

The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda-
Volume 7- Translation of writings

Contents

1	Note	1
2	Memoirs of European Travel I	2
3	Memoirs of European Travel II	27
4	Addenda	36
4.1	Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses	39
4.1.1	Text	39
4.1.2	Images	39
4.1.3	Content license	39

Chapter 1

Note

NOTE

Swami Vivekananda left Calcutta for the West, for the second time, on the 20th June, 1899, by the BISN steamship Golconda. In reading these pages the reader should remember that Swamiji wrote them in a light, humorous tone in Bengali, which it is impossible to render in English.

The [6]second section of these memoirs, relates to his return journey from the West at the end of 1900.

These were originally published in the Udbodhan.

-EDITOR.

Chapter 2

Memoirs of European Travel I

MEMOIRS OF EUROPEAN TRAVEL

I

Om Namô Nârâyânâya, ("Salutations to the Lord"; the usual form of addressing a Sannyasin. These memoirs of his second journey to the West were addressed to Swami Trigunatitananda, Editor, Udbodhan and hence this form of address.) Swâmi. — Pronounce the last syllable of the second word in a high pitch, brother, in the Hrishikesh fashion. For seven days we have been on board the ship and every day I think of writing to you something about our mode of life, and of writing materials also you have given me enough, but the characteristic lethargy of a Bengali stands in the way and foils everything. In the first place, there is idleness; every day I think of writing — what do you call it — a diary, but then, on account of various preoccupations, it is postponed to the endless "tomorrow", and does not progress an inch. In the second place, I do not remember the dates etc., at all; you must do me the favour to fill these up yourselves. And, besides, if you be very generous, you may think that like the great devotee, Hanuman, it is impossible for me to remember dates and such other trivialities — owing to the presence of the Lord in the heart. But the real truth is that it is due to my foolishness and idleness. What nonsense! What comparison can there be between "the Solar Dynasty" (Swamiji here refers to Kâlidâsa's famous line of the Raghuvamsham: "O the difference between the majestic Solar Dynasty and my poor intellect!") — I beg your pardon — between Hanuman with his whole heart given to Shri Râma, the crown of the Solar Dynasty, and me, the lowest of the low! But then he crossed at one bound the ocean extending a hundred Yojanas, while we are crossing it confined within a wooden house, so to say, being pitched this side and that and somehow keeping ourselves on our feet with the help of posts and pillars. But there is one point of superiority on our side in that he had the blessed sight of Râkshasas and Râkshasis after reaching Lankâ, whereas we are going in company with them. At dinner time that glittering of a hundred knives and the clattering of a hundred forks frightened brother T ___ (Turiyananda) out of his wits. He now and then started lest his neighbour with auburn hair and grey, cat-like

eyes, through inadvertence might plunge her knife into his flesh, and the more so, as he is rather sleek and fat. I say, did Hanuman have sea-sickness while crossing the sea? Do the ancient books say anything on that? You are all well-read men, proficient in the Ramayana and other scriptures, so you may settle that question. But our modern authorities are silent on that point. Perhaps he had not; but then the fact of his having entered into the jaws of somebody raises a doubt. Brother T___ is also of opinion that when the prow of the ship suddenly heaves up towards heaven as if to consult with the king of gods, and immediately after plunges to the bottom of the ocean as if to pierce king Vali, residing in the nether worlds — he at that time feels that he is being swallowed by the terrible and wide-gaping jaws of somebody.

I beg your pardon, you have entrusted your work to a nice man! I owe you a description of the sea-voyage for seven days which will be full of poetry and interest, and be written in a polished, rhetorical style, but instead of that I am talking at random. But the fact is, having striven all my life to eat the kernel of Brahman, after throwing away the shell of Maya, how shall I now get the power of appreciating nature's beauties all of a sudden? All my life I have been on the move all over India, "from Varanasi to Kashmir, and thence to Khorasan, and Gujarat (Tulsidâs.)". How many hills and rivers, mountains and springs, and valleys and dales, how many cloud-belted peaks covered in perpetual snow, and oceans tempestuous, roaring and foamy, have I not seen, and heard of, and crossed! But sitting on a shabby wooden bedstead in a dark room of the ground floor, requiring a lamp to be lighted in the day-time, with the walls variegated by the stain of chewed betel leaves and made noisy by the squeaking and tickling of rats and moles and lizards, by the side of the main street resounding with the rattle of hackneys and tram-cars and darkened by clouds of dust — in such poetic environment, the pictures of the Himalayas, oceans, meadows, deserts, etc., that poet Shyamacharan, puffing at the all too familiar hookah, has drawn with such lifelike precision, to the glory of the Bengalis — it is vain for us to try to imitate them! Shyamacharan in his boyhood went for a change to the up-country, where the water

is so stimulating to the digestive functions that if you drink a tumblerful of it even after a very heavy meal, every bit of it will be digested and you will feel hungry again. Here it was that Shyamacharan's intuitive genius caught a glimpse of the sublime and beautiful aspects of nature. But there is one fly in the pot — they say that Shyamacharan's peregrinations extended as far as Burdwan (in Bengal) and no further!

But at your earnest request and also to prove that I am not wholly devoid of the poetic instinct either, I set myself to the task with God's name, and you, too, be all attention.

No ship generally leaves the port in the night — specially from a commercial port like Calcutta and in a river like the Hooghly or Ganga. Until the ship reaches the sea, it is in the charge of the pilot, who acts as the Captain, and he gives the command. His duty ends in either piloting the ship down to the sea or, if it be an incoming ship, from the mouth of the sea to the port. We have got two great dangers towards the mouth of the Hooghly — first, the James and Mary Banks near Budge-Budge, and second, the sandbank near the entrance to Diamond Harbour. Only in the high tide and during the day, the pilot can very carefully steer his ship, and in no other condition; consequently it took us two days to get out of the Hooghly.

Do you remember the Ganga at Hrishikesh? That clear bluish water — in which one can count the fins of fishes five yards below the surface — that wonderfully sweet, ice-cold “charming water of the Ganga (From Valmiki's hymn.)”, and that wonderful sound of “Hara, Hara” of the running water, and the echo of “Hara, Hara” from the neighbouring mountain-falls? Do you remember that life in the forest, the begging of Mâdhukari (Meaning, collected from door to door, in small bits.) alms, eating on small islands of rock in the bed of the Ganga, hearty drinking of that water with the palms, and the fearless wandering of fishes all round for crumbs of bread? You remember that love for Ganga water, that glory of the Ganga, the touch of its water that makes the mind dispassionate, that Ganga flowing over the Himalayas, through Srinagar, Tehri, Uttarkasi, and Gangotri — some of you have seen even the source of the Ganga! But there is a certain unforgettable fascination in our Ganga of Calcutta, muddy, and whitish — as if from contact with Shiva's body — and bearing a large number of ships on her bosom. Is it merely patriotism or the impressions of childhood? — Who knows? What wonderful relation is this between mother Ganga and the Hindus? Is it merely superstition? May be. They spend their lives with the name of Ganga on their lips, they die immersed in the waters of the Ganga, men from far off places take away Ganga water with them, keep it carefully in copper vessels, and sip drops of it on holy festive occasions. Kings and princes keep it in jars, and at considerable expense take the water from Gangotri to pour it on the

head of Shiva at Rameshwaram! The Hindus visit foreign countries — Rangoon, Java, Hongkong, Madagascar, Suez, Aden, Malta — and they take with them Ganga water and the Gitâ.

The Gita and the sacred waters of the Ganga constitute the Hinduism of the Hindus. Last time I went to the West, I also took a little of it with me, fearing it might be needed, and whenever opportunities occurred I used to drink a few drops of it. And every time I drank, in the midst of the stream of humanity, amid that bustle of civilisation, that hurry of frenzied footsteps of millions of men and women in the West, the mind at once became calm and still, as it were. That stream of men, that intense activity of the West, that clash and competition at every step, those seats of luxury and celestial opulence — Paris, London, New York, Berlin, Rome — all would disappear and I used to hear that wonderful sound of “Hara, Hara”, to see that lonely forest on the sides of the Himalayas, and feel the murmuring heavenly river coursing through the heart and brain and every artery of the body and thundering forth, “Hara, Hara, Hara!”

This time you, too, I see, have sent Mother Ganga, for Madras. But, dear brother, what a strange vessel have you put Mother in! Brother T__ is a Brahmachârin from his boyhood, and looks “like burning fire through the force of his spirituality (Kâlidâsa's Kumârasambhavam.)”. Formerly as a Brâhmana he used to be saluted as “Namo Brahmané”, and now it is — oh, the sublimity of it! — “Namo Nârâyanâya”, as he is a Sannyâsin. And it is perhaps due to that, that Mother, in his custody, has left her seat in the Kamandalu of Brahmâ, and been forced to enter a jar! Anyhow, getting up from bed late at night I found that Mother evidently could not bear staying in that awkward vessel and was trying to force her passage out of it. I thought it most dangerous, for if Mother chose to re-enact here those previous scenes of her life, such as piercing the Himalayas, washing away the great elephant Airâvata, and pulling down the hut of the sage Jahnu, then it would be a terrible affair. I offered many prayers to Mother and said to her in various supplicatory phrases, “Mother, do wait a little, let us reach Madras tomorrow, and there you can do whatever you like. There are many there more thick-skulled than elephants — most of them with huts like that of Jahnu — while those half-shaven, shining heads with ample hair-tufts are almost made of stone, compared to which even the Himalayas would be soft as butter! You may break them as much as you like; now pray wait a little.” But all my supplications were in vain. Mother would not listen to them. Then I hit upon a plan, and said to her, “Mother, look at those turbaned servants with jackets on, moving to and fro on the ship, they are Mohammedans, real, beef-eating Mohammedans, and those whom you find moving about sweeping and cleaning the rooms etc., are real scavengers, disciples of Lâl Beg; and if you do not hear me, I will call

them and ask them to touch you! Even if that is not sufficient to quiet you, I will just send you to your father's home; you see that room there, if you are shut in there, you will get back to your primitive condition in the Himalayas, when all your restlessness will be silenced, and you shall remain frozen into a block of ice." That silenced her. So it is everywhere, not only in the case of gods, but among men also — whenever they get a devotee, they take an undue advantage over him.

See, how I have again strayed from my subject and am talking at random. I have already told you at the outset that those things are not in my line, but if you bear with me, I shall try again.

There is a certain beauty in one's own people which is not to be found anywhere else. Even the denizens of Paradise cannot compare in point of beauty with our brothers and sisters, or sons and daughters, however uncouth they may be. But, if, even roaming over Paradise and seeing the people there, you find your own people coming out really beautiful, then there is no bound to your delight. There is also a special beauty in our Bengal, covered with endless verdant stretches of grass, and bearing as garlands a thousand rivers and streams. A little of this beauty one finds in Malabar, and also in Kashmir. Is there not beauty in water? When there is water everywhere, and heavy showers of rain are running down arum leaves, while clumps of cocoanut and date palms slightly bend their heads under that downpour, and there is the continuous croaking of frogs all round — is there no beauty in such a scene as this? And one cannot appreciate the beauty of the banks of our Ganga, unless one is returning from foreign countries and entering the river by its mouth at Diamond Harbour. That blue, blue sky, containing in its bosom black clouds, with golden-fringed whitish clouds below them, underneath which clumps of cocoanut and date palms toss their tufted heads like a thousand chowries, and below them again is an assemblage of light, deep, yellowish, slightly dark, and other varieties of green massed together — these being the mango, lichi, blackberry, and jack-fruit trees, with an exuberance of leaves and foliage that entirely hide the trunk, branches, and twigs — while, close by, clusters of bamboos toss in the wind, and at the foot of all lies that grass, before whose soft and glossy surface the carpets of Yarkand, Persia, and Turkistan are almost as nothing — as far as the eye can reach that green, green grass looking as even as if some one had trimmed and pruned it, and stretching right down to the edge of the river — as far down the banks as where the gentle waves of the Ganga have submerged and are pushing playfully against, the land is framed with green grass, and just below this is the sacred water of the Ganga. And if you sweep your eye from the horizon right up to the zenith, you will notice within a single line such a play of diverse colours, such manifold shades of the same colour, as you have witnessed nowhere else. I say, have you ever come under

the fascination of colours — the sort of fascination which impels the moths to die in the flame, and the bees to starve themselves to death in the prison of flowers? I tell you one thing — if you want to enjoy the beauty of Gangetic scenery, enjoy it to your heart's content now, for very soon the whole aspect will be altered. In the hands of money-grabbing merchants, everything will disappear. In place of that green grass, brick kilns will be reared and burrow-pits for the brickfields will be sunk. Where, now, the tiny wavelets of the Ganga are playing with the grass, there will be moored the jute-laden flats and those cargo-boats; and those variegated colours of cocoanuts and palms, of mangoes and lichis, that blue sky, the beauty of the clouds — these you will altogether miss hereafter; and you will find instead the enveloping smoke of coal, and standing ghostlike in the midst of that smoke, the half-distinct chimneys of the factories!

Now our ship has reached the sea. The description, which you read in Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsham* of the shores "of the sea appearing blue with forests of palm and other trees" and "looking like a slender rim of rust on the tyre of an iron wheel" etc. — is not at all accurate and faithful. With all my respects for the great poet, it is my belief that he never in his life saw either the ocean or the Himalayas. (Swamiji afterwards changed his opinion with regard to the last part, i.e. Kalidasa's acquaintance with the Himalayas.)

Here there is a blending of white and black waters, somewhat resembling the confluence of the Ganga and Jamuna at Allahabad. Though Mukti (liberation) may be rare in most places, it is sure at "Hardwar, Allahabad, and the mouth of the Ganga". But they say that this is not the real mouth of the river. However, let me salute the Lord here, for "He has His eyes, and head and face everywhere (*Gita*, XIII, 13.)".

How beautiful! As far as the eye reaches, the deep blue waters of the sea are rising into foamy waves and dancing rhythmically to the winds. Behind us lie the sacred waters of the Ganga, whitened with the ashes of Shiva's body, as we read in the description, "Shiva's matted locks whitened by the foam of the Ganga (*Shankaracharya's* hymn.)". The water of the Ganga is comparatively still. In front of us lies the parting line between the waters. There ends the white water. Now begin the blue waters of the ocean — before, behind and all round there is only blue, blue water everywhere, breaking incessantly into waves. The sea has blue hair, his body is of a blue complexion, and his garment is also blue. We read in the Puranas that millions of Asuras hid themselves under the ocean through fear of the gods. Today their opportunity has come, today Neptune is their ally, and Aeolus is at their back. With hideous roars and thundering shouts they are today dancing a terrible war-dance on the surface of the ocean, and the

foamy waves are their grim laughter! In the midst of this tumult is our ship, and on board the ship, pacing the deck with lordly steps, are men and women of that nation which rules the sea-girt world, dressed in charming attire, with a complexion like the moonbeams — looking like self-reliance and self-confidence personified, and appearing to the black races as pictures of pride and haughtiness. Overhead, the thunder of the cloudy monsoon sky, on all sides the dance and roar of foam-crested waves, and the din of the powerful engines of our ship setting at naught the might of the sea — it was a grand conglomeration of sounds, to which I was listening, lost in wonder, as if in a half-waking state, when, all of a sudden, drowning all these sounds, there fell upon my ears the deep and sonorous music of commingled male and female voices singing in chorus the national anthem, "Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves!" Startled, I looked around and found that the ship was rolling heavily, and brother T__, holding his head with his hands was struggling against an attack of sea-sickness.

In the second class are two Bengali youths going to the West for study, whose condition is worse. One of them looks so frightened that he would be only too glad to scuttle straight home if he were allowed to land. These two lads and we two are the only Indians on the ship — the representatives of modern India. During the two days the ship was in the Ganga, brother T__, under the secret instructions of the Editor, Udbodhan, used to urge me very much to finish my article on "Modern India" quickly. I too found an opportunity today and asked him, "Brother, what do you think is the condition of modern India?" And he, casting a look towards the second class and another at himself, said, with a sigh, "Very sad, getting very much muddled up!"

The reason why so much importance is attached to the Hooghly branch of the Ganga, instead of the bigger one, Padmâ, is, according to many, that the Hooghly was the primary and principal course of the river, and latterly the river shifted its course, and created an outlet by the Padma. Similarly the present "Tolley's Nullah" represents the ancient course of the Ganga, and is known as the Âdi-Gangâ. The sailing merchant, the hero of Kavikankan's work, makes his voyage to Ceylon along that channel. Formerly the Ganga was navigable for big ships up to Triveni. The ancient port of Saptagrâm was situated a little distance off Triveni ghat, on the river Saraswati. From very ancient times Saptagram was the principal port for Bengal's foreign trade. Gradually the mouth of the Saraswati got silted up. In the year 1539 it silted up so much that the Portuguese settlers had to take up a site further down the Ganga, for their ships to come up. The site afterwards developed into the famous town of Hooghly. From the commencement of the sixteenth century both Indian and foreign merchants were feeling much anxiety about the silting up of the Ganga. But

what of that? Human engineering skill has hitherto proved ineffectual against the gradual silting up of the river-bed which continues to the present day. In 1666 a French Missionary writes that the Ganga near Suti got completely silted up at the time. Holwell, of Black-Hole fame, on his way to Murshidabad was compelled to resort to small country-boats on account of the shallowness of the river at Santipur. In 1797 Captain Colebrook writes that country-boats could not ply in the Hooghly and the Jalangi during summer. During the years 1822-1884, the Hooghly was closed to all boat-traffic. For twenty-four years within this period the water was only two or three feet deep. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch planted a trade settlement at Chinsura, one mile below Hooghly. The French, who came still later, established their settlement at Chandernagore, still further down the river. In 1723 the German Ostend Company opened a factory at Bankipore, five miles below Chandernagore on the other side of the river. In 1616 the Danes had started a factory at Serampore, eight miles below Chandernagore, and then the English established the city of Calcutta still further down the river. None of the above places are now accessible to ships, only Calcutta being open now. But everybody is afraid of its future.

There is one curious reason why there remains so much water in the Ganga up to about Santipur even during summer. When the flow of the surface water has ceased, large quantities of water percolating through the subsoil find their way into the river. The bed of the Ganga is even now considerably below the level of the land on either side. If the level of the river-bed should gradually rise owing to the subsidence of fresh soil, then the trouble will begin. And there is talk about another danger. Even near Calcutta, through earthquakes or other causes, the river at times dried up so much that one could wade across. It is said that in 1770 such a state of things happened. There is another report that on Thursday, the 9th October, 1734, during ebb-tide in the noon, the river dried up completely. Had it happened a little later, during the inauspicious last portion of the day, I leave it to you to infer the result. Perhaps then the river would not have returned to its bed again.

So far, then, as regards the upper portion of the Hooghly; now as regards the portion below Calcutta. The great dangers to be faced in this portion are the James and Mary Banks. Formerly the river Damodar had its confluence with the Ganga thirty miles above Calcutta, but now, through the curious transformations of time, the confluence is over thirty-one miles to the south of it. Some six miles below this point the Rupnarayan pours its waters into the Ganga. The fact is there, that these two feeders rush themselves into the Ganga in happy combination — but how shall this huge quantity of mud be disposed of? Consequently big sandbanks are formed in the bed of the river, which constantly shift their

position and are sometimes rather loose and sometimes a compact mass, causing no end of fear. Day and night soundings of the river's depth are being taken, the omission of which for a few days, through carelessness, would mean the destruction of ships. No sooner will a ship strike against them than it will either capsize or be straightway swallowed up in them! Cases are even recorded that within half an hour of a big three-masted ship striking one of these sandbanks, the whole of it disappeared in the sand, leaving only the top of the masts visible. These sandbanks may rightly be considered as the mouth of the Damodar-Rupnarayan. (There is a pun on the words Damodar-Rupnarayan which not only imply the two rivers, but also mean "Narayana as Damodara, or swallowing everything (Damodara-rupa-Narayana).") The Damodar is not now satisfied with Santhal villages, and is swallowing ships and steamers etc. as a sauce by way of variety. In 1877 a ship named "County of Sterling", with a cargo of 1,444 tons of wheat from Calcutta, had no sooner struck one of these terrible sandbanks than within eight minutes there was no trace left of it. In 1874 a steamer carrying a load of 2,400 tons suffered the same fate in two minutes. Blessed be thy mouth, O Mother Ganga! I salute thee for allowing us to get off scot-free. Brother T__ says, "Sir, a goat ought to be offered to the Mother for her benignity." I replied, "Exactly so, brother, but why offer only one day, instead of everyday!" Next day brother T__ readverted to the topic, but I kept silent. The next day after that I pointed out to him at dinner-time to what an extent the offering of goats was progressing. Brother seemed rather puzzled and said, "What do you mean? It is only you who are eating." Then at considerable pains I had to explain to him how it was said that a youth of Calcutta once visited his father-in-law's place in a remote village far from the Ganga. There at dinner-time he found people waiting about with drums etc., and his mother-in-law insisted on his taking a little milk before sitting to dinner. The son-in-law considered it might perhaps be a local custom which he had better obey; but no sooner had he taken a sip of the milk than the drums began to play all around and his mother-in-law, with tears of joy, placed her hand on his head and blessed him, saying, "My son, you have really discharged the duties of a son today; look here, you have in your stomach the water of the Ganga, as you live on its banks, and in the milk there was the powdered bone of your deceased father-in-law; so by this act of yours his bones have reached the Ganga and his spirit has obtained all the merits thereof." So here was a man from Calcutta, and on board the ship there was plenty of meat preparations and every time one ate them, meat was being offered to mother Ganga. So he need not be at all anxious on the subject. Brother T__ is of such a grave disposition that it was difficult to discover what impression the lecture made on him.

What a wonderful thing a ship is! The sea, which from the shore looks so fearful, in the heart of which the sky

seems to bend down and meet, from whose bosom the sun slowly rises and in which it sinks again, and the least frown of which makes the heart quail — that sea has been turned into a highway, the cheapest of all routes, by ships. Who invented the ship? No one in particular. That is to say, like all machinery indispensable to men — without which they cannot do for a single moment, and by the combination and adjustment of which all kinds of factory plants have been constructed — the ship also is the outcome of joint labour. Take for instance the wheels; how absolutely indispensable they are! From the creaking bullock-cart to the car of Jagannath, from the spinning wheel to the stupendous machinery of factories, everywhere there is use for the wheel. Who invented the wheel? No one in particular, that is to say, all jointly. The primitive man used to fell trees with axes, roll big trunks along inclined planes; by degrees they were cut into the shape of solid wheels, and gradually the naves and spokes of the modern wheel came into vogue. Who knows how many millions of years it took to do this? But in India all the successive stages of improvement are preserved. However much they may be improved or transformed, there are always found men to occupy the lower stages of evolution, and consequently the whole series is preserved. First of all a musical instrument was formed with a string fixed to a piece of bamboo. Gradually it came to be played by a horsehair bow, and the first violin was made; then it passed through various transformations, with different sorts of strings and guts, and the bow also assumed different forms and names, till at last the highly finished guitar and sarang etc., came into existence. But in spite of this, do not the Mohammedan cabmen even now with a shabby horsehair bow play on the crude instrument made of a bamboo pipe fixed to an earthen pot, and sing the story of Majwar Kahar weaving his fishing net? Go to the Central Provinces, and you will find even now solid wheels rolling on the roads — though it bespeaks a dense intellect on the part of the people, specially in these days of rubber tyres.

In very ancient times, that is, in the golden age, when the common run of people were so sincere and truthful that they would not even cover their bodies for fear of hypocrisy — making the exterior look different from the interior — would not marry lest they might contract selfishness, and banishing all ideas of distinction between meum and tuum always used to look upon the property of others "as mere clods of earth", on the strength of bludgeons, stones, etc. (Swamiji is ironically describing the naked primitive man, to whom marriage was unknown, and who had no respect for person or property.); — in those blessed times, for voyaging over water, they constructed canoes and rafts and so forth, burning out the interior of a tree, or by fastening together a few logs of trees. Haven't you seen catamarans along the sea-coast from Orissa to Colombo? And you must have observed how far into the sea the rafts can go. There you have rudiments of ship-building.

And that boat of the East Bengal boatmen boarding which you have to call on the five patron-saints of the river for your safety; your house-boat manned by Chittagong boatmen, which even in a light storm makes its helmsmen declare his inability to control the helm, and all the passengers are asked to take the names of their respective gods as a last resort; that big up-country boat with a pair of fantastic brass eyes at the prow, rowed by the oarsmen in a standing posture; that boat of merchant Shrimanta's voyage (according to Kavikankan, Shrimanta crossed the Bay of Bengal simply by rowing, and was about to be drowned owing to his boat getting caught in the antennae of a shoal of lobsters, and almost capsizing! Also he mistook a shell for a tiny fish, and so on), in other words the Gangasagar boat — nicely roofed above and having a floor of split bamboos, and containing in its hold rows of jars filled with Ganga water (which is deliciously cool, I beg your pardon, you visit Gangasagar during hard winter, and the chill north wind drives away all your relish for cooling drinks); and that small-sized boat which daily takes the Bengali Babus to their office and brings them back home, and is superintended over by the boatman of Bally, very expert and very clever — no sooner does he sight a cloud so far away as Konnagar than he puts the boat in safety! — they are now passing into the hands of the strong-bodied men from Jaunpur who speak a peculiar dialect, and whom your Mahant Maharaj, out of fun ordered to catch a heron — which he facetiously styled as "Bakâsur (A demon of the shape of a big heron, mentioned in the Bhagavâta.)", and this puzzled them hopelessly and they stammered out, "Please, sire, where are we to get this demon? It is an enigma to us"; then that bulky, slow-moving (cargo) boat nicknamed "Gâdhâ (donkey)" in Bengali, which never goes straight, but always goes sideways; and that big species of boats, like the schooner, having from one to three masts, which imports cargoes of cocoanuts, dates and dried fish from Ceylon, the Maldives, or Arabia; — these and many others too numerous to mention, represent the subsequent development in naval construction.

To steer a ship by means of sails is a wonderful discovery. To whichever direction the wind may be blowing, by a clever manipulation of the sails, the ship is sure to reach her destination. But she takes more time when the wind is contrary. A sailing ship is a most beautiful sight, and from a distance looks like a many-winged great bird descending from the skies. Sails, however, do not allow a ship to steer straight ahead, and if the wind is a little contrary, she has to take a zigzag course. But when there is a perfect lull, the ship is helpless and has to lower her sails and stand still. In the equatorial regions it frequently happens even now. Nowadays sailing ships also have very little of wood in them and are mostly made of iron. It is much more difficult to be the captain or sailor of a sailing ship than in a steamer, and no one can be a good captain in sailing ship without experience.

To know the direction of the wind at every step and to be on one's guard against danger-spots long ahead — these two qualifications are indispensably necessary in a sailing ship, more than in a steamer. A steamer is to a great extent under human control — the engines can be stopped in a moment. It can be steered ahead, or astern, sideways or in any desired direction, within a very short time, but the sailing ship is at the mercy of the wind. By the time the sails can be lowered or the helm turned, the ship may strike a bank or run up on a submarine rock or collide with another ship. Nowadays sailing ships very seldom carry passengers, except coolies. They generally carry cargo, and that also inferior stuff, such as salt etc. Small sailing ships such as the schooner, do coasting trade. Sailing ships cannot afford to hire steamers to tow them along the Suez Canal and spend thousands of rupees as toll, so they can go to England in six months by rounding Africa.

Due to all these disadvantages of sailing ships, naval warfare in the past was a risky affair. A slight change in the course of the wind or in the ocean-current would decide the fate of a battle. Again, those ships, being made of wood, would frequently catch fire, which had to be put out. Their construction also was of a different type; one end was flat and very high, with five or six decks. On the uppermost deck at this end there used to be a wooden verandah, in front of which were the commander's room and office and on either side were the officers' cabins. Then there was a large open space, at the other end of which were a few cabins. The lower decks also had similar roofed halls, one underneath the other. In the lowermost deck or hold were the sailor's sleeping and dining rooms, etc. On either side of each deck were ranged cannon, their muzzles projecting through the rows of apertures in the ships' walls; and on both sides were heaps of cannon balls (and powder bags in times of war). All the decks of these ancient men-of-war had very low roofs and one had to carry his head down when moving about. Then it was a troublesome business to secure marines for naval warfare. There was a standing order of the Government to enlist men by force or guile wherever they could be found. Sons were violently snatched away from their mothers, and husbands from their wives. Once they were made to board the ship, (which perhaps the poor fellows had never done in their lives), they were ordered straightway to climb the masts! And if through fear they failed to carry out the order, they were flogged. Some would also die under the ordeal. It was the rich and influential men of the country who made these laws, it was they who would appropriate the benefits of commerce, or ravage, or conquest of different countries, and the poor people were simply to shed their blood and sacrifice their lives — as has been the rule throughout the world's history! Now those laws exist no longer, and the name of the Press-gang does not now send a shiver through the hearts of the peasantry and poor folk. Now it is voluntary service, but many juvenile criminals are trained as sailors in men-of-

war, instead of being thrown into prison.

Steam-power has revolutionised all this, and sails are almost superfluous ornaments in ships nowadays. They depend very little on winds now, and there is much less danger from gales and the like. Ships have now only to take care that they do not strike against submarine rocks. And men-of-war of the present day are totally different from those of the past. In the first place, they do not at all look like ships, but rather like floating iron fortresses of varying dimensions. The number of cannon also has been much reduced, but compared with the modern turret-guns, those of the past were mere child's play. And how fast these men-of-war are! The smallest of these are the torpedo-boats; those that are a little bigger are for capturing hostile merchant-ships, and the big ones are the ponderous instruments for the actual naval fight.

During the Civil War of the United States of America, the Unionist party fixed rows of iron rails against the outer walls of a wooden ship so as to cover them. The enemy's cannon-balls striking against them were repulsed without doing any harm to the ship. After this, as a rule, the ship's sides began to be clad in iron, so that hostile balls might not penetrate the wood. The ship's cannon also began to improve — bigger and bigger cannon were constructed and the work of moving, loading, and firing them came to be executed by machinery, instead of with the hand. A cannon which even five hundred men cannot move an inch, can now be turned vertically or horizontally, loaded and fired by a little boy pressing a button, and all this in a second! As the iron wall of ships began to increase in thickness, so cannon with the power of thunder also began to be manufactured. At the present day, a battle-ship is a fortress with walls of steel, and the guns are almost as Death itself. A single shot is enough to smash the biggest ship into fragments. But this "iron bridal-chamber" — which Nakindar's father (in the popular Bengali tale) never even dreamt of, and which, instead of standing on the top of "Sâtâli Hill" moves dancing on seventy thousand mountain-like billows, even this is mortally afraid of torpedoes! The torpedo is a tube somewhat shaped like a cigar, and if fired at an object travels under water like a fish. Then, the moment it hits its object, the highly explosive materials it contains explode with a terrific noise, and the ship under which this takes place is reduced to its original condition, that is, partly into iron and wooden fragments, and partly into smoke and fire! And no trace is found of the men who are caught in this explosion of the torpedo — the little that is found, is almost in a state of mince-meat! Since the invention of these torpedoes, naval wars cannot last long. One or two fights, and a big victory is scored or a total defeat. But the wholesale loss of men of both parties in naval fight which men apprehended before the introduction of these men-of-war has been greatly falsified by facts.

If a fraction of the volley of balls discharged during a field-fight from the guns and rifles of each hostile army on the opponents hit their aim, then both rival armies would be killed to a man in two minutes. Similarly if only one of five hundred shots fired from a battle-ship in action hit its mark, then no trace would be left of the ships on both sides. But the wonder is that, as guns and rifles are improving in quality, as the latter are being made lighter, and the rifling in their barrels finer, as the range is increasing, as machinery for loading is being multiplied, and rate of firing quickened — the more they seem to miss their aim! Armed with the old fashioned unusually long-barrelled musket — which has to be supported on a two-legged wooden stand while firing, and ignited by actually setting fire and blowing into it — the Barakhjais and the Afridis can fire with unerring precision, while the modern trained soldier with the highly complex machine-guns of the present day fires 150 rounds in a minute and serves merely to heat the atmosphere! Machinery in a small proportion is good, but too much of it kills man's initiative and makes a lifeless machine of him. The men in factories are doing the same monotonous work, day after day, night after night, year after year, each batch of men doing one special bit of work — such as fashioning the heads of pins, or uniting the ends of threads, or moving backwards or forwards with the loom — for a whole life. And the result is that the loss of that special job means death to them — they find no other means of living and starve. Doing routine work like a machine, one becomes a lifeless machine. For that reason, one serving as a schoolmaster or a clerk for a whole lifetime ends by turning a stupendous fool.

The form of merchantmen and passenger-ships is of a different type. Although some merchant-ships are so constructed that in times of war they can easily be equipped with a few guns and give chase to unarmed hostile merchant-ships, for which they get remuneration from their respective Governments, still they generally differ widely from warships. These are now mostly steamships and generally so big and expensive that they are seldom owned by individuals, but by companies. Among the carrying companies for Indian and European trade, the P. & O. Company is the oldest and richest, then comes the B. I. S. N. Company, and there are many others. Among those of foreign nationalities, the Messageries Maritimes (French) the Austrian Lloyd, the German Lloyd, and the Rubattino Company (Italian), are the most famous. Of these the passenger-ships of the P. & O. Company are generally believed to be the safest and fastest. And the arrangements of food in the Messageries Maritimes are excellent.

When we left for Europe this time, the last two companies had stopped booking "native" passengers for fear of the

plague-infection. And there is a law of the Indian Government that no "native" of India can go abroad without a certificate from the Emigration Office, in order to make sure that nobody is enticing him away to foreign countries to sell him as a slave or to impress him as a coolie, but that he is going of his own free will. This written document must be produced before they will take him into the ship. This law was so long silent against the Indian gentry going to foreign countries. Now on account of the plague epidemic it has been revived, so that the Government may be informed about every "native" going out. Well, in our country we hear much about some people belonging to the gentry and some to the lower classes. But in the eyes of the Government all are "natives" without exception. Maharajas, Rajas, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras — all belong to one and the same class — that of "natives". The law, and the test which applies to coolies, is applicable to all "natives" without distinction. Thanks to you, O English Government, through your grace, for a moment at least I feel myself one with the whole body of "natives". It is all the more welcome, because this body of mine having come of a Kâyastha family, I have become the target of attack of many sections. Nowadays we hear it from the lips of people of all castes in India that they are all full-blooded Aryans — only there is some difference of opinion amongst them about the exact percentage of Aryan blood in their veins, some claiming to have the full measure of it, while others may have one ounce more or less than another — that is all. But in this they are all unanimous that their castes are all superior to the Kayastha! And it is also reported that they and the English race belong to the same stock — that they are cousins-german to each other, and that they are not "natives". And they have come to this country out of humanitarian principles, like the English. And such evil customs as child-marriage, polygamy, image-worship, the sutti, the zenana-system, and so forth have no place in their religion — but these have been introduced by the ancestors of the Kayasthas, and people of that ilk. Their religion also is of the same pattern as that of the English! And their forefathers looked just like the English, only living under the tropical sun of India has turned them black! Now come forward with your pretensions, if you dare! "You are all natives", the Government says. Amongst that mass of black, a shade deeper or lighter cannot be distinguished. The Government says, "They are all natives". Now it is useless for you to dress yourselves after the English fashion. Your European hats etc., will avail you little henceforth. If you throw all the blame on the Hindus, and try to fraternise with the English, you would thereby come in for a greater share of cuffs and blows and not less. Blessings to you, O English Government! You have already become the favoured child of Fortune; may your prosperity increase ever more! We shall be happy once more to wear our loin-cloth and Dhoti — the native dress. Through your grace we shall continue to travel from one end of the country to the other, bare-headed, and bare-footed, and heartily eat our habitual food of rice and Dâl

with our fingers, right in the Indian fashion. Bless the Lord! We had well-nigh been tempted by Anglo-Indian fashions and been duped by its glamour. We heard it said that no sooner did we give up our native dress, native religion, and native manners and customs, than the English people would take us on their shoulders and lionise us. And we were about to do so, when smack came the whip of the Englishman and the thud of British boots — and immediately men were seized by a panic and turned away, bidding good-bye to English ways, eager to confess their "native" birth.

"The English ways we'd copy with such pains, The British boots did stamp out from our brains!"

Blessed be the English Government! May their throne be firm and their rule permanent. And the little tendency that remained in me for taking to European ways vanished, thanks to the Americans. I was sorely troubled by an overgrown beard, but no sooner did I peep into a hair-cutting saloon than somebody called out, "This is no place for such shabby-looking people as you." I thought that perhaps seeing me so quaintly dressed in turban and Gerua cloak, the man was prejudiced against me. So I should go and buy an English coat and hat. I was about to do this when fortunately I met an American gentleman who explained to me that it was much better that I was dressed in my Gerua cloak, for now the gentlemen would not take me amiss, but if I dressed in European fashion, everybody would chase me away. I met the same kind of treatment in one or two other saloons. After which I began the practice of shaving with my own hands. Once I was burning with hunger, and went into a restaurant, and asked for a particular thing, whereupon the man said, "We do not stock it." "Why, it is there." "Well, my good man, in plain language it means there is no place here for you to sit and take your meal." "And why?" "Because nobody will eat at the same table with you, for he will be outcasted." Then America began to look agreeable to me, somewhat like my own caste-ridden country. Out with these differences of white and black, and this nicety about the proportion of Aryan blood among the "natives"! How awkward it looks for slaves to be over-fastidious about pedigree! There was a Dom (a man of the sweeper-caste) who used to say, "You won't find anywhere on earth a caste superior to ours. You must know we are Dom-m-m-s!" But do you see the fun of it? The excesses about caste distinctions obtain most among peoples who are least honoured among mankind.

Steamships are generally much bigger than sailing ships. The steamships that ply across the Atlantic are just half as much bigger than the "Golconda". (The B. I. S. N. steamer in which Swami Vivekananda went to the West for the second time.) The ship on which I crossed the Pacific from Japan was also very big. In the centre of the biggest ships are the first class compartments with some open space on either side; then comes the second class, flanked by the "steerage" on either side. At one end are the sailors' and servants' quarters. The steerage corresponds to the third class, in which very poor people go as

passengers, as, for instance, those who are emigrating to America, Australia, etc. The accommodation for them is very small and the food is served not on tables but from hand to hand. There is no steerage in ships which ply between England and India, but they take deck-passengers. The open space between the first and second classes is used by them for sitting or sleeping purposes. But I did not notice a single deck-passenger bound for a long journey. Only in 1893, on my way to China, I found a number of Chinamen going as deck-passengers from Bombay to Hongkong.

During stormy weather, the deck-passengers suffer great inconvenience, and also to a certain extent at ports when the cargo is unloaded. Excepting in the hurricane-deck which is on top of all, there is a square opening in all other decks, through which cargo is loaded and unloaded, at which times the deck-passengers are put to some trouble. Otherwise, it is very pleasant on the deck at night from Calcutta to Suez, and in summer, through Europe also. When the first and second class passengers are about to melt in their furnished compartments on account of the excessive heat, then the deck is almost a heaven in comparison. The second class in ships of this type is very uncomfortable. Only, in the ships of the newly started German Lloyd Company plying between Bergen, in Germany and Australia, the second class arrangements are excellent; there are cabins even in the hurricane-deck, and food arrangements are almost on a par with those of the first class in the "Golconda". That line touches Colombo on the way.

In the "Golconda" there are only two cabins on the hurricane-deck, one on each side; one is for the doctor, and the other was allotted to us. But owing to the excessive heat, we had to take shelter in the lower deck, for our cabin was just above the engine-room of the ship. Although the ship is made of iron, yet the passengers' cabins are made of wood. And there are many holes along the top and bottom of the wooden walls of these, for the free passage of air. The walls are painted over with ivory-paint which has cost nearly £25 per room. There is a small carpet spread on the floor and against one of the walls are fixed two frameworks somewhat resembling iron bedsteads without legs, one on top of the other. Similarly on the opposite wall. Just opposite the entrance there is a wash-basin, over which there is a looking-glass, two bottles, and two tumblers for drinking water. Against the sides of each bed is attached a netting in brass frames which can be fixed up to the wall and again lowered down. In it the passengers put their watch and other important personal necessaries before retiring. Below the lower bedstead, there is room for storing the trunks and bags. The second class arrangements are on a similar plan, only the space is narrower and the furniture of an inferior quality. The shipping business is almost a monopoly of the English. Therefore in the ships constructed by other nations also, the food arrangements, as well as the regulation of the time, have to be made in the English fashion,

to suit the large number of English passengers in them. There are great differences between England, France, Germany, and Russia, as regards food and time. Just as in our country, there are great differences between Bengal, Northern India, the Mahratta country, and Gujarat. But these differences are very little observed in the ships, because there, owing to a majority of English-speaking passengers, everything is being moulded after the English fashion.

The Captain is the highest authority in a ship. Formerly the Captain used to rule in the ship in the high seas, punishing offenders, hanging pirates, and so forth. Now he does not go so far, but his word is law on board a ship. Under him are four officers (or malims, in Indian vernacular). Then come four or five engineers, the chief engineer ranking equally with an officer and getting first class food. And there are four or five steersmen (sukanis, in Indian vernacular) who hold the helm by turns — they are also Europeans. The rest, comprising the servants, the sailors, and the coalmen are all Indian, and all of them Mohammedans; Hindu sailors I saw only on the Bombay side, in P. & O. ships. The servants and the sailors are from Calcutta, while the coalmen belong to East Bengal; the cooks also are Catholic Christians of East Bengal. There are four sweepers besides, whose duty it is to clear out dirty water from the compartments, make arrangements for bath and keep the latrines etc. clean and tidy. The Mohammedan servants and lascars do not take food cooked by Christians; besides, every day there are preparations of ham or bacon on board the ship. But they manage to set up some sort of privacy for themselves. They have no objection to taking bread prepared in the ship's kitchen, and those servants from Calcutta who have received the "new light" of civilisation, do not observe any restrictions in matters of food. There are three messes for the men, one for the servants, one for the sailors, and one for the coalmen. The company provides each mess with a cook and a servant; every mess has got a separate place for cooking. A few Hindu passengers, were going from Calcutta to Colombo, and they used to do their cooking in one of these kitchens after the servants had finished theirs. The servants draw their own drinking water. On every deck two pumps are fixed against the wall, one on each side; the one is for sweet and the other for salt water, and the Mohammedans draw sweet water from this for their own use. Those Hindus who have no objection to taking pipe-water can very easily go on these ships to England and elsewhere, observing all their orthodoxy in matters of food and drink. They can get a kitchen, and drinking water free from the touch of any, and even the bathing water need not be touched by anybody else; all kinds of food such as rice, pulse, vegetables, fish, meat, milk, and ghee are available on the ship, especially on these ships where mostly Indians are employed, to whom rice, pulse, radish, cabbage, and potato, etc. have to be supplied every day. The one thing necessary is money. With money you can proceed anywhere alone, observing full

orthodoxy.

These Bengali servants are employed nowadays in almost all ships that ply between Calcutta and Europe. They are gradually forming into a class by themselves. Several nautical terms also are being coined by them; for instance, the captain is termed bariwallah (landlord); the officer malim; the mast 'dól'; a sail sarh; bring down aria; raise habish (heave), etc.

The body of lascars and coalmen have each a head who is called serang, under whom are two or three tindals, and under these come the lascars and coalmen.

The head of the khansamas, or "boys", is the butler, over whom there is a European steward. The lascars wash and cleanse the ship, throw or wind up the cables, set down or lift the boats and hoist or strike sail (though this last is a rare occurrence in steamships) and do similar kind of work. The Serang and the Tindal are always moving about watching them and assisting in their work. The coalmen keep the fire steady in the engine-room; their duty is to fight day and night with fire and to keep the engines neat and clean. And it is no easy task to keep that stupendous engine and all its parts neat and tidy. The Serang and his assistant (or "Brother", in the lascar's parlance) are from Calcutta and speak Bengali; they look gentlemanly and can read and write, having studied in school; they speak tolerable English also. The Serang has a son, thirteen years of age, who is a servant of the Captain and waits at his door as an orderly. Seeing these Bengali lascars, coalmen, servants, and boys at work, the feeling of despair with regard to my countrymen which I had, was much abated. How they are slowly developing their manhood, with a strong physique — how fearless, yet docile! That cringing, sycophant attitude common to "natives" even the sweepers do not possess — what a transformation!

The Indian lascars do excellent work without murmur, and go on a quarter of a European sailor's pay. This has dissatisfied many in England, especially as many Europeans are losing their living thereby. They sometimes set up an agitation. Having nothing else to say against them — for the lascars are smarter in work than Europeans — they only complain that in rough weather, when the ship is in danger, they lose all courage. Good God! In actual circumstances, that infamy is found to be baseless. In times of danger, the European sailors freely drink through fear and make themselves stupid and out of use. Indian sailors never take a drop of liquor in their life, and up to now, not one of them has ever shown cowardice in times of great danger. Does the Indian soldier display any cowardice on the field of battle? No, but they must have leaders. An English friend of mine, named General Strong, was in India during the Sepoy Mutiny. He used to tell many stories about it. One day, in the course of conversation, I asked him how it was that the sepoys who

had enough of guns, ammunition, and provisions at their disposal, and were also trained veterans, came to suffer such a defeat. He replied that the leaders among them, instead of advancing forward, only kept shouting from a safe position in the rear, "Fight on, brave lads", and so forth; but unless the commanding officer goes ahead and faces death, the rank and file will never fight with heart. It is the same in every branch. "A captain must sacrifice his head," they say. If you can lay down your life for a cause, then only you can be a leader. But we all want to be leaders without making the necessary sacrifice. And the result is zero — nobody listens to us!

However much you may parade your descent from Aryan ancestors and sing the glories of ancient India day and night, and however much you may be strutting in the pride of your birth, you, the upper classes of India, do you think you are alive? You are but mummies ten thousand years old! It is among those whom your ancestors despised as "walking carrion" that the little of vitality there is still in India is to be found; and it is you who are the real "walking corpses". Your houses, your furniture, look like museum specimens, so lifeless and antiquated they are; and even an eye-witness of your manners and customs, your movements and modes of life, is inclined to think that he is listening to a grandmother's tale! When, even after making a personal acquaintance with you, one returns home, one seems to think one had been to visit the paintings in an art gallery! In this world of Maya, you are the real illusions, the mystery, the real mirage in the desert, you, the upper classes of India! You represent the past tense, with all its varieties of form jumbled into one. That one still seems to see you at the present time, is nothing but a nightmare brought on by indigestion. You are the void, the unsubstantial nonentities of the future. Denizens of the dreamland, why are you loitering any longer? Fleshless and bloodless skeletons of the dead body of Past India you are, why do you not quickly reduce yourselves into dust and disappear in the air? Ay, on your bony fingers are some priceless rings of jewel, treasured up by your ancestors, and within the embrace of your stinking corpses are preserved a good many ancient treasure-chests. Up to now you have not had the opportunity to hand them over. Now under the British rule, in these days of free education and enlightenment, pass them on to your heirs, ay, do it as quickly as you can. You merge yourselves in the void and disappear, and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise — out of the peasants' cottage, grasping the plough; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts, and from markets. Let her emerge from groves and forests, from hills and mountains. These common people have suffered oppression for thousands of years — suffered it without murmur, and as a result have got wonderful fortitude. They have suffered eternal

misery, which has given them unflinching vitality. Living on a handful of grain, they can convulse the world; give them only half a piece of bread, and the whole world will not be big enough to contain their energy; they are endowed with the inexhaustible vitality of a Raktabija. (A demon, in the Durgâ-Saptashati, every drop of whose blood falling on the ground produced another demon like him.) And, besides, they have got the wonderful strength that comes of a pure and moral life, which is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Such peacefulness, such contentment, such love, such power of silent and incessant work, and such manifestation of lion's strength in times of action — where else will you find these! Skeletons of the Past, there, before you, are your successors, the India that is to be. Throw those treasure-chests of yours and those jewelled rings among them, as soon as you can; and you vanish into the air, and be seen no more — only keep your ears open. No sooner will you disappear than you will hear the inaugural shout of Renaissance India, ringing with the voice of a million thunders and reverberating throughout the universe, “Wah Guru Ki Fateh” — victory to the Guru!

Our ship is now in the Bay of Bengal, which is reported to be very deep. The little of it that was shallow has been silted up by the Ganga crumbling the Himalayas and washing down the North-Western Provinces (U.P.). That alluvial region is our Bengal. There is no indication of Bengal extending further beyond the Sunderbans. Some say that the Sunderbans were formerly the site of many villages and towns and were an elevated region. But many do not admit this now. However, the Sunderbans and the northern part of the Bay of Bengal have been the scene of many historic events. These were the rendezvous of the Portuguese pirates; the king of Arakan made repeated attempts to occupy this region, and here also the representative of the Mogul Emperor tried his best to punish the Portuguese pirates headed by Gonzalez; and this has frequently been the scene of many fights between the Christians, Moguls, Mugs, and Bengalis.

The Bay of Bengal is naturally rough, and to add to this, it is the monsoon season, so our ship is rolling heavily. But then, this is only the beginning and there is no knowing what is to follow, as we are going to Madras. The greater part of Southern India belongs now to the Madras Presidency. What is there in mere extent of land? Even a desert turns into heaven when it falls to the care of a fortunate owner. The unknown petty village of Madras, formerly called Chinnapattanam or Madraspattanam, was sold by the Raja of Chandragiri to a company of merchants. Then the English had their principal trade in Java, and Bantam was the centre of England's Asiatic trade. Madras and other English trade settlements in India were under the control of Bantam. Where is that Bantam now? And what development that Madras has made! It is not

whole truth to say that fortune favours the enterprising man; behind there must be the strength that comes of the Divine Mother. But I also admit that it is the enterprising men unto whom Mother gives strength.

Madras reminds one of a typical South Indian province; though even at the Jagannath Ghat of Calcutta, one can get a glimpse of the South by seeing the Orissa Brahmin with his border-shaven head and tufted hair, his variously painted forehead, the involuted slippers, in which only the toes may enter; that nose irritated with snuff and with that habit of covering the bodies of their children with sandalpaste prints. The Gujarati Brahmin, the jet-black Maharashtra Brahmin, and the exceptionally fair, cat-eyed square-headed Brahmin of Konkan — though all of them dress in the same way, and are all known as Deccanis, yet the typical southern Brahmin is to be found in Madras. That forehead covered over with the ample caste-mark of the Ramanuja sect — which to the uninitiated looks anything but sublime, (and whose imitation — the caste-mark of the Ramananda sect of Northern India — is hailed with many a facetious rhyme — and which completely throws into the shade the custom prevailing in Bengal among leaders of the Vaishnavite sect, of frightfully imprinting their whole body); that Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam speech of which you won't understand a single syllable even if you hear it spoken for six years and in which there is a play of all possible varieties of 'l' and 'd' sounds; that eating of rice with 'black-peppered dal soup' — each morsel of which sends a shiver through the heart (so pungent and so acid!); that addition of margosa leaves, oats, etc., by way of flavour, that taking of “rice-and-curd” etc., that bath with gingili oil rubbed over the body, and the frying of fish in the same oil — without these how can one conceive the southern country?

Again, the South has Hinduism alive during the Mohammedan rule and even for some time previous to it. It was in the South that Shankaracharya was born, among that caste who wear a tuft on the front of the head and eat food prepared with cocoanut oil: this was the country that produced Ramanuja: it was also the birthplace of Madhva Muni. Modern Hinduism owes its allegiance to these alone. The Vaishnavas of the Chaitanya sect form merely a recension of the Madhva sect; the religious reformers of the North such as Kabir, Dadu, Nanak, and Ramsanehi are all an echo of Shankaracharya; there you find the disciples of Ramanuja occupying Ayodhya and other places. These Brahmins of the South do not recognise those of the North as true Brahmins, nor accept them as disciples, and even to the other day would not admit them to Sannyasa. The people of Madras even now occupy the principal seats of religion. It was in the South that when people of North India were hiding themselves in woods and forests, giving up their treasures, their household deities, and wives and children, before the triumphant war-cry of Mohammedan invaders — the

suzerainty of the King of Vidyānagar was established firm as ever. In the South, again, was born the wonderful Sāyanāchārya — the strength of whose arms, vanquishing the Mohammedans, kept King Bukka on his throne, whose wise counsels gave stability to the Vidyānagar Kingdom, whose state-policy established lasting peace and prosperity in the Deccan, whose superhuman genius and extraordinary industry produced the commentaries on the whole Vedas — and the product of whose wonderful sacrifice, renunciation, and researches was the Vedānta treatise named Panchadashi — that Sannyasin Vidyāranya Muni or Sayana (According to some, Sayana, the commentator of the Vedas, was the brother of Vidyāranya Muni.) was born in this land. The Madras Presidency is the habitat of that Tamil race whose civilisation was the most ancient, and a branch of whom, called the Sumerians, spread a vast civilisation on the banks of the Euphrates in very ancient times; whose astrology, religious lore, morals, rites, etc., furnished the foundation for the Assyrian and Babylonian civilisations; and whose mythology was the source of the Christian Bible. Another branch of these Tamils spread from the Malabar coast and gave rise to the wonderful Egyptian civilisation, and the Aryans also are indebted to this race in many respects. Their colossal temples in the South proclaim the triumph of the Veera Shaiva and Veera Vaishnava sects. The great Vaishnava religion of India has also sprung from a Tamil Pariah — Shathakopa — “who was a dealer in winnowing-fans but was a Yogin all the while”. And the Tamil Alwars or devotees still command the respect of the whole Vaishnava sect. Even now the study of the Dvaita, Vishishtādvaita and Advaita systems of Vedānta is cultivated more in South India than anywhere else. Even now the thirst for religion is stronger here than in any other place.

In the night of the 24th June, our ship reached Madras. Getting up from bed in the morning, I found that we were within the enclosed space of the Madras harbour. Within the harbour the water was still, but without, towering waves were roaring, which occasionally dashing against the harbour-wall were shooting up fifteen or twenty feet high into the air and breaking in a mass of foam. In front lay the well-known Strand Road of Madras. Two European Police Inspectors, a Jamadar of Madras and a dozen Constables boarded our ship and told me with great courtesy that “natives” were not allowed to land on the shore, but the Europeans were. A “native”, whoever he might be, was of such dirty habits that there was every chance of his carrying plague germs about; but the Madrasians had asked for a special permit for me, which they might obtain. By degrees the friends of Madras began to come near our vessel on boats in small groups. As all contact was strictly forbidden, we could only speak from the ship, keeping some space between. I found all my friends — Alasinga, Biligiri, Narasimachary, Dr. Nanjunda Rao, Kidi, and others on the boats. Basketfuls of mangoes, plantains, cocoanuts, cooked rice-and-curd, and heaps of sweet and salt delicacies, etc. began to come in. Grad-

ually the crowd thickened — men, women, and children in boats everywhere. I found also Mr. Chamier, my English friend who had come out to Madras as a barrister-at-law. Ramakrishnananda and Nirbhayananda made some trips near to the ship. They insisted on staying on the boat the whole day in the hot sun, and I had to remonstrate with them, when they gave up the idea. And as the news of my not being permitted to land got abroad, the crowd of boats began to increase still more. I, too, began to feel exhaustion from leaning against the railings too long. Then I bade farewell to my Madras friends and entered my cabin. Alasinga got no opportunity to consult me about the Brahmavadin and the Madras work; so he was going to accompany me to Colombo. The ship left the harbour in the evening, when I heard a great shout, and peeping through the cabin-window, I found that about a thousand men, women, and children of Madras who had been sitting on the harbour-walls, gave this farewell shout when the ship started. On a joyous occasion the people of Madras also, like the Bengalis, make the peculiar sound with the tongue known as the *Hulu*.

It took us four days to go from Madras to Ceylon. That rising and heaving of waves which had commenced from the mouth of the Ganga began to increase as we advanced, and after we had left Madras it increased still more. The ship began to roll heavily, and the passengers felt terribly sea-sick, and so did the two Bengali boys. One of them was certain he was going to die, and we had to console him with great difficulty, assuring him that there was nothing to be afraid of, as it was quite a common experience and nobody ever died of it. The second class, again, was right over the screw of the ship. The two Bengali lads, being natives, were put into a cabin almost like a black-hole, where neither air nor light had any access. So the boys could not remain in the room, and on the deck the rolling was terrible. Again, when the prow of the ship settled into the hollow of a wave and the stern was pitched up, the screw rose clear out of the water and continued to wheel in the air, giving a tremendous jolting to the whole vessel. And the second class then shook as when a rat is seized by a cat and shaken.

However, this was the monsoon season. The more the ship would proceed westwards, the more gale and wind she would have to encounter. The people of Madras had given plenty of fruits, the greater part of which, and the sweets, and rice-and-curd, etc., I gave to the boys. Alasinga had hurriedly bought a ticket and boarded the ship barefooted. He says he wears shoes now and then. Ways and manners differ in different countries. In Europe it is a great shame on the part of ladies to show their feet, but they feel no delicacy in exposing half their bust. In our country, the head must be covered by all means, no matter if the rest of the body is well covered or not. Alasinga, the editor of the Brahmavadin, who is a Mysore Brahmin of the Ramanuja sect, having a fondness for Rasam (Pungent and sour dal soup.) with shaven head and forehead overspread with the

caste-mark of the Tengale sect, has brought with him with great care, as his provision for the voyage, two small bundles, in one of which there is fried flattened rice, and in another popped rice and fried peas! His idea is to live upon these during the voyage to Ceylon, so that his caste may remain intact. Alasinga had been to Ceylon once before, at which his caste-people tried to put him into some trouble, without success. That is a saving feature in the caste-system of India — if one's caste-people do not object, no one else has any right to say anything against him. And as for the South India castes — some consist of five hundred souls in all, some even hundred, or at most a thousand, and so circumscribed is their limit that for want of any other likely bride, one marries one's sister's daughter! When railways were first introduced in Mysore, the Brahmins who went from a distance to see the trains were outcasted! However, one rarely finds men like our Alasinga in this world — one so unselfish, so hard-working and devoted to his Guru, and such an obedient disciple is indeed very rare on earth. A South Indian by birth, with his head shaven so as to leave a tuft in the centre, bare-footed, and wearing the Dhoti, he got into the first class; he was strolling now and then on the deck and when hungry, was chewing some of the popped rice and peas! The ship's servants generally take all South Indians to be Chettis (merchants) and say that they have lots of money, but will not spend a bit of it on either dress or food! But the servants are of opinion that in our company Alasinga's purity as a Brahmin is getting contaminated. And it is true — for the South Indians lose much of their caste-rigours through contact with us.

Alasinga did not feel sea-sick. Brother T__ felt a little trouble at the beginning but is now all right. So the four days passed in various pleasant talks and gossip. In front of us is Colombo. Here we have Sinhal — Lanka. Shri Ramachandra crossed over to Lanka by building a bridge across and conquered Ravana, her King. Well, I have seen the bridge, and also, in the palace of the Setupati Maharaja of Ramnad, the stone slab on which Bhagavan Ramachandra installed his ancestor as Setupati for the first time. But the Buddhist Ceylonese of these sophisticated times will not admit this. They say that in their country there is not even a tradition to indicate it. But what matters their denial? Are not our "old books" authorities enough? Then again, they call their country Sinhal and will not term it Lanka (Means also "Chillies" in Bengal.) — and how should they? There is no piquancy either in their words, or in their work, or in their nature, or in their appearance! Wearing gowns, with plaited hair, and in that a big comb — quite a feminine appearance! Again, they have slim, short, and tender womanlike bodies. These — the descendants of Ravana and Kumbhakarna! Not a bit of it! Tradition says they have migrated from Bengal — and it was well done. That new type of people who are springing in Bengal — dressed like women, speaking in soft and delicate accents, walking with a timid, faltering gait,

unable to look any one in the face and from their very birth given to writing love poems and suffering the pangs of separation from their beloved — well, why do they not go to Ceylon, where they will find their fellows! Are the Government asleep? The other day they created a great row trying to capture some people in Puri. Why, in the metropolis itself are many worth seizing and packing off!

There was a very naughty Bengali Prince, named Vijaya Sinha, who quarrelled with his father, and getting together a few more fellows like him set sail in a ship, and finally came upon the Island of Ceylon. That country was then inhabited by an aboriginal tribe whose descendants are now known as the Bedouins. The aboriginal king received him very cordially and gave him his daughter in marriage. There he remained quietly for some time, when one night, conspiring with his wife, with a number of fellows, he took the king and his nobles by surprise and massacred them. Then Vijaya Sinha ascended the throne of Ceylon. But his wickedness did not end here. After a time he got tired of his aboriginal queen, and got more men and more girls from India and himself married a girl named Anurâdhâ, discarding his first aboriginal wife. Then he began to extirpate the whole race of the aborigines, almost all of whom were killed, leaving only a small remnant who are still to be met with in the forests and jungles. In this way Lanka came to be called Sinhal and became, to start with, colony of Bengali ruffians!

In course of time, under the regime of Emperor Asoka, his son Mahinda and his daughter Sanghamittâ, who had taken the vow of Sannyasa, came to the Island of Ceylon as religious missionaries. Reaching there, they found the people had grown quite barbarous, and, devoting their whole lives, they brought them back to civilisation as far as possible; they framed good moral laws for them and converted them to Buddhism. Soon the Ceylonese grew very staunch Buddhists, and built a great city in the centre of the island and called it Anuradhapuram. The sight of the remains of this city strikes one dumb even today — huge stupas, and dilapidated stone building extending for miles and miles are standing to this day; and a great part of it is overgrown with jungles which have not yet been cleared. Shaven-headed monks and nuns, with the begging bowl in hand and clothed in yellow robes, spread all over Ceylon. In places colossal temples were reared containing huge figure of Buddha in meditation, of Buddha preaching the Law, and of Buddha in a reclining posture — entering into Nirvana. And the Ceylonese, out of mischief, painted on the walls of the temples the supposed state of things in Purgatory — some are being thrashed by ghosts, some are being sawed, some burnt, some fried in hot oil, and some being flayed — altogether a hideous spectacle! Who could know that in this religion, which preached "noninjury as the highest virtue", there would be room for such things! Such is the case in China, too, so also in Japan. While

preaching non-killing so much in theory, they provide for such an array of punishments as curdles up one's blood to see. Once a thief broke into the house of a man of this non-killing type. The boys of the house caught hold of the thief and were giving him a sound beating. The master hearing a great row came out on the upper balcony and after making inquiries shouted out, "Cease from beating, my boys. Don't beat him. Non-injury is the highest virtue." The fraternity of junior non-killers stopped beating and asked the master what they were to do with the thief. The master ordered, "Put him in a bag, and throw him into water." The thief, much obliged at this humane dispensation, with folded hands said, "Oh! How great is the master's compassion!" I had heard that the Buddhists were very quiet people and equally tolerant of all religions. Buddhist preachers come to Calcutta and abuse us with choice epithets, although we offer them enough respect. Once I was preaching at Anuradhapuram among the Hindus — not Buddhists — and that in an open maidan, not on anybody's property — when a whole host of Buddhist monks and laymen, men and women, came out beating drums and cymbals and set up an awful uproar. The lecture had to stop, of course, and there was the imminent risk of bloodshed. With great difficulty I had to persuade the Hindus that we at any rate might practise a bit of non-injury, if they did not. Then the matter ended peacefully.

Gradually Tamilian Hindus from the north began slowly to migrate into Ceylon. The Buddhists, finding themselves in untoward circumstances, left their capital to establish a hill-station called Kandy, which, too, the Tamilians wrested from them in a short time and placed a Hindu king on the throne. Then came hordes of Europeans — the Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the Dutch. Lastly the English have made themselves kings. The royal family of Kandy have been sent to Tanjore, where they are living on pension and Mulagutanni Rasam.

In northern Ceylon there is a great majority of Hindus, while in the southern part, Buddhists and hybrid Eurasians of different types preponderate. The principal seat of the Buddhists is Colombo, the present capital, and that of the Hindus is Jaffna. The restrictions of caste are here much less than in India; the Buddhists have a few in marriage affairs, but none in matters of food, in which respect the Hindus observe some restrictions. All the butchers of Ceylon were formerly Buddhists; now the number is decreasing owing to the revival of Buddhism. Most of the Buddhists are now changing their anglicised titles for native ones. All the Hindu castes have mixed together and formed a single Hindu caste, in which, like the Punjabi Jats, one can marry a girl of any caste — even a European girl at that. The son goes into a temple, puts the sacred trilinear mark on the forehead, utters "Shiva, Shiva", and becomes a Hindu. The husband may be a Hindu, while the wife is a Christian. The Christian

puts some sacred ash on the forehead, utters "Namah Pârvatipatayé" (salutation to Shiva), and she straightway becomes a Hindu. This is what has made the Christian missionaries so cross with you. Since your coming into Ceylon, many Christians, putting sacred ash on their head and repeating "Salutation to Shiva", have become Hindus and gone back to their caste. Advaitavâda and Vira-Shaivavâda are the prevailing religions here. In place of the word "Hindu" one has to say "Shiva". The religious dance and Sankirtana which Shri Chaitanya introduced into Bengal had their origin in the South, among the Tamil race. The Tamil of Ceylon is pure Tamil and the religion of Ceylon is equally pure Tamil religion. That ecstatic chant of a hundred thousand men, and their singing of devotional hymns to Shiva, the noise of a thousand Mridangas (A kind of Indian drum.) with the metallic sound of big cymbals, and the frenzied dance of these ash-covered, red-eyed athletic Tamilians with stout rosaries of Rudrâksha beads on their neck, looking just like the great devotee, Hanuman — you can form no idea of these, unless you personally see the phenomenon.

Our Colombo friends had procured a permit for our landing, so we landed and met our friends there. Sir Coomara Swami is the foremost man among the Hindus: his wife is an English lady, and his son is barefooted and wears the sacred ashes on his forehead. Mr. Arunachalam and other friends came to meet me. After a long time I partook of Mulagutanni and the king-cocoanut. They put some green cocoanuts into my cabin. I met Mrs. Higgins and visited her boarding school for Buddhist girls. I also visited the monastery and school of our old acquaintance, the Countess of Canovara. The Countess' house is more spacious and furnished than Mrs. Higgins's. The Countess has invested her own money, whereas Mrs. Higgins has collected the money by begging. The Countess herself wears a Gerua cloth after the mode of the Bengali Sari. The Ceylonese Buddhists have taken a great fancy to this fashion, I found. I noticed carriage after carriage of women, all wearing the same Bengali Sari.

The principal place of pilgrimage for the Buddhists is the Dalada Maligawa or Tooth-temple at Kandy, which contains a tooth of Lord Buddha. The Ceylonese say it was at first in the Jagannath Temple at Puri and after many vicissitudes reached Ceylon, where also there was no little trouble over it. Now it is lying safe. The Ceylonese have kept good historical records of themselves, not like those of ours — merely cock and bull stories. And the Buddhist scriptures also are well preserved here in the ancient Magadhi dialect. From here the Buddhist religion spread to Burma, Siam, and other countries. The Ceylonese Buddhists recognise only Shâkyamuni mentioned in their scriptures and try to follow his precepts. They do not, like the people of Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Ladak, China, and Japan, worship Shiva and do not know the worship with mystical Mantras of such goddesses as Târâ Devi and so forth. But they believe in possession by

spirits and things of that sort. The Buddhists have now split into two schools, the Northern and the Southern; the Northern school calls itself the Mahâyâna, and the Southern school, comprising the Ceylonese, Burmese, Siamese, etc., Hinayâna. The Mahâyâna branch worships Buddha in name only; their real worship is of Tara Devi and of Avalokiteshwara (whom the Japanese, Chinese and Koreans call Wanyin); and there is much use of various cryptic rites and Mantras. The Tibetans are the real demons of Shiva. They all worship Hindu gods, play the Damaru, (A tabor shaped like an hour-glass.) keep human skulls, blow horns made of the bones of dead monks, are much given to wine and meat, and are always exorcising evil spirits and curing diseases by means of mystical incantations. In China and Japan, on the walls of all the temples I have observed various monosyllabic Mantras written in big gilt letters, which approach the Bengali characters so much that you can easily make out the resemblance.

Alasinga returned to Madras from Colombo, and we also got on board our ship, with presents of some lemons from the orchard of Coomara Swami, some king-cocoanuts, and two bottles of syrup, etc. (The god Kârtikeya has various names, such as Subrahmanya, Kamâra Swâmi etc. In the South the worship of this god is much in vogue; they call Kartikeya an incarnation of the sacred formula "Om".)

The ship left Colombo on the morning of 25th June. Now we have to encounter full monsoon conditions. The more our ship is advancing, the more is the storm increasing and the louder is the wind howling — there is incessant rain, and enveloping darkness; huge waves are dashing on the ship's deck with a terrible noise, so that it is impossible to stay on the deck. The dining table has been divided into small squares by means of wood partitions, placed lengthwise and breadthwise, called fiddle, out of which the food articles are jumping up. The ship is creaking, as if it were going to break to pieces. The Captain says, "Well, this year's monsoon seems to be unusually rough". The Captain is a very interesting person who spent many years in the Chinese Sea and Indian Ocean; a very entertaining fellow, very clever in telling cock and bull stories. Numerous stories of pirates — how Chinese coolies used to kill ship's officers, loot the whole ship and escape — and other stories of that ilk he is narrating. And there is nothing else to do, for reading or writing is out of the question in such heavy rolling. It is extremely difficult to sit inside the cabin; the window has been shut for fear of the waves getting in. One day Brother T__ kept it slightly ajar and a fragment of a wave entered and flooded the whole cabin! And who can describe the heaving and tossing on the deck! Amid such conditions, you must remember, the work for your Udbodhan is going on to a certain extent.

There are two Christian missionary passengers on our

ship, one of whom is an American, with a family — a very good man, named Bogesh. He has been married seven years, and his children number half-a-dozen. The servants call it God's special grace — though the children perhaps, feel differently. Spreading a shabby bed on the deck, Mrs. Bogesh makes all the children lie on it and goes away. They make themselves dirty and roll on the deck, crying aloud. The passengers on the deck are always nervous and cannot walk about on the deck, lest they might tread on any of Bogesh's children. Making the youngest baby lie in a square basket with high sides, Mr. and Mrs. Bogesh sit in a corner for four hours, huddled together. One finds it hard to appreciate your European civilisation. If we rinse our mouth or wash our teeth in public — they say it is barbarous, these things ought to be done in private. All right, but I put it to you, if it is not also decent to avoid such acts as the one above referred to, in public. And you run after this civilisation! However you cannot understand what good Protestantism has done to North Europe, unless you see the Protestant clergy. If then ten crores of English people die, and only the priests survive, in twenty years another ten crores will be raised!

Owing to the rolling of the ship most of the passengers are suffering from headache. A little girl named Tootle is accompanying her father; she has lost her mother. Our Nivedita has become a mother to Tootle and Bogesh's children. Tootle has been brought up in Mysore with her father who is a planter. I asked her, "Tootle, how are you?" She replied, "This Bungalow is not good and rolls very much, which makes me sick." To her every house is a bungalow. One sickly child of Bogesh suffers specially from want of care; the poor thing is rolling on the wooden deck the whole day. The old Captain now and then comes out of his cabin and feeds him with some soup with a spoon, and pointing to his slender legs says, "What a sickly child — how sadly neglected!"

Many desire eternal happiness. But if happiness were eternal, misery also would be eternal, just think of that. Could we in that case have ever reached Aden! Fortunately neither happiness nor misery is eternal; therefore in spite of our six days' journey being prolonged into fourteen days, and our buffeting terrible wind and rain night and day, we at last did reach Aden. The more we were ahead of Colombo, the more the storm and rain increased, the sky became a lake, and the wind and the waves grew fierce; and it was almost impossible for the ship to proceed, breasting such wind and wave, and her speed was halved. Near the island of Socotra, the monsoon was at its worst. The Captain remarked that this was the centre of the monsoon, and that if we could pass this, we should gradually reach calmer waters. And so we did. And this nightmare also ended.

On the evening of the 8th, we reached Aden. No one, white or black, is allowed to land, neither is any cargo

allowed into the ship. And there are not many things worth seeing here. You have only barren stretches of sand, bearing some resemblance to Rajputana, and treeless, verdureless hills. In between the hills there are forts and on the top are the soldiers' barracks. In front are the hotels and shops arranged in the form of a crescent, which are discernible from the ship. Many ships are lying in anchor. One English, and one German man-of-war came in; the rest are either cargo or passenger ships. I had visited the town last time. Behind the hills are the native barracks and the bazar. A few miles from there, there are big pits dug into the sides of the hills, where the rain-water accumulates. Formerly that was the only source of water. Now by means of an apparatus they distil the sea water and get good fresh water, which, however, is very dear. Aden is just like an Indian town — with its large percentage of Indian civil and military population. There are a good many Parsee shopkeepers and Sindhi merchants. Aden is a very ancient place — the Roman Emperor Constantius sent a batch of missionaries here to preach Christianity. Then the Arabs rose and killed these Christians, whereupon the Roman Emperor asked the King of Abyssinia — long a Christian country — to punish them. The Abyssinian King sent an army and severely punished the Arabs of Aden. Afterwards Aden passed into the hands of the Samanidi Kings of Persia. It is they who are reputed to have first excavated those caves for the accumulation of water. Then, after the rise of Mohammedanism, Aden passed into the hands of the Arabs. After a certain time, a Portuguese general made ineffectual attempts to capture the place. Then the Sultan of Turkey made the place a naval base with the object of expelling the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean.

Again it passed into the possession of the neighbouring Arabian ruler. Afterwards, the English purchased it and they built the present town. Now the warships of all the powerful nations are cruising all over the world, and everyone wants to have a voice in every trouble that arises in any part of it. Every nation wants to safeguard its supremacy, political interest, and commerce. Hence they are in need of coal every now and then. As it would not be possible to get a supply of coal from an enemy country in times of war, every Power wants to have a coaling station of its own. The best sites have been already occupied by the English; the French have come in for the next best; and after them the other Powers of Europe have secured, and are securing, sites for themselves either by force or by purchase, or by friendly overture. The Suez Canal is now the link between Europe and Asia, and it is under the control of the French. Consequently the English have made their position very strong at Aden, and the other Powers also have each made a base for themselves along the Red Sea. Sometimes this rage for land brings disastrous consequences. Italy, trodden under foreign feet for seven centuries, stood on her legs after enormous difficulties. But immediately after doing this, she began to think a lot of herself and became ambitious of foreign conquest. In Europe no nation can seize a bit of land be-

longing to another; for all the Powers would unite to crush the usurper. In Asia also, the big Powers — the English, Russians, French, and Dutch — have left little space unoccupied. Now there remained only a few bits of Africa, and thither Italy directed her attention. First she tried in North Africa, where she met with opposition from the French and desisted. Then the English gave her a piece of land on the Red Sea, with the ulterior object that from that centre Italy might absorb the Abyssinian territory. Italy, too, came on with an army. But the Abyssinian King, Manalik, gave her such a beating that Italy found it difficult to save herself by fleeing from Africa. Besides, Russian and Abyssinian Christianity being, as is alleged, very much alike, the Russian Czar is an ally of the Abyssinians at bottom.

Well, our ship is now passing through the Red Sea. The missionary said, "This is the Red Sea, which the Jewish leader Moses crossed on foot with his followers. And the army which the Egyptian King Pharaoh sent for their capture was drowned in the sea, the wheels of their war-chariots having stuck in the mud" — like Karna's in the Mahābhārata story. He further said that this could now be proved by modern scientific reasons. Nowadays in every country it has become a fashion to support the miracles of religion by scientific argument. My friend, if these phenomena were the outcome of natural forces, where then is there room for their intervention of your god "Yave"? A great dilemma! — If they are opposed to science, those miracles are mere myths, and your religion is false. And even if they are borne out by science, the glory of your god is superfluous, and they are just like any other natural phenomena. To this, Priest Bogesh replied, "I do not know all the issues involved in it, I simply believe." This is all right — one can tolerate that. But then there is a party of men, who are very clear in criticising others' views and bringing forward arguments against them, but where they themselves are concerned, they simply say, "I only believe, my mind testifies to their veracity." These are simply unbearable. Pooh! What weight has their intellect? Absolutely nothing! They are very quick to label the religious beliefs of others as superstitious, especially those which have been condemned by the Europeans, while in their own case they concoct some fantastic notions of Godhead and are beside themselves with emotions over them.

The ship is steadily sailing north. The borders of this Red Sea were a great centre of ancient civilisation. There, on the other side, are the deserts of Arabia, and on this — Egypt. This is that ancient Egypt. Thousands of years ago, these Egyptians starting from Punt (probably Malabar) crossed the Red Sea, and steadily extended their kingdom till they reached Egypt. Wonderful was the expansion of their power, their territory, and their civilisation. The Greeks were the disciples of these. The wonderful mausoleums of their kings, the Pyramids, with figures of the Sphinx, and even their dead bodies are

preserved to this day. Here lived the ancient Egyptian peoples, with curling hair and ear-rings, and wearing snow-white dhotis without one end being tucked up behind. This is Egypt — the memorable stage where the Hyksos, the Pharaohs, the Persian Emperors, Alexander the Great, and the Ptolemies, and the Roman and Arab conquerors played their part. So many centuries ago, they left their history inscribed in great detail in hieroglyphic characters on papyrus paper, on stone slabs, and on the sides of earthen vessels.

This is the land where Isis was worshipped and Horus flourished. According to these ancient Egyptians, when a man dies, his subtle body moves about; but any injury done to the dead body affects the subtle body, and the destruction of the former means the total annihilation of the latter. Hence they took so much pains to preserve the corpse. Hence the pyramids of the kings and emperors. What devices, how much labour — alas, all in vain! Lured by the treasures, robbers have dug into the pyramids, and penetrating the mysteries of the labyrinths, have stolen the royal bodies. Not now — it was the work of the ancient Egyptians themselves. Some five or six centuries ago, these desiccated mummies the Jewish and Arab physicians looked upon as possessing great medicinal virtues and prescribed them for patients all over Europe. To this day, perhaps, it is the genuine “Mumia” of Unani and Hakimi methods of treatment!

Emperor Asoka sent preachers to this Egypt during the reign of the Ptolemy dynasty. They used to preach religion, cure diseases, live on vegetable food, lead celibate lives, and make Sannyasin disciples. They came to found many sects — the Therapeutae, Essenes, Manichaeans, and the like; from which modern Christianity has sprung. It was Egypt that became, during the Ptolemaic rule, the nursery of all learning. Here was that city of Alexandria, famous all over the world for its university, its library, and its literati — that Alexandria which, falling into the hands of illiterate, bigoted, and vulgar Christians suffered destruction, with its library burnt to ashes and learning stamped out! Finally, the Christians killed the lady servant, Hypatia, subjected her dead body to all sorts of abominable insult, and dragged it through the streets, till every bit of flesh was removed from the bones!

And to the south lie the deserts of Arabia — the mother of heroes. Have you ever seen a Bedouin Arab, with a cloak on, and a big kerchief tied on his head with a bunch of woollen strings? — That gait, that pose of standing, and that look, you will find in no other country. From head to foot emanates the freedom of open unconfined desert air — there you have the Arab. When the bigotry of the Christians and the barbarity of the Goths extinguished the ancient Greek and Roman civilisation, when Persia was trying to hide her internal putrefaction by adding layer after layer of gold-leaf upon

it, when, in India, the sun of splendour of Pataliputra and Ujjain had set, leaving some illiterate, tyrant kings to rule over her, and the corruptions of dreadful obscenities and the worship of lust festering within — when such was the state of the world, this insignificant, semi-brutal Arab race spread like lightning over its surface.

There you see a steamer coming from Mecca, with a cargo of pilgrims; behold — the Turk in European dress, the Egyptian in half-European costume, the Syrian Mus-salman in Iranian attire, and the real Arab wearing a cloth reaching down the knee. Before the time of Mohammed, it was the custom to circumambulate round the Cabba temple in a state of nudity; since his time they have to wrap round a cloth. It is for this reason, that our Mohammedans unloose the strings of their trousers, and let their cloth hang down to the feet. Gone are those days for the Arabs. A continual influx of Kaffir, Sidi, and Abyssinian blood has changed their physique, energy, and all — the Arab of the desert is completely shorn of his former glory. Those that live in the north are peaceful citizens of the Turkish State. But the Christian subjects of the Sultan hate the Turks and love the Arabs. They say that the Arabs are amenable to education, become gentlemen, and are not so troublesome, while the real Turks oppress the Christians very much.

Though the desert is very hot, that heat is not enervating. There is no further trouble if you cover your body and head against it. Dry heat is not only not enervating, on the contrary it has a marked toning effect. The people of Rajputana, Arabia, and Africa are illustrations of this. In certain districts of Marwar, men, cattle, horses, and all are strong and of great stature. It is a joy to look at the Arabs and Sidis. Where the heat is moist, as in Bengal, the body is very much enervated, and every animal is weak.

The very name of the Red Sea strikes terror into the hearts of the passengers — it is so dreadfully hot, specially in summer, as it is now. Everyone is seated on the deck and recounts a story of some terrible accident, according to his knowledge. The Captain has outbidden them all. He says that a few days ago a Chinese man-of-war was passing through the Red Sea, and her Captain and eight sailors who worked in the coal-room died of heat.

Indeed, those who work in the coal-room have in the first place to stand in a pit of fire, and then there is the terrible heat of the Red Sea. Sometimes they run mad, rush up to the deck, plunge into the sea, and are drowned; or sometimes they die of heat in the engine-room itself.

These stories were enough to throw us out of our wits, nearly. But fortunately we did not experience so much heat. The breeze, instead of being a south-wind, continued to blow from the north, and it was the cool

breeze of the Mediterranean.

On the 14th of July the steamer cleared the Red Sea and reached Suez. In front is the Suez Canal. The steamer has cargo for Suez. Well, Egypt is now under a visitation of plague, and possibly we are also carrying its germs. So there is the risk of contagion on both sides. Compared with the precautions taken here against mutual contact, well, those of our country are as nothing. The goods have to be unloaded, but the coolie of Suez must not touch the ship. It meant a good deal of extra trouble for the ship's sailors. They have to serve as coolies, lift up the cargo by means of cranes and drop it, without touching, on the Suez boats which carry it ashore. The agent of the Company has come near the ship in a small launch, but he is not allowed to board her. From the launch he is talking with the Captain who is in his ship. You must know this is not India, where the white man is beyond the plague regulations and all — here is the beginning of Europe. And all this precaution is taken lest the rat-borne plague finds an entrance into this heaven. The incubation period of plague-germs is ten days; hence the quarantine for ten days. We have however passed that period, so the disaster has been averted for us. But we shall be quarantined for ten days more if we but touch any Egyptian. In that case no passengers will be landed either at Naples or at Marseilles. Therefore every kind of work is being done from a distance, free from contact. Consequently it will take them the whole day to unload the cargo in this slow process. The ship can easily cross the Canal in the night, if she be provided with a searchlight; but if that is to be fitted, the Suez people will have to touch the ship — there, you have ten days' quarantine. She is therefore not to start in the night, and we must remain as we are in this Suez harbour for twenty-four hours! This is a very beautiful natural harbour, surrounded almost on three sides by sandy mounds and hillocks, and the water also is very deep. There are innumerable fish and sharks swimming in it. Nowhere else on earth are sharks in such plenty as in this port and in the port of Sydney, in Australia — they are ready to swallow men at the slightest opportunity! Nobody dares to descend into the water. Men, too, on their part are dead against the snakes and sharks and never let slip an opportunity to kill them.

In the morning, even before breakfast, we came to learn that big sharks were moving about behind the ship. I had never before an opportunity to see live sharks — the last time I came, the ship called at Suez for only a very short time, and that too, close to the town. As soon as we heard of the sharks, we hastened to the spot. The second class was at the stern of the ship, and from its deck, crowds of men, women and children were leaning over the railings to see the sharks. But our friends, the sharks, had moved off a little when we appeared on the spot, which damped our spirit very much. But we noticed that shoals

of a kind of fish with bill-like heads were swimming in the water, and there was a species of very tiny fish in great abundance. Now and then a big fish, greatly resembling the hilsa, was flitting like an arrow hither and thither. I thought, he might be a young shark, but on inquiry I found it was not. Bonito was his name. Of course I had formerly read of him, and this also I had read that he was imported into Bengal from the Maldives as dried fish, on big-sized boats. It was also a matter of report that his meat was red and very tasteful. And we were now glad to see his energy and speed. Such a large fish was flitting through the water like an arrow, and in that glassy sea-water every movement of his body was noticeable. We were thus watching the bonito's circuits and the restless movements of the tiny fish for twenty minutes of half an hour. Half an hour — three quarters — we were almost tired of it, when somebody announced — there he was. About a dozen people shouted, "There he is coming!" Casting my eyes I found that at some distance a huge black thing was moving towards us, six or seven inches below the surface of the water. Gradually the thing approached nearer and nearer. The huge flat head was visible; now massive his movement, there was nothing of the bonito's flitting in it. But once he turned his head, a big circuit was made. A gigantic fish; on he comes in a solemn gait, while in front of him are one or two small fish, and a number of tiny ones are playing on his back and all about his body. Some of them are holding fast on to his neck. He is your shark with retinue and followers. The fish which are preceding him are called the pilot fish. Their duty is to show the shark his prey, and perhaps be favoured with crumbs of his meal. But as one looks at the terrible gaping jaws of the shark, one doubts whether they succeed much in this latter respect. The fish which are moving about the shark and climbing on his back, are the "suckers". About their chest there is a flat, round portion, nearly four by two inches, which is furrowed and grooved, like the rubber soles of many English shoes. That portion the fish applies to the shark's body and sticks to it; that makes them appear as if riding on the shark's body and back. They are supposed to live on the worms etc. that grow on the shark's body. The shark must always have his retinue of these two classes of fish. And he never injures them, considering them perhaps as his followers and companions. One of these fish was caught with a small hook and line. Someone slightly pressed the sole of his shoe against its chest and when he raised his foot, it too was found to adhere to it. In the same way it sticks to the body of the shark.

The second class passengers have got their mettle highly roused. One of them is a military man and his enthusiasm knows no bounds. Rummaging the ship they found out a terrible hook — it outvied the hooks that are used in Bengal for recovering water-pots that have accidentally dropped into wells. To this they tightly fastened about two pounds of meat with a strong cord, and a stout cable was tied to it. About six feet from it, a big piece of wood was attached to act as a float. Then the hook with the float

was dropped in the water. Below the ship a police boat was keeping guard ever since we came, lest there might be any contact between us and the people ashore. On this boat there were two men comfortably asleep, which made them much despised in the eyes of the passengers. At this moment they turned out to be great friends. Roused by the tremendous shouts, our friend, the Arab, rubbed his eyes and stood up. He was preparing to tuck up his dress, imagining some trouble was at hand, when he came to understand that so much shouting was nothing more than a request to him to remove the beam that was meant as a float to catch the shark, along with the hook, to a short distance. Then he breathed a sigh of relief, and grinning from ear to ear he managed to push the float to some distance by means of a pole. While we in eagerness stood on tiptoe, leaning over the railing, and anxiously waited for the shark — “watching his advent with restless eyes”; (From Jayadeva, the famous Sanskrit Poet of Bengal.) and as is always the case with those for whom somebody may be waiting with suspense, we suffered a similar fate — in other words, “the Beloved did not turn up”. But all miseries have an end, and suddenly about a hundred yards from the ship, something of the shape of a water-carrier’s leather bag, but much larger, appeared above the surface of the water, and immediately there was the hue and cry, “There is the shark!” “Silence, you boys and girls! — the shark may run off”. — “Hallo, you people there, why don't you doff your white hats for a while? — the shark may shy”. — While shouts like these were reaching the ear, the shark, denizen of the salt sea, rushed close by, like a boat under canvas, with a view to doing justice to the lump of pork attached to the hook. Seven or eight feet more and the shark’s jaws would touch the bait. But that massive tail moved a little, and the straight course was transformed into a curve. Alas, the shark has made off! Again the tail slightly moved, and the gigantic body turned and faced the hook. Again he is rushing on — gaping, there, he is about to snap at the bait! Again the cursed tail moved, and the shark wheeled his body off to a distance. Again he is taking a circuit and coming on, he is gaping again; look now, he has put the bait into his jaws, there, he is tilting on his side; yes, he has swallowed the bait — pull, pull, forty or fifty pull together, pull on with all your might! What tremendous strength the fish has, what struggles he makes, how widely he gapes! Pull, pull! He is about to come above the surface, there he is turning in the water, and again turning on his side, pull, pull! Alas, he has extricated himself from the bait! The shark has fled. Indeed, what fussy people you all are! You could not wait to give him some time to swallow the bait! And you were impatient enough to pull so soon as he turned on his side! However, it is no use crying over spilt milk. The shark was rid of the hook and made a clean run ahead. Whether he taught the pilot fish a good lesson, we have got no information, but the fact was that the shark was clean off. And he was tiger-like, having black stripes over his body like a tiger. However, the “Tiger”, with a view to avoiding the dangerous vicinity of the hook, dis-

appeared, with his retinue of pilots and suckers.

But there is no need of giving up hopes altogether, for there, just by the side of the retreating “Tiger” is coming on another, a huge flat-headed creature! Alas, sharks have no language! Otherwise “Tiger” would surely have made an open breast of his secret to the newcomer and thus warned him. He would certainly have said, “Hallo, my friend, beware there is a new creature come over there, whose flesh is very tasteful and savoury, but what hard bones! Well, I have been born and brought up as a shark these many years and have devoured lots of animals — living, dead, and half-dead, and filled my stomach with lots of bones, bricks, and stones, and wooden stuff; but compared with these bones they are as butter, I tell you. Look, what has become of my teeth and jaws”. And along with this he would certainly have shown to the newcomer those gaping jaws reaching almost to half his body. And the other too, with characteristic experience of maturer years, would have prescribed for him one or other of such infallible marine remedies as the bile of one fish, the spleen of another, the cooling broth of oysters, and so forth. But since nothing of the kind took place, we must conclude that either the sharks are sadly in want of a language, or that they may have one, but it is impossible to talk under water; therefore until some characters fit for the sharks are discovered, it is impossible to use that language. Or it may be that “Tiger”, mixing too much in human company, has imbibed a bit of human disposition too, and therefore, instead of giving out the real truth, asked “Flat-head”, with a smile, if he was doing well, and bade him good-bye: “Shall I alone be befooled?”

Then Bengali poem has it, “First goes Bhagiratha blowing his conch, then comes Ganga bringing up the rear” etc. Well, of course, no blowing of the conch is heard, but first are going the pilot fish, and behind them comes “Flat-head”, moving his massive body, while round about him dance the suckers. Ah, who can resist such a tempting bait? For a space of five yards on all sides, the surface of the sea is glossy with a film of fat, and it is for “Flat-head” himself to say how far the fragrance thereof has spread. Besides, what a spectacle it is! White, and red, and yellow — all in one place! It was real English pork, tied round a huge black hook, heaving under water most temptingly!

Silence now, every one — don't move about, and see that you don't be too hasty. But take care to keep close to the cable. There, he is moving near the hook, and examining the bait, putting it in his jaws! Let him do so. Hush — now he has turned on his side — look, he is swallowing it whole, silence — give him time to do it. Then, as “Flat-head”, turning on his side, had leisurely swallowed the bait, and was about to depart, immediately there was the pull behind! “Flat-head”, astonished, jerked his head and wanted to throw the bait off, but it made matters worse! The hook pierced him, and from above, men, young and old, began to pull violently at

the cable. Look, the head of the shark is above water — pull, brothers, pull! There, about half the shark's body is above water! Oh, what jaws! It is all jaws and throat, it seems! Pull on! Ah, the whole of it is clear of water. There, the hook has pierced his jaws through and through — pull on! Wait, wait! — Hallo, you Arab Police boatman, will you tie a string round his tail? — He is such a huge monster that it is difficult to haul him up otherwise. Take care, brother, a blow from that tail is enough to fracture a horse's leg! Pull on — Oh, how very heavy! Good God, what have we here! Indeed, what is it that hangs down from under the shark's belly? Are they not the entrails! His own weight has forced them out! All right, cut them off, and let them drop into the sea, that will make the weight lighter. Pull on, brothers! Oh, it is a fountain of blood! No, there is no use trying to save the clothes. Pull, he is almost within reach. Now, set him on the deck; take care, brother, be very careful, if he but charges on anybody, he will bite off a whole arm! And beware of that tail! Now, slacken the rope — thud! Lord! What a big shark! And with what a thud he fell on board the ship! Well, one cannot be too careful — strike his head with that beam — hallo, military man, you are a soldier, you are the man to do it. — "Quite so". The military passenger, with body and clothes splashed with blood, raised the beam and began to land heavy blows on the shark's head. And the women went on shrieking, "Oh dear! How cruel! Don't kill him!" and so forth, but never stopped seeing the spectacle. Let that gruesome scene end here. How the shark's belly was ripped open, how a torrent of blood flowed, how the monster continued to shake and move for a long time even after his entrails and heart had been taken off and his body dismembered, how from his stomach a heap of bones, skin, flesh, and wood, etc. came out — let all these topics go. Suffice it to say, that I had my meal almost spoiled that day — everything smelt of that shark.

This Suez Canal is a triumph of canal engineering. It was dug by a French engineer, Ferdinand de Lesseps. By connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, it has greatly facilitated the commerce between Europe and India.

Of all the causes which have worked for the present state of human civilisation from the ancient times, the commerce of India is perhaps the most important. From time immemorial India has beaten all other countries in point of fertility and commercial industries. Up till a century ago, the whole of the world's demand for cotton cloth, cotton, jute, indigo, lac, rice, diamonds, and pearls, etc. used to be supplied from India. Moreover, no other country could produce such excellent silk and woollen fabrics, like the kincob etc. as India. Again, India has been the land of various spices such as cloves, cardamom, pepper, nutmeg, and mace. Naturally, therefore, from very ancient times, whatever country became civilised at any particular epoch, depended upon India for those commodities. This trade used to follow two main routes

— one was through land, via Afghanistan and Persia, and the other was by sea — through the Red Sea. After his conquest of Persia, Alexander the Great despatched a general named Niarchus to explore a sea-route, passing by the mouth of the Indus, across the ocean, and through the Red Sea. Most people are ignorant of the extent to which the opulence of ancient countries like Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome depended on Indian commerce. After the downfall of Rome, Baghdad in Mohammedan territory, and Venice and Genoa in Italy, became the chief Western marts of Indian commerce. And when the Turks made themselves masters of the Roman Empire and closed the trade-route to India for the Italians, then Christopher Columbus (Christobal Colon), a Spaniard or Genoese, tried to explore a new route to India across the Atlantic, which resulted in the discovery of the American continent. Even after reaching America, Columbus could not get rid of the delusion that it was India. It is therefore that the aborigines of America are to this day designated as Indians. In the Vedas we find both names, "Sindhu" and "Indu", for the Indus; the Persians transformed them into "Hindu", and the Greeks into "Indus", whence we derived the words "India" and "Indian". With the rise of Mohammedanism the word "Hindu" became degraded and meant "a dark-skinned fellow", as is the case with the word "native" now.

The Portuguese, in the meantime, discovered a new route to India, doubling Africa. The fortune of India smiled on Portugal — then came the turn of the French, the Dutch, the Danes, and the English. Indian commerce, Indian revenue and all are now in the possession of the English; it is therefore that they are the foremost of all nations now. But now, Indian products are being grown in countries like America and elsewhere, even better than in India, and she has therefore lost something of her prestige. This the Europeans are unwilling to admit. That India, the India of "natives", is the chief means and resources of their wealth and civilisation, is a fact which they refuse to admit, or even understand. We too, on our part, must not cease to bring it home to them.

Just weigh the matter in your mind. Those uncared-for lower classes of India — the peasants and weavers and the rest, who have been conquered by foreigners and are looked down upon by their own people — it is they who from time immemorial have been working silently, without even getting the remuneration of their labours! But what great changes are taking place slowly, all over the world, in pursuance of nature's law! Countries, civilisations, and supremacy are undergoing revolutions. Ye labouring classes of India, as a result of your silent, constant labours Babylon, Persia, Alexandria, Greece, Rome, Venice, Genoa, Baghdad, Samarqand, Spain, Portugal, France, Denmark, Holland, and England have successively attained supremacy and eminence! And you? — Well, who cares to think of you! My dear

Swami, your ancestors wrote a few philosophical works, penned a dozen or so epics, or built a number of temples — that is all, and you rend the skies with triumphal shouts; while those whose heart's blood has contributed to all the progress that has been made in the world — well, who cares to praise them? The world-conquering heroes of spirituality, war, and poetry are in the eyes of all, and they have received the homage of mankind. But where nobody looks, no one gives a word of encouragement, where everybody hates — that living amid such circumstances and displaying boundless patience, infinite love, and dauntless practicality, our proletariat are doing their duty in their homes day and night, without the slightest murmur — well, is there no heroism in this? Many turn out to be heroes when they have got some great task to perform. Even a coward easily gives up his life, and the most selfish man behaves disinterestedly, when there is a multitude to cheer them on; but blessed indeed is he who manifests the same unselfishness and devotion to duty in the smallest of acts, unnoticed by all — and it is you who are actually doing this ye ever-trampled labouring classes of India! I bow to you.

This Suez Canal is also a thing of remote antiquity. During the reign of the Pharaohs in Egypt, a number of lagoons were connected with one another by a channel and formed a canal touching both seas. During the rule of the Roman Empire in Egypt also, attempts were made now and then to keep that channel open. Then the Mohammedan General Amru, after his conquest of Egypt, dug out the sand and changed certain features of it, so that it became almost transformed.

After that nobody paid much attention to it. The present canal was excavated by Khedive Ismail of Egypt, the Viceroy of the Sultan of Turkey, according to the advice of the French, and mostly through French capital. The difficulty with this canal is that owing to its running through a desert, it again and again becomes filled with sand. Only one good-sized merchant-ship can pass through it at a time, and it is said that very big men-of-war or merchantmen can never pass through it. Now, with a view to preventing incoming and outgoing ships from colliding against each other, the whole canal has been divided into a number of sections, and at both ends of each section there are open spaces broad enough for two or three ships to lie at anchor together. The Head Office is at the entrance to the Mediterranean, and there are stations in every section like railway stations. As soon as a ship enters the canal, messages are continually wired to this Head Office, where reports of how many ships are coming in and how many are going out, with their position at particular moments are telegraphed, and are marked on a big map. To prevent one ship confronting another, no ship is allowed to leave any station without a line-clear.

The Suez Canal is in the hands of the French. Though the majority of shares of the Canal Company are now owned by the English, yet, by a political agreement, the entire management rests with the French.

Now comes the Mediterranean. There is no more memorable region than this, outside India. It marks the end of Asia, Africa, and of ancient civilisation. One type of manners and customs and modes of living ends here and another type of features and temperament, food and dress, customs and habits begins — we enter Europe. Not only this, but here also is the great centre of that historical admixture of colours, races, civilisations, culture, and customs, which extending over many centuries has led to the birth of modern civilisation. That religion, and culture, and civilisation, and extraordinary prowess which today have encircled the globe were born here in the regions surrounding the Mediterranean. There, on the south, is the very, very ancient Egypt, the birthplace of sculpture — overflowing in wealth and food-stuffs; on the east is Asia Minor, the ancient arena of the Phoenician, Philistine, Jewish, valiant Babylonian, Assyrian, and Persian civilisations; and on the north, the land where the Greeks — wonders of the world — flourished in ancient times.

Well, Swami, you have had enough of countries, and rivers, and mountains, and seas — now listen to a little of ancient history. Most wonderful are these annals of ancient days; not fiction, but truth — the true history of the human race. These ancient countries were almost buried in oblivion for eternity — the little that people knew of them consisted almost exclusively of the curiously fictitious compositions of the ancient Greek historians, or the miraculous descriptions of the Jewish mythology called the Bible. Now the inscriptions on ancient stones, buildings, rooms, and tiles, and linguistic analysis are valuable in their narration of the history of those countries. This recounting has but just commenced, but even now it has unearthed most wonderful tales, and who knows what more it will do in future? Great scholars of all countries are puzzling their heads day and night over a bit of rock inscription or a broken utensil, a building or a tile, and discovering the tales of ancient days sunk in oblivion.

When the Mohammedan leader Osman occupied Constantinople, and the banner of Islam began to flutter triumphantly over the whole of eastern Europe, then those books and that learning and culture of the ancient Greeks which were kept hidden with their powerless descendants spread over western Europe in the wake of the retreating Greeks. Though subjected for a long time to the Roman rule, the Greeks were the teachers of the Romans in point of learning and culture. So much so that owing to the Greeks embracing Christianity and the Christian Bible being written in the Greek tongue, Christianity got a hold over the whole Roman Empire. But the ancient Greeks, whom we call the Yavanas, and who were the first teachers of European civilisation,

attained the zenith of their culture long before the Christians. Ever since they became Christians, all their learning and culture was extinguished. But as some part of the culture of their ancestors is still preserved in the Hindu homes, so it was with the Christian Greeks; these books found their way all over Europe. This it was that gave the first impetus to civilisation among the English, German, French, and other nations. There was a craze for learning the Greek language and Greek arts. First of all, they swallowed everything that was in those books. Then, as their own intelligence began to brighten up, and sciences began to develop, they commenced researches as to the date, author, subject, and authenticity, etc. of those books. There was no restriction whatever in passing free opinions on all books of the non-Christian Greeks, barring only the scriptures of the Christians, and consequently there cropped up a new science — that of external and internal criticism.

Suppose, for instance, that it is written in a book that such and such an incident took place on such and such a date. But must a thing be accepted as authentic, simply because some one has been pleased to write something about it in a book? It was customary with people, specially of those times, to write many things from imagination; moreover, they had very scanty knowledge about nature, and even of this earth we live in. All these raised grave doubts as to the authenticity of the subject-matter of a book. Suppose, for instance, that a Greek historian has written that on such and such a date there was a king in India called Chandragupta. If now, the books of India, too, mention that king under that particular date, the matter is certainly proved to a great extent. If a few coins of Chandragupta's reign be found, or a building of his time which contains references to him, the veracity of the matter is then assured.

Suppose another book records a particular incident as taking place in the reign of Alexander the Great, but there is mention of one or two Roman Emperors in such a way that they cannot be taken as interpolations — then that book is proved not to belong to Alexander's time.

Or again, language. Every language undergoes some change through the lapse of time, and authors have also their own peculiar style. If in any book there is suddenly introduced a description which has no bearing on the subject, and is in a style quite different from the author's, it will readily be suspected as an interpolation. Thus a new science of ascertaining the truth about a book, by means of doubting and testing and proving in various ways, was discovered.

To add to this, modern science began, with rapid strides, to throw new light on things from all sides, with the results that any book that contained a reference to supernatural incidents came to be wholly disbelieved.

To crown all, there were the entrance of the tidal wave of Sanskrit into Europe and the deciphering of ancient lapidary inscriptions found in India, on the banks of the Euphrates, and in Egypt, as well as the discovery of temples etc., hidden for ages under the earth or on hill-sides, and the correct reading of their history.

I have already said that this new science of research set the Bible or the New Testament books quite apart. Now there are no longer the tortures of the Inquisition, there is only the fear of social obloquy; disregarding that, many scholars have subjected those books also to a stringent analysis. Let us hope that as they mercilessly hack the Hindu and other scriptures to pieces, they will in time show the same moral courage towards the Jewish and Christian scriptures also. Let me give an illustration to explain why I say this. Maspero, a great savant and a highly reputed author on Egyptology, has written a voluminous history of the Egyptians and Babylonians entitled *Histoire Ancienne Orientale*. A few years ago I read an English translation of the book by an English archaeologist. This time, on my asking a Librarian of the British Museum about certain books on Egypt and Babylon, Maspero's book was mentioned. And when he learnt that I had with me an English translation of the book, he said that it would not do, for the translator was a rather bigoted Christian, and wherever Maspero's researches hit Christianity in any way, he (the translator) had managed to twist and torture those passages! He recommended me to read the book in original French. And on reading I found it was just as he had said — a terrible problem indeed! You know very well what a queer thing religious bigotry is; it makes a mess of truth and untruth. Thenceforth my faith in the translations of those research works has been greatly shaken.

Another new science has developed — ethnology, that is, the classification of men from an examination of their colour, hair, physique, shape of the head, language, and so forth.

The Germans, though masters in all sciences, are specially expert in Sanskrit and ancient Assyrian culture; Benfey and other German scholars are illustrations of this. The French are skilled in Egyptology — scholars like Maspero are French. The Dutch are famous for their analysis of Jewish and ancient Christian religions — writers like Kuenen have attained a world-celebrity. The English inaugurate many sciences and then leave off.

Let me now tell you some of the opinions of these scholars. If you do not like their views, you may fight them; but pray, do not lay the blame on me. According to the Hindus, Jews, ancient Babylonians, Egyptians, and other ancient races, all mankind have descended from the same *primaeval* parents. People do not much believe in this now.

Have you ever seen jet-black, flat-nosed, thick-lipped, curly-haired Kaffirs with receding foreheads? And have you seen the Santals, and Andamanese, and Bhils with about the same features, but of shorter stature, and with hair less curly? The first class are called Negroes; these live in Africa. The second class are called Negritos (little Negroes); in ancient times these used to inhabit certain parts of Arabia, portions of the banks of the Euphrates, the southern part of Persia, the whole of India, the Andamans, and other islands, even as far as Australia. In modern times they are to be met with in certain forests and jungles of India, in the Andamans, and in Australia.

Have you seen the Lepchas, Bhutias, and Chinese — white or yellow in colour, and with straight black hair? They have dark eyes — but these are set so as to form an angle — scanty beard and moustache, a flat face, and very prominent malar bones. Have you seen the Nepalese, Burmese, Siamese, Malays, and Japanese? They have the same shape, but have shorter stature.

The two species of this type are called Mongols and Mongoloids (little Mongols). The Mongolians have now occupied the greater part of Asia. It is they who, divided into many branches such as the Mongols, Kalmucks, Huns, Chinese, Tartars, Turks, Manchus, Kirghiz, etc. lead a nomadic life, carrying tents, and tending sheep, goats, cattle, and horses, and whenever an opportunity occurs, sweep like a swarm of locusts and unhinge the world. These Chinese and Tibetans alone are an exception to this. They are also known by the name of Turanians. It is the Turan which you find in the popular phrase, "Iran and Turan."

A race of a dark colour but with straight hair, straight nose and straight dark eyes, used to inhabit ancient Egypt and ancient Babylonia and now live all over India, specially in the southern portion; in Europe also one finds traces of them in rare places. They form one race, and have the technical name of Dravidians.

Another race has white colour, straight eyes, but ears and noses curved and thick towards the tip, receding foreheads, and thick lips — as, for instance, the people of north Arabia, the modern Jews and the ancient Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, etc.; their languages also have a common stock; these are called the Semitic race.

And those who speak a language allied to Sanskrit, who have straight noses, mouths, and eyes, a white complexion, black or brown hair, dark or blue eyes, are called Aryans.

All the modern races have sprung from an admixture of these races. A country which has a preponderance of one or other of these races, has also its language and physiognomy mostly like those of that particular race.

It is not a generally accepted theory in the West that a warm country produces dark complexion and a cold country white complexion. Many are of opinion that the existing shades between black and white have been the outcome of a fusion of races.

According to scholars, the civilisations of Egypt and ancient Babylonia are the oldest. Houses and remains of buildings are to be met with in these countries dating 6,000 B.C. or even earlier. In India the oldest building that may have been discovered date back to Chandragupta's time at the most; that is, only 300 B.C. Houses of greater antiquity have not yet been discovered. (The ancient remains at Harappa, Mohenjo-daro etc., in the Indus Valley in North-west India, which prove the existence of an advanced city civilisation in India dating back to more than 3000 B.C., were not dug out before 1922. — Ed.) But there are books, etc., of a far earlier date, which one cannot find in any other country. Pandit Bal Gangadhar Tilak has brought evidence to show that the Vedas of the Hindus existed in the present form at least five thousand years before the Christian era.

The borders of this Mediterranean were the birthplace of that European civilisation which has now conquered the world. On these shores the Semitic races such as the Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, and Jews, and the Aryan races such as the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, fused together — to form the modern European civilisation.

A big stone slab with inscriptions on it, called the Rosetta Stone, was discovered in Egypt. On this there are inscriptions in hieroglyphics, below which there is another kind of writing, and below them all there are inscriptions resembling Greek characters. A scholar conjectured that those three sets of inscriptions presented the same thing, and he deciphered these ancient Egyptian inscriptions with the help of Coptic characters — the Copts being the Christian race who yet inhabit Egypt and who are known as the descendants of the ancient Egyptians. Similarly the cuneiform characters inscribed on the bricks and tiles of the Babylonians were also gradually deciphered. Meanwhile certain Indian inscriptions in plough-shaped characters were discovered as belonging to the time of Emperor Asoka. No earlier inscriptions than these have been discovered in India. (The Indus script is now known to be contemporary with Sumerian and Egyptian. — Ed.) The hieroglyphics inscribed on various kinds of temples, columns, and sarcophagi all over Egypt are being gradually deciphered and making Egyptian antiquity more lucid.

The Egyptians entered into Egypt from a southern country called Punt, across the seas. Some say that that Punt is the modern Malabar, and that the Egyptians and Dravidians belong to the same race. Their first king was

named Menes, and their ancient religion too resembles in some parts our mythological tales. The god Shibu was enveloped by the goddess Nui; later on another god Shu came and forcibly removed Nui. Nui's body became the sky, and her two hands and two legs became the four pillars of that sky. And Shibu became the earth. Osiris and Isis, the son and daughter of Nui, are the chief god and goddess in Egypt, and their son Horus is the object of universal worship. These three used to be worshipped in a group. Isis, again, is worshipped in the form of the cow.

Like the Nile on earth there is another Nile in the sky, of which the terrestrial Nile is only a part. According to the Egyptians, the Sun travels round the earth in a boat; now and then a serpent called Ahi devours him, then an eclipse takes place. The Moon is periodically attacked by a boar and torn to pieces, from which he takes fifteen days to recover. The deities of Egypt are some of them jackal-faced, some hawk-faced, others cow-faced, and so on.

Simultaneously with this, another civilisation had its rise on the banks of the Euphrates. Baal, Moloch, Istarte, and Damuzi were the chief of deities here. Istarte fell in love with a shepherd named Damuzi. A boar killed the latter and Istarte went to Hades, below the earth, in search of him. There she was subjected to various tortures by the terrible goddess Alat. At last Istarte declared that she would no more return to earth unless she got Damuzi back. This was a great difficulty; she was the goddess of sex-impulse, and unless she went back, neither men, nor animals, nor vegetables would multiply. Then the gods made a compromise that every year Damuzi was to reside in Hades for four months and live on earth during the remaining eight months. Then Istarte returned, there was the advent of spring and a good harvest followed.

Thus Damuzi again is known under the name of Adunoi or Adonis! The religion of all the Semitic races, with slight minor variations, was almost the same. The Babylonians, Jews, Phoenicians, and Arabs of a later date used the same form of worship. Almost every god was called Moloch — the word which persists to this day in the Bengali language as Mâlik (ruler), Mulluk (kingdom) and so forth — or Baal; but of course there were minor differences. According to some, the god called Alat afterwards turned into Allah of the Arab.

The worship of these gods also included certain terrible and abominable rites. Before Moloch or Baal children used to be burnt alive. In the temple of Istarte the natural and unnatural satisfaction of lust was the principal feature.

The history of the Jewish race is much more recent than that of Babylon. According to scholars the scripture

known as the Bible was composed from 500 B.C. to several years after the Christian era. Many portions of the Bible which are generally supposed to be of earlier origin belong to a much later date. The main topics of the Bible concern the Babylonians. The Babylonian cosmology and description of the Deluge have in many parts been incorporated wholesale into the Bible. Over and above this, during the rule of the Persian Emperors in Asia Minor, many Persian doctrines found acceptance among the Jews. According to the Old Testament, this world is all; there is neither soul nor an after-life. In the New Testament there is mention of the Parsee doctrines of an after-life and resurrection of the dead, while the theory of Satan exclusively belongs to the Parsis.

The principal feature of the Jewish religion is the worship of Yave-Moloch. But this name does not belong to the Jewish language; according to some it is an Egyptian word. But nobody knows whence it came. There are descriptions in the Bible that the Israelites lived confined in Egypt for a long time, but all this is seldom accepted now, and the patriarchs such as Abraham, and Isaac, and Joseph are proved to be mere allegories.

The Jews would not utter the name "Yave", in place of which they used to say "Adunoi". When the Jews became divided into two branches, Israel and Ephraim, two principal temples were constructed in the two countries. In the temple that was built by the Israelites in Jerusalem, an image of Yave, consisting of a male and female figure united, was preserved in a coffer (ark), and there was a big phallic column at the door. In Ephraim, Yave used to be worshipped in the form of a gold-covered Bull.

In both places it was the practice to consign the eldest son alive to the flames before the god, and a band of women used to live in both the temples, within the very precincts of which they used to lead most immoral lives and their earnings were utilised for temple expenditure.

In course of time there appeared among the Jews a class of men who used to invoke the presence of deities in their person by means of music or dance. They were called Prophets. Many of these, through association with the Persians, set themselves against image-worship, sacrifice of sons, immorality, prostitution, and such other practices. By degrees, circumcision took the place of human sacrifice; and prostitution and image-worship etc. gradually disappeared. In course of time from among these Prophets Christianity had its rise.

There is a great dispute as to whether there ever was born a man with the name of Jesus. Of the four books comprising the New Testament, the Book of St. John has been rejected by some as spurious. As to the remaining three, the verdict is that they have been copied from some ancient book; and that, too, long after the date ascribed to Jesus Christ.

Moreover, about the time that Jesus is believed to have been born among the Jews themselves, there were born

two historians, Josephus and Philo. They have mentioned even petty sects among the Jews, but not made the least reference to Jesus or the Christians, or that the Roman Judge sentenced him to death on the cross. Josephus' book had a single line about it, which has now been proved to be an interpolation. The Romans used to rule over the Jews at that time, and the Greeks taught all sciences and arts. They have all written a good many things about the Jews, but made no mention of either Jesus or the Christians.

Another difficulty is that the sayings, precepts, or doctrines which the New Testament preaches were already in existence among the Jews before the Christian era, having come from different quarters, and were being preached by Rabbis like Hillel and others. These are what scholars say; but they cannot, with safety to their reputation, give oracular verdicts off-hand on their own religion, as they are wont to do with regard to alien religions. So they proceed slowly. This is what is called Higher Criticism.

The Western scholars are thus studying the religions, customs, races, etc., of different and far-off countries. But we have nothing of the kind in Bengali! And how is it possible? If a man after ten years of hard labour translates a book of this kind, well, what will he himself live upon, and where will he get the funds to publish his book?

In the first place, our country is very poor, and in the second place, there is practically no cultivation of learning. Shall such a day dawn for our country when we shall be cultivating various kinds of arts and sciences? — “She whose grace makes the dumb eloquent and the lame to scale mountains” — She, the Divine Mother, only knows!

The ship touched Naples — we reached Italy. The capital of Italy is Rome — Rome, the capital of that ancient, most powerful Roman Empire, whose politics, military science, art of colonisation, and foreign conquest are to this day the model for the whole world!

After leaving Naples the ship called at Marseilles, and thence straight at London.

You have already heard a good deal about Europe — what they eat, how they dress, what are their manners and customs, and so forth — so I need not write on this. But about European civilisation, its origin, its relation to us, and the extent to which we should adopt it — about such things I shall have much to say in future. The body is no respecter of persons, dear brother, so I shall try to speak about them some other time. Or what is the use? Well, who on earth can vie with us (specially the Bengalis) as regards talking and discussing? Show it in action if you can. Let your work proclaim, and let the tongue rest. But let me mention one thing in passing, viz. that Europe began to advance from the date that learning and power began to flow in among the poor lower classes.

Lots of suffering poor people of other countries, cast off like refuse as it were, find a house and shelter in America, and these are the very backbone of America! It matters little whether rich men and scholars listen to you, understand you, and praise or blame you — they are merely the ornaments, the decorations of the country! — It is the millions of poor lower class people who are its life. Numbers do not count, nor does wealth or poverty; a handful of men can throw the world off its hinges, provided they are united in thought, word, and deed — never forget this conviction. The more opposition there is, the better. Does a river acquire velocity unless there is resistance? The newer and better a thing is, the more opposition it will meet with at the outset. It is opposition which foretells success. Where there is no opposition there is no success either. Good-bye!

Chapter 3

Memoirs of European Travel II

MEMOIRS OF EUROPEAN TRAVEL

II

We have an adage among us that one that has a disc-like pattern on the soles of his feet becomes a vagabond. I fear, I have my soles inscribed all over with them. And there is not much room for probability, either. I have tried my best to discover them by scrutinising the soles, but all to no purpose — the feet have been dreadfully cracked through the severity of cold, and no discs or anything of the kind could be traced. However, when there is the tradition, I take it for granted that my soles are full of those signs. But the results are quite patent — it was my cherished desire to remain in Paris for some time and study the French language and civilisation; I left my old friends and acquaintances and put up with a new friend, a Frenchman of ordinary means, who knew no English, and my French — well, it was something quite extraordinary! I had this in mind that the inability to live like a dumb man would naturally force me to talk French, and I would attain fluency in that language in no time — but on the contrary I am now on a tour through Vienna, Turkey, Greece, Egypt, and Jerusalem! Well, who can stem the course of the inevitable! — And this letter I am writing to you from the last remaining capital of Mohammedan supremacy — from Constantinople!

I have three travelling companions — two of them French and the third an American. The American is Miss MacLeod whom you know very well; the French male companion is Monsieur Jules Bois, a famous philosopher and litterateur of France; and the French lady friend is the world-renowned singer, Mademoiselle Calvé. “Mister” is “Monsieur” in the French language, and “Miss” is “Mademoiselle” — with a Z-sound. Mademoiselle Calvé is the foremost singer — opera singer — of the present day. Her musical performances are so highly appreciated that she has an annual income of three to four lakhs of rupees, solely from singing. I had previously been acquainted with her. The foremost actress in the West, Madame Sarah Bernhardt, and the foremost singer, Calvé, are both of them of French extraction, and both totally ignorant of English, but they visit England and America occasionally and earn

millions of dollars by acting and singing. French is the language of the civilised world, the mark of gentility in the West, and everybody knows it; consequently these two ladies have neither the leisure nor the inclination to learn English. Madame Bernhardt is an aged lady; but when she steps on the stage after dressing, her imitation of the age and sex of the role she plays is perfect! A girl or a boy — whatever part you want her to play, she is an exact representation of that. And that wonderful voice! People here say her voice has the ring of silver strings! Madame Bernhardt has a special regard for India; she tells me again and again that our country is “trés ancien, tres civilisé” — very ancient and very civilised. One year she performed a drama touching on India, in which she set up a whole Indian street-scene on the stage — men, women, and children, Sadhus and Nagas, and everything — an exact picture of India! After the performance she told me that for about a month she had visited every museum and made herself acquainted with the men and women and their dress, the streets and bathing ghats and everything relating to India. Madame Bernhardt has a very strong desire to visit India. — “C'est mon rêve! — It is the dream of my life”, she says. Again, the Prince of Wales (His late Majesty King Edward VII, the then Prince of Wales.) has promised to take her over to a tiger and elephant hunting excursion. But then she said she must spend some two lakhs of rupees if she went to India! She is of course in no want of money. “La divine Sarah” — the divine Sarah — is her name; how can she want money, she who never travels but by a special train! That pomp and luxury many a prince of Europe cannot afford to indulge in! One can only secure a seat for her performance by paying double the fees, and that a month in advance! Well, she is not going to suffer want of money! But Sarah Bernhardt is given to spending lavishly. Her travel to India is therefore put off for the present.

Mademoiselle Calvé will not sing this winter, she will take a rest and is going to temperate climates like Egypt etc. I am going as her guest. Calvé has not devoted herself to music alone, she is sufficiently learned and has a great love for philosophical and religious literature. She was born amidst very poor circumstances; gradually, through

her own genius and undergoing great labour and much hardship, she has now amassed a large fortune and has become the object of adoration of kings and potentates!

There are famous lady singers, such as Madame Melba, Madame Emma Ames, and others; and very distinguished singers, such as Jean de Reszke, Plancon, and the rest — all of whom earn two or three lakhs of rupees a year! But with Calvé's art is coupled a unique genius. Extraordinary beauty, youth, genius, and a celestial voice — all these have conspired to raise Calvé to the forefront of all singers. But there is no better teacher than pain and poverty! That extreme penury and pain and hardship of childhood, a constant struggle against which has won for Calvé this victory, have engendered a remarkable sympathy and a profound seriousness in her life. Again, in the West, there are ample opportunities along with the enterprising spirit. But in our country, there is a sad dearth of opportunities, even if the spirit of enterprise be not absent. The Bengali woman may be keen after acquiring education, but it comes to nought for want of opportunities. And what is there to learn from in the Bengali language? At best some poor novels and dramas! Then again, learning is confined at present to a foreign tongue or to Sanskrit and is only for the chosen few. In these Western countries there are innumerable books in the mother-tongue; over and above that, whenever something new comes out in a foreign tongue, it is at once translated and placed before the public.

Monsieur Jules Bois is a famous writer; he is particularly an adept in the discovery of historical truths in the different religions and superstitions. He has written a famous book putting into historical form the devil-worship, sorcery, necromancy, incantation, and such other rites that were in vogue in Mediaeval Europe, and the traces of those that obtain to this day. He is a good poet, and is an advocate of the Indian Vedantic ideas that have crept into the great French poets, such as Victor Hugo and Lamartine and others, and the great German poets, such as Goethe, Schiller, and the rest. The influence of Vedanta on European poetry and philosophy is very great. Every good poet is a Vedantin, I find; and whoever writes some philosophical treatise has to draw upon Vedanta in some shape or other. Only some of them do not care to admit this indebtedness, and want to establish their complete originality, as Herbert Spencer and others, for instance. But the majority do openly acknowledge. And how can they help it — in these days of telegraphs and railways and newspapers? M. Jules Bois is very modest and gentle, and though a man of ordinary means, he very cordially received me as a guest into his house in Paris. Now he is accompanying us for travel.

We have two other companions on the journey as far as Constantinople — Père Hyacinthe and his wife. Père, i.e. Father Hyacinthe was a monk of a strict ascetic section of the Roman Catholic Church. His scholarship, extraordinary eloquence, and great austerities won for

him a high reputation in France and in the whole Catholic Order. The great poet, Victor Hugo, used to praise the French style of two men — one of these was Père Hyacinthe. At forty years of age Père Hyacinthe fell in love with an American woman and eventually married her. This created a great sensation, and of course the Catholic Order immediately gave him up. Discarding his ascetic garb of bare feet and loose-fitting cloak, Père Hyacinthe took up the hat, coat, and boots of the householder and became — Monsieur Loyson. I, however, call him by his former name. It is an old, old tale, and the matter was the talk of the whole continent. The Protestants received him with honour, but the Catholics began to hate him. The Pope, in consideration of his attainments, was unwilling to part with him and asked him to remain a Greek Catholic priest, and not abandon the Roman Church. (The priests of the Greek Catholic section are allowed to marry but once, but do not get any high position). Mrs. Loyson, however, forcibly dragged him out of the Pope's fold. In course of time they had children and grandchildren; now the very aged Loyson is going to Jerusalem to try to establish cordial relations among the Christians and Mussulmans. His wife had perhaps seen many visions that Loyson might possibly turn out to be a second Martin Luther and overthrow the Pope's throne — into the Mediterranean. But nothing of the kind took place; and the only result was, as the French say, that he was placed between two stools. But Madame Loyson still cherishes her curious day-dreams! Old Loyson is very affable in speech, modest, and of a distinctly devotional turn of mind. Whenever he meets me, he holds pretty long talks about various religions and creeds. But being of a devotional temperament, he is a little afraid of the Advaita. Madame Loyson's attitude towards me is, I fear, rather unfavourable. When I discuss with the old man such topics as renunciation and monasticism etc., all those long-cherished sentiments wake up in his aged breast, and his wife most probably smarts all the while. Besides, all French people, of both sexes, lay the whole blame on the wife; they say, "That woman has spoilt one of our great ascetic monks!" Madame Loyson is really in a sorry predicament — specially as they live in Paris, in a Catholic country. They hate the very sight of a married priest; no Catholic would ever tolerate the preaching of religion by a man with family. And Madame Loyson has a bit of animus also. Once she expressed her dislike of an actress, saying, "It is very bad of you to live with Mr. So-and-so without marrying him". The actress immediately retorted, "I am a thousand times better than you. I live with a common man; it may be, I have not legally married him; whereas you are a great sinner — you have made such a great monk break his religious vows! If you were so desperately in love with the monk, why, you might as well live as his attending maid; but why did you bring ruin on him by marrying him and thus converting him into a householder?"

However I hear all and keep silent. But old Père Hy-

acinthe is a really sweet-natured and peaceful man, he is happy with his wife and family — and what can the whole French people have to say against this? I think, everything would be settled if but his wife climbed down a bit. But one thing I notice, viz. that men and women, in every country, have different ways of understanding and judging things. Men have one angle of vision, women another; men argue from one standpoint, women from another. Men extenuate women and lay the blame on men; while women exonerate men and heap all the blame on women.

One special benefit I get from the company of these ladies and gentlemen is that, except the one American lady, no one knows English; talking in English is wholly eschewed, (It is not etiquette in the West to talk in company any language but one known to all party.) and consequently somehow or other I have to talk as well as hear French.

From Paris our friend Maxim has supplied me with letters of introduction to various places, so that the countries may be properly seen. Maxim is the inventor of the famous Maxim gun — the gun that sends off a continuous round of balls and is loaded and discharged automatically without intermission. Maxim is by birth an American; now he has settled in England, where he has his gun-factories etc. Maxim is vexed if anybody alludes too frequently to his guns in his presence and says, “My friend, have I done nothing else except invent that engine of destruction?” Maxim is an admirer of China and India and is a good writer on religion and philosophy etc. Having read my works long since, he holds me in great — I should say, excessive — admiration. He supplies guns to all kings and rulers and is well known in every country, though his particular friend is Li Hung Chang, his special regard is for China and his devotion, for Confucianism. He is in the habit of writing occasionally in the newspapers, under Chinese pseudonyms, against the Christians — about what takes them to China, their real motive, and so forth. He cannot at all bear the Christian missionaries preaching their religion in China! His wife also is just like her husband in her regard for China and hatred of Christianity! Maxim has no issue; he is an old man, and immensely rich.

The tour programme was as follows — from Paris to Vienna, and thence to Constantinople, by rail; then by steamer to Athens and Greece, then across the Mediterranean to Egypt, then Asia Minor, Jerusalem, and so on. The “Oriental Express” runs daily from Paris to Constantinople, and is provided with sleeping, sitting, and dining accommodations after the American model. Though not perfect like the American cars, they are fairly well furnished. I am to leave Paris by that train on October 24 (1900).

Today is the 23rd October; tomorrow evening I am to take leave of Paris. This year Paris is a centre of the civilised world, for it is the year of the Paris Exhibition, and there has been an assemblage of eminent men and women from all quarters of the globe. The master-minds of all countries have met today in Paris to spread the glory of their respective countries by means of their genius. The fortunate man whose name the bells of this great centre will ring today will at the same time crown his country also with glory, before the world. And where art thou, my Motherland, Bengal, in the great capital city swarming with German, French, English, Italian, and other scholars? Who is there to utter thy name? Who is there to proclaim thy existence? From among that white galaxy of geniuses there stepped forth one distinguished youthful hero to proclaim the name of our Motherland, Bengal — it was the world-renowned scientist, Dr. (Later, Sir.) J. C. Bose! Alone, the youthful Bengali physicist, with galvanic quickness, charmed the Western audience today with his splendid genius; that electric charge infused pulsations of new life into the half-dead body of the Motherland! At the top of all physicists today is — Jagadish Chandra Bose, an Indian, a Bengali! Well done, hero! Whichever countries, Dr. Bose and his accomplished, ideal wife may visit, everywhere they glorify India — add fresh laurels to the crown of Bengal. Blessed pair!

And the daily reunion of numbers of distinguished men and women which Mr. Leggett brought about at an enormous expense in his Parisian mansion, by inviting them to at-homes — that too ends today.

All types of distinguished personages — poets, philosophers, scientists, moralists, politicians, singers, professors, painters, artists, sculptors, musicians, and so on, of both sexes — used to be assembled in Mr. Leggett’s residence, attracted by his hospitality and kindness. That incessant outflow of words, clear and limpid like a mountainfall, that expression of sentiments emanating from all sides like sparks of fire, bewitching music, the magic current of thoughts from master minds coming into conflict with one another — which used to hold all spellbound, making them forgetful of time and place — these too shall end.

Everything on earth has an end. Once again I took a round over the Paris Exhibition today — this accumulated mass of dazzling ideas, like lightning held steady as it were, this unique assemblage of celestial panorama on earth!

It has been raining in Paris for the last two or three days. During all this time the sun who is ever kind to France has held back his accustomed grace. Perhaps his face has been darkened over with clouds in disgust to witness the secretly flowing current of sensuality behind

this assemblage of arts and artists, learning and learned folk, or perhaps he has hid his face under a pall of cloud in grief over the impending destruction of this illusive heaven of particoloured wood and canvas.

We too shall be happy to escape. The breaking up of the Exhibition is a big affair; the streets of this heaven on earth, the Eden-like Paris, will be filled with knee-deep mud and mortar. With the exception of one or two main buildings, all the houses and their parts are but a display of wood and rags and whitewashing — just as the whole world is! And when they are demolished, the lime-dust flies about and is suffocating; rags and sand etc. make the streets exceedingly dirty; and, if it rains in addition, it is an awful mess.

In the evening of October 24 the train left Paris. The night was dark and nothing could be seen. Monsieur Bois and myself occupied one compartment — and early went to bed. On awakening from sleep we found we had crossed the French frontier and entered German territory. I had already seen Germany thoroughly; but Germany, after France, produces quite a jarring effect. “On the one hand the moon is setting” (यात्येकतोऽस्तशखिरं पतरिषधीनां — From Kalidasa’s *Shakuntalâ*.) — the world-encompassing France is slowly consuming herself in the fire of contemplated retribution — while on the other hand, centralised, young, and mighty Germany has begun her upward march above the horizon with rapid strides. On one side is the artistic workmanship of the dark-haired, comparatively short-statured, luxurious, highly civilised French people, to whom art means life; and on the other, the clumsy daubing, the unskilful manipulation, of tawny-haired, tall, gigantic German. After Paris there is no other city in the Western world; everywhere it is an imitation of Paris — or at least an attempt at it. But in France that art is full of grace and ethereal beauty, while in Germany, England, and America the imitation is coarse and clumsy. Even the application of force on the part of the French is beautiful, as it were, whereas the attempt of the Germans to display beauty even is terrible. The countenance of French genius, even when frowning in anger, is beautiful; that of German genius, even when beaming with smiles, appears frightful, as it were. French civilisation is full of nerve, like camphor or musk — it volatilises and pervades the room in a moment; while German civilisation is full of muscle, heavy like lead or mercury — it remains motionless and inert wherever it lies. The German muscle can go on striking small blows untiringly, till death; the French have tender, feminine bodies, but when they do concentrate and strike, it is a sledge-hammer blow and is irresistible.

The Germans are constructing after the French fashion big houses and mansions, and placing big statues, equestrian figures, etc. on top of them, but on seeing

a double-storeyed German building one is tempted to ask — is it a dwelling-house for men, or a stable for elephants and camels, while one mistakes a five-storeyed French stable for elephants and horses as a habitation for fairies.

America is inspired by German ideals; hundreds of thousand Germans are in every town. The language is of course English, but nevertheless America is being slowly Germanised. Germany is fast multiplying her population and is exceptionally hardy. Today Germany is the dictator to all Europe, her place is above all! Long before all other nations, Germany has given man and woman compulsory education, making illiteracy punishable by law, and today she is enjoying the fruits of that tree. The German army is the foremost in reputation, and Germany has vowed to become foremost in her navy also. German manufacture of commodities has beaten even England! German merchandise and the Germans themselves are slowly obtaining a monopoly even in the English colonies. At the behest of the German Emperor all the nations have ungrudgingly submitted to the lead of the German Generalissimo in the battle-fields of China!

The whole day the train rushed through Germany, till in the afternoon it reached the frontiers of Austria, the ancient sphere of German supremacy, but now an alien territory. There are certain troubles in travelling through Europe. In every country enormous duties are levied upon certain things, or some articles of merchandise are the monopoly of the Government, as for instance, tobacco. Again, in Russia and Turkey, you are totally forbidden to enter without a royal passport; a passport you must always have. Besides, in Russia and Turkey, all your books and papers will be seized; and when on perusal the authorities are satisfied that there is nothing in them against the Russian or Turkish Government and religion, then only they will be returned, otherwise they will all be confiscated. In other countries your tobacco is a source of great trouble. You must open your chest, and trunk and packages for inspection whether they contain tobacco etc. or not. And to come to Constantinople one has to pass through two big States — Germany and Austria, and many petty ones; the latter had formerly been districts of Turkey, but later on the independent Christian kings made a common cause and wrested as many of these Christian districts from Mohammedan hands as they could. The bite of these tiny ants is much worse than even that of the bigger ones.

In the evening of October 25 the train reached Vienna, the capital of Austria. The members of the royal family in Austria and Russia are styled Archdukes and Archduchesses. Two Archdukes are to get down at Vienna by this train; and until they have done so the other passengers are not allowed to get down. So we had to wait. A few officers in laced uniform and some soldiers with feath-

ered caps were waiting for the Archdukes, who got down surrounded by them. We too felt relieved and made haste to get down and have our luggage passed. There were few passengers, and it did not take us much time to show our luggage and have it passed. A hotel had already been arranged for, and a man from the hotel was waiting for us with a carriage. We reached the hotel duly. It was out of the question to go out for sight-seeing during the night; so the next morning we started to see the town. In all hotels, and almost in all the countries of Europe except England and Germany, the French fashion prevails. They eat twice a day like the Hindus; in the morning by twelve o'clock, and in the evening by eight. Early in the morning, that is, about eight or nine, they take a little coffee. Tea is very little in vogue except in England and Russia. The morning meal is called in French *déjeuner* — that is, breakfast, and the evening meal *dîner* — that is, dinner. Tea is very much in use in Russia — it is too cold, and China is near enough. Chinese tea is excellent, and most of it goes to Russia. The Russian mode of drinking tea is also analogous to the Chinese, that is, without mixing milk. Tea or coffee becomes injurious like poison if you mix milk with it. The real tea-drinking races, the Chinese, Japanese, Russians, and the inhabitants of Central Asia, take tea without milk. Similarly, the original coffee-drinking races, such as the Turks, drink coffee without milk. Only in Russia they put a slice of lemon and a lump of sugar into the tea. The poor people place a lump of sugar in the mouth and drink tea over it, and when one has finished drinking, one passes that lump on to another, who repeats the process.

Vienna is a small city after the model of Paris. But the Austrians are German by race. The Austrian Emperor was hitherto the Emperor of almost the whole of Germany. In the present times, owing to the far-sightedness of King Wilhelm of Prussia, the wonderful diplomacy of his able minister, Bismark, and the military genius of General Von Moltke, the King of Prussia is the Emperor of the whole of Germany barring Austria. Austria, shorn of her glory and robbed of her power, is somehow maintaining her ancient name and prestige. The Austrian royal line — the Hapsburg Dynasty — is the oldest and most aristocratic dynasty in Europe. It was this Austrian dynasty which hitherto rules Germany as Emperors — Germany whose princes are seated on the thrones of almost all the countries of Europe, and whose petty feudatory chiefs even occupy the thrones of such powerful empires as England and Russia. The desire for that honour and prestige Austria still cherishes in full, only she lacks the power. Turkey is called “the sick man” of Europe; then Austria should be called “the sick dame”. Austria belongs to the Catholic sect, and until recently the Austrian Empire used to be called “the Holy Roman Empire”. Modern Germany has a preponderance of Protestants. The Austrian Emperor has always been the right-hand man of the Pope, his faithful follower, and the leader of the Roman Catholic sect. Now the Austrian Emperor is the only Catholic Ruler in Europe; France,

the eldest daughter of the Catholic Church, is now a Republic, while Spain and Portugal are downfallen! Italy has given only room enough for the Papal throne to be established, robbing the Pope's entire splendour and dominion; between the King of Italy and the Pope of Rome there is no love lost, they cannot bear each other's sight. Rome, the capital of the Pope, is now the capital of Italy. The King lives in the Pope's ancient palace which he has seized, and the ancient Italian kingdom of the Pope is now confined within the precincts of the Vatican. But the Pope has still great influence in religious matters — and the chief supporter of this is Austria. As a result of the struggle against Austria — against the age-long thralldom of Austria, the ally of the Pope — up rose modern Italy. Consequently Austria is against Italy — against, because she lost her. Unfortunately, however, young Italy, under England's misdirection, set herself to create a powerful army and navy. But where was the money? So, involved in debt, Italy is on the way to ruin; and to her misfortune, she brought on herself a fresh trouble by proceeding to extend her empire in Africa. Defeated by the Abyssinian monarch, she has sunk down, bereft of glory and prestige. Prussia in the meantime defeated Austria in a great war and thrust her off to a great distance. Austria is slowly dying, while Italy has similarly fettered herself by the misuse of her new life.

The Austrian royal line is still the proudest of all European royal families. It boasts of being a very ancient and very aristocratic dynasty. The marriages and other connections of this line are contracted with the greatest circumspection, and no such relationship can be established with families that are not Roman Catholic. It was the glamour of a connection with this line that led to the fall of Napoleon the Great. Quaintly enough, he took it into his head to marry a daughter of some noble royal family and found a great dynasty through a succession of descendents. The hero who, questioned as to his pedigree, had replied, “I owe the title to my nobility to none — I am to be the founder of a great dynasty” — that is to say, that he would originate a powerful dynasty, and that he was not born to glorify himself with the borrowed plumes of some ancestor — that hero fell into this abyss of family prestige.

The divorce of the Empress Josephine, the defeat of the Austrian Emperor in battle and taking his daughter to wife, the marriage of Bonaparte in great pomp with Marie Louise, the Princess of Austria, the birth of a son, the installation of the new-born babe as the King of Rome, the fall of Napoleon, the enmity of his father-in-law, Leipsic, Waterloo, St. Helena, Empress Marie Louise living in her father's house with her child, the marriage of Napoleon's royal consort with an ordinary soldier, the death of his only son, the King of Rome, in the house of his maternal grandfather — all these are

well-known incidents of history.

Fallen in a comparatively weakened condition, France is now ruminating on her past glory — nowadays there are very many books on Napoleon. Dramatists like Sardou are writing many dramas on Napoleon dead and gone; and actresses like Madame Bernhardt and Réjane are performing those plays every night before bumper houses. Recently Madame Bernhardt has created a great attraction in Paris by playing a drama entitled *L'aiglon* (the Young Eagle).

The young Eagle is the only son of Napoleon, practically interned in his maternal grandfather's residence, the Palace of Vienna. The Austrian Emperor's minister, the Machiavellian Metternich, is always careful not to allow the tales of heroism of his father to enter into the boy's mind. But a few of Bonaparte's veterans contrived to get themselves admitted into the boy's service in the Schönbrunn Palace, incognito; their idea was to somehow take the boy over to France and found the Bonaparte line by driving out the Bourbons reinstated by the combined European potentates. The child was the son of a great hero, and very soon that latent heroism woke up in him to hear the glorious tales of battle of his father. One day the boy fled from the Schönbrunn Palace accompanied by the conspirators. But Metternich's keen intellect had already scented the matter, and he cut off the journey. The son of Bonaparte was carried back to the Schönbrunn Palace and the Young Eagle, with his wings tied, as it were, very soon died of a broken heart!

This Schönbrunn Palace is an ordinary palace. Of course, the rooms etc. are lavishly decorated; in one of them perhaps one meets with only Chinese workmanship, in another only works of Hindu art, in a third the productions of some other country, and so on; and the garden attached to the Palace is very charming indeed. But all the people that now go to visit this Palace go there with the object of seeing the room where Bonaparte's son used to lie, or his study, or the room in which he died, and so forth. Many thoughtless French men and women are interrogating the guard, which room belonged to "*L'aiglon*", which bed did "*L'aiglon*" use to occupy, and so on. What silly questions, these! The Austrians only know that he was the son of Bonaparte, and the relation was established by forcibly taking their girl in marriage; that hatred they have not yet forgotten. The Prince was a grandchild of the Emperor, and homeless, so they could not help giving him a shelter, but they could give him no such title as "King of Rome"; only, being the grandson of the Austrian Emperor, he was an Archduke, that was all. It may be that you French people have now written a book on him, making him the Young Eagle, and the addition of imaginary settings and the genius of Madame Bernhardt have created a great interest in the story, but how should an Austrian guard know that name? Besides, it has been written in that book that the Austrian Emperor, following the advice of his minister

Metternich, in a way killed Napoleon's son!

Hearing the name "*L'aiglon*", the guard put on a long face and went on showing the rooms and other things thoroughly disgusted at heart; what else could he do? — it was too much for him to give up the tips. Moreover, in countries like Austria etc., the military department is too poorly paid, they have to live almost on a bare pittance; of course they are allowed to go back home after a few years' service. The guard's countenance darkened as an expression of his patriotism, but the hand instinctively moved towards the tip. The French visitors put some silver pieces into the guard's hand and returned home talking of "*L'aiglon*" and abusing Metternich, while the guard shut the doors with a long salute. In his heart he must have given sweet names to the ancestors of the whole French people.

The thing most worth seeing in Vienna is the Museum, specially the Scientific Museum, an institution of great benefit to the student. There is a fine collection of the skeletons of various species of ancient extinct animals. In the Art Gallery, paintings by Dutch artists form the major portion. In the Dutch school, there is very little attempt at suggestiveness; this school is famous for its exact copy of natural objects and creatures. One artist has spent years over the drawing of a basketful of fish, or a lump of flesh, or a tumbler of water — and that fish, or flesh, or water in the tumbler is wonderful. But the female figures of the Dutch school look just like athletes.

There is of course German scholarship and German intellectuality in Vienna, but the causes which helped the gradual decay of Turkey are at work here also — that is to say, the mixture of various races and languages. The population of Austria proper speaks German; the people of Hungary belong to the Tartar stock, and have a different language; while there are some who are Greek-speaking and are Christians belonging to the Greek Church. Austria has not the power to fuse together so many different sects. Hence she has fallen.

In the present times a huge wave of nationalism is sweeping over Europe, where people speaking the same tongue, professing the same religion, and belonging to the same race want to unite together. Wherever such union is being effectively accomplished, there is great power being manifested; and where this is impossible, death is inevitable. After the death of the present Austrian Emperor, (Francis Joseph II died in 1916) Germany will surely try to absorb the German-speaking portion of the Austrian Empire — and Russia and others are sure to oppose her; so there is the possibility of a dreadful war. The present Emperor being very old, that catastrophe may take place very early. The German Emperor is nowadays an ally of the Sultan of Turkey; and when Germany will attempt to seize Austrian territory, Turkey, which is Russia's enemy, will certainly

offer some resistance to Russia; so the German Emperor is very friendly towards Turkey.

Three days in Vienna were sufficient to tire me. To visit Europe after Paris is like tasting an inferior preparation after a sumptuous feast — that dress, and style of eating, that same fashion everywhere; throughout the land you meet with that same black suit, and the same queer hat — disgusting! Besides, you have clouds above, and this swarm of people with black hats and black coats below — one feels suffocated, as it were. All Europe is gradually taking up that same style of dress, and that same mode of living! It is a law of nature that such are the symptoms of death! By hundreds of years of drill, our ancestors have so fashioned us that we all clean our teeth, wash our face, eat our meals, and do everything in the same way, and the result is that we have gradually become mere automata; the life has gone out, and we are moving about, simply like so many machines! Machines never say “yea” or “nay”, never trouble their heads about anything, they move on “in the way their forefathers have gone”, and then rot and die. The Europeans too will share the same fate! “The course of time is ever changing! If all people take to the same dress, same food, same manner of talking, and same everything, gradually they will become like so many machines, will gradually tread the path their forefathers have trod”, and as an inevitable consequence of that — they will rot and die!

On the 28th October, at 9 p.m., we again took that Orient Express train, which reached Constantinople on the 30th. These two nights and one day the train ran through Hungary, Serbia, and Bulgaria. The people of Hungary are subjects of the Austrian Emperor, whose title, however, is “Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary”. The Hungarians and Turks are of the same race, akin to the Tibetans. The Hungarians entered Europe along the north of the Caspian Sea, while the Turks slowly occupied Europe through the western borders of Persia and through Asia Minor. The people of Hungary are Christians, and the Turks are Mohammedans, but the martial spirit characteristic of Tartar blood is noticeable in both. The Hungarians have fought again and again for separation from Austria and are now but nominally united. The Austrian Emperor is King of Hungary in name only. Their capital, Budapest, is a very neat and beautiful city. The Hungarians are a pleasure-loving race and fond of music, and you will find Hungarian bands all over Paris.

Serbia, Bulgaria, and the rest were districts of Turkey and have become practically independent after the Russo-Turkish War; but the Sultan of Turkey is yet their Emperor; and Serbia and Bulgaria have no right regarding foreign affairs. There are three civilised nations in Europe — the French, the Germans, and the English. The rest are almost as badly off as we are, and the majority of them are so uncivilised that you can find no race in Asia so degraded. Throughout Serbia

and Bulgaria you find the same mud houses, and people dressed in tattered rags, and heaps of filth — and I was almost inclined to think I was back to India! Again, as they are Christians, they must have a number of hogs; and a single hog will make a place more dirty than two hundred barbarous men will be able to do. Living in a mud house with mud roof, with tattered rags on his person, and surrounded by hogs — there you have your Serb or Bulgarian! After much bloodshed and many wars, they have thrown off the yoke of Turkey; but along with this they have got a serious disadvantage — they must construct their army after the European model, otherwise the existence of not one of them is safe for a day. Of course, sooner or later they will all one day be absorbed by Russia; but even this two days’ existence is impossible without an army. So they must have conscription.

In an evil hour, did France suffer defeat from Germany. Through anger and fear she made every citizen a soldier. Every man must serve for some time in the army and learn the military science; there is no exemption for anybody. He must have to live in the barracks for three years and learn to fight, shouldering his gun, be he a millionaire by birth. The government will provide for his food and clothing, and the salary will be a centime (one pice) a day. After this he must be always ready for active service for two years at his home; and another fifteen years he must be ready to present himself for service at the first call. Germany set a lion to fury, so she too had to be ready. In other countries also conscription has been introduced in mutual dread of one another — so throughout Europe, excepting only England. England, being an island, is continually strengthening her navy, but who knows if the lessons of the Boer War will not force her to introduce conscription. Russia has the largest population of all, so she can amass the biggest army in Europe. Now, the titular states, like Serbia and Bulgaria, which the European Powers are creating by dismembering Turkey — they, too, as soon as they are born, must have up-to-date trained and well-equipped armies and guns etc. But ultimately who is to supply the funds? Consequently the peasants have had to put on tattered rags — while in the towns you will find soldiers dressed in gorgeous uniforms. Throughout Europe there is a craze for soldiers — soldiers everywhere. Still, liberty is one thing and slavery another; even best work loses its charm if one is forced to do it by another. Without the idea of personal responsibility, no one can achieve anything great. Freedom with but one meal a day and tattered rags on is a million times better than slavery in gold chains. A slave suffers the miseries of hell both here and hereafter. The people of Europe joke about the Serbs and Bulgarians etc., and taunt them with their mistakes and shortcomings. But can they attain proficiency all in a day, after so many years of servitude? Mistakes they are bound to commit — ay, by the hundreds — but they will learn through these

mistakes and set them right when they have learnt. Give him responsibility and the weakest man will become strong, and the ignorant man sagacious.

The train is traversing Hungary, Rumania, and other countries. Among the races that inhabit the moribund Austrian Empire, the Hungarians yet possess vitality. All the races of Europe, except one or two small ones, belong to the great stock which European scholars term the Indo-European or Aryan race. The Hungarians are among the few races which do not speak a Sanskritic language. The Hungarians and Turks, as already stated, belong to the same race. In comparatively modern times this very powerful race established their sovereignty in Asia and Europe. The country now called Turkistan, lying to the north of the Western Himalayas and the Hindukush range, was the original home of the Turks. The Turkish name for that country is Chagwoi. The Mogul dynasty of Delhi, the present Persian royal line, the dynasty of the Turkish Sultan of Constantinople, and the Hungarians have all gradually extended their dominion from that country, beginning with India, and pushing right up to Europe, and even today these dynasties style themselves as Chagwois and speak a common language. Of course these Turks were uncivilised ages ago, and used to roam with herds of sheep, horses, and cattle, taking their wives and children and every earthly possession with them, and encamp for some time wherever they could find enough pasture for their beasts. And when grass and water ran short there, they used to remove somewhere else. Even now many families of this race lead nomadic lives in this way in Central Asia. They have got a perfect similarity with the races of Central Asia as regards language, but some difference in point of physiognomy. The Turk's face resembles that of the Mongolian in the shape of the head and in the prominence of the cheek-bone, but the Turk's nose is not flat, but rather long, and the eyes are straight and large, though the space between the eyes of comparatively wide, as with the Mongolians. It appears that from a long time past Aryan and Semitic blood has found its way into this Turkish race. From time immemorial the Turks have been exceedingly fond of war. And the mixture with them of Sanskrit-speaking races and the people of Kandahar and Persia has produced the war-loving races such as the Afghans, Khiljis, Hazaras, Barakhais, Usufjais, etc., to whom war is a passion and who have frequently oppressed India.

In very ancient times this Turkish race repeatedly conquered the western provinces of India and founded extensive kingdoms. They were Buddhists, or would turn Buddhists after occupying Indian territory. In the ancient history of Kashmir there is mention of these famous Turkish Emperors, Hushka, Yushka, and Kanishka. It was this Kanishka who founded the Northern school of Buddhism called the Mahâyâna. Long after, the majority

of them took to Mohammedanism and completely devastated the chief Buddhistic seats of Central Asia such as Kandahar and Kabul. Before their conversion to Mohammedanism they used to imbibe the learning and culture of the countries they conquered, and by assimilating the culture of other countries would try to propagate civilisation. But ever since they became Mohammedans, they have only the instinct for war left in them; they have not got the least vestige of learning and culture; on the contrary, the countries that come under their sway gradually have their civilisation extinguished. In many places of modern Afghanistan and Kandahar etc., there yet exist wonderful Stupas, monasteries, temples and gigantic statues built by their Buddhistic ancestors. As a result of Turkish admixture and their conversion to Mohammedanism, those temples etc. are almost in ruins, and the present Afghans and allied races have grown so uncivilised and illiterate that far from imitating those ancient works of architecture, they believe them to be the creation of supernatural spirits like the Jinn etc., and are firmly convinced that such great undertakings are beyond the power of man to accomplish. The principal cause of the present degradation of Persia is that the royal line belongs to the powerful, uncivilised Turkish stock, whereas the subjects are the descendants of the highly civilised ancient Persians, who were Aryans. In this way the Empire of Constantinople — the last political arena of the Greeks and Romans, the descendants of civilised Aryans — has been ruined under the blasting feet of powerful, barbarous Turkey. The Mogul Emperors of India were the only exceptions to this rule; perhaps that was due to an admixture of Hindu ideas and Hindu blood. In the chronicles of Rajput bards and minstrels all the Mohammedan dynasties who conquered India are styled as Turks. This is a very correct appellation, for, or whatever races the conquering Mohammedan armies might be made up, the leadership was always vested in the Turks alone.

What is called the Mohammedan invasion, conquest, or colonisation of India means only this that, under the leadership of Mohammedan Turks who were renegades from Buddhism, those sections of the Hindu race who continued in the faith of their ancestors were repeatedly conquered by the other section of that very race who also were renegades from Buddhism or the Vedic religion and served under the Turks, having been forcibly converted to Mohammedanism by their superior strength. Of course, the language of the Turks has, like their physiognomy, been considerably mixed up; specially those sections that have gone farthest from their native place. Chagwoi have got the most hybrid form of language. This year the Shah of Persia visited the Paris Exhibition and returned to his country by rail via Constantinople. Despite the immense difference in time and place, the Sultan and the Shah talked with each other in their ancient Turkish mother tongue. But the Sultan's Turkish was mixed up with Persian, Arabic, and a few Greek words, while that of the Shah was comparatively pure.

In ancient times these Chagwoi Turks were divided into two sections; one was called the “white sheep”, and the other, “black sheep”. But these sections started from their birthplace on the north of Kashmir, tending their flocks of sheep and ravaging countries, till they reached the shore of the Caspian Sea. The “white sheep” penetrated into Europe along the north of the Caspian Sea and founded the Kingdom of Hungary, seizing a fragment of the Roman Empire then almost in ruins, while the “black sheep”, advancing along the south of the Caspian Sea, gradually occupied the western portion of Persia and, crossing the Caucasus, by degrees made themselves masters of Arabian territory such as Asia Minor and so forth; gradually they seized the throne of the Caliph, and bit by bit annexed the small remnant of the western Roman Empire. In very remote ages these Turks were great snake-worshippers. Most probably it was these dynasties whom the ancient Hindus used to designate as Nagas and Takshakas. Later on they became Buddhists; and afterwards they very often used to embrace the religion of any particular country they might conquer at any particular time. In comparatively recent times, of the two sections we are speaking about, the “white sheep” conquered the Christians and became converts to Christianity, while the “black sheep” conquered the Mohammedans and adopted their religion. But in their Christianity or Mohammedanism one may even now trace on research the strata of serpent-worship and of Buddhism.

The Hungarians, though Turks by race and language, are Christians — Roman Catholics — in religion. In the past, religious fanaticism had no respect for any tie — neither the tie of language, nor that of blood, nor that of country. The Hungarians are ever the deadly enemies of Turkey; and but for the Hungarians’ aid Christian states, such as Austria etc., would not have been able to maintain their existence on many an occasion. In modern times, owing to the spread of education and the discovery of Linguistics and Ethnology, people are being more attracted to the kinship of language and blood, while religious solidarity is gradually slackening. So, among the educated Hungarians and Turks, there is growing up a feeling of racial unity. Though a part of the Austrian Empire, Hungary has repeatedly tried to cut off from her. The result of many revolutions and rebellions has been that Hungary is now only nominally a province of the Austrian Empire, but practically independent in all respects. The Austrian Emperor is styled “the Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary”. Hungary manages all her internal affairs independently of Austria and in these the subjects have full power. The Austrian Emperor continues to be a titular leader here, but even this bit of relation, it appears, will not last long. Skill in war, magnanimity and other characteristic virtues of the Turkish race are sufficiently present in the Hungarian also. Besides, not being converted to Mohammedanism they do not consider such heavenly arts as music etc. as the

devil’s snare, and consequently the Hungarians are great adepts in music and are renowned for this all over Europe.

Formerly I had the notion that people of cold climates did not take hot chillies, which was merely a bad habit of warm climate people. But the habit of taking chillies, which we observed to begin with Hungary and which reached its climax in Rumania and Bulgaria etc., appeared to me to beat even your South Indians.

Chapter 4

Addenda

MEMOIRS OF EUROPEAN TRAVEL

ADDENDA

(These interesting jottings were found among Swamiji's papers
— Ed.)

The first view of Constantinople we had from the train. It is an ancient city, with big drains running across the walls, narrow and crooked lanes full of dirt, and wooden houses, etc., but in them there is a certain beauty owing to their novelty. At the station we had great trouble over our books. Mademoiselle Calvé and Jules Bois tried much, in French, to reason with the octroi officers, which gradually led to a quarrel between the parties. The head of the officers was a Turk, and his dinner was ready; so the quarrel ended without further complications. They returned all the books with the exception of two which they held back. They promised to send them to the hotel immediately, which they never did. We went round the town and bazar of Stamboul or Constantinople. Beyond the Pont or creek is the Pera or foreigners' quarters, hotels, etc., whence we got into a carriage, saw the town, and then took some rest. In the evening we went to visit Woods Pasha, and the next day started on an excursion along the Bosphorus in a boat. It was extremely cold and there was a strong wind. So I and Miss MacLeod got down at the first station. It was decided that we would cross over to Scutari and see Père Hyacinthe. Not knowing the language we engaged a boat by signs merely, crossed over, and hired a carriage. On the way we saw the seat of a Sufi Fakir. These Fakirs cure people's diseases, which they do in the following manner. First they read a portion of their scriptures, moving their body backward and forward; then they begin to dance and gradually get a sort of inspiration, after which they heal the disease by treading on the patient's body.

We had a long talk with Père Hyacinthe about the American Colleges, after which we went to an Arab shop where we met a Turkish student. Then we returned from Scutari. — We had found out a boat, but it failed to reach its exact destination. However, we took a tram from the place where we were landed and returned to our quarters at the hotel at Stamboul. The Museum at Stamboul

is situated where the ancient harem of the Greek Emperors once stood. We saw some remarkable sarcophagi and other things, and had a charming view of the city from above Topkhana. I enjoyed taking fried chick peas here after such a long time, and had spiced rice and some other dishes, prepared in the Turkish fashion. After visiting the cemetery of Scutari we went to see the ancient walls. Within the walls was the prison — a dreadful place. Next we met Woods Pasha and started for the Bosphorus. We had our dinner with the French chargé d'affaires and met a Greek Pasha and an Albanian gentleman. The Police have prohibited Père Hyacinthe's lectures; so I too cannot lecture. We saw Mr. Devanmall and Chobeji — a Gujarâti Brahmin. There are a good many Indians here — Hindustanis, Mussalmans, etc. We had a talk on Turkish Philosophy and heard of Noor Bey, whose grandfather was a Frenchman. They say he is as handsome as a Kashmiri. The women here have got no purdah system and are very free. Prostitution is chiefly a Mohammedan practice. We heard of Kurd Pasha and the massacre of Armenians. The Armenians have really no country of their own, and those countries which they inhabit have generally a preponderating Mohammedan population. A particular tract called Armenia is unknown. The present Sultan is constructing a Hamidian cavalry out of the Kurds who will be trained in the manner of the Cossacks and they will be exempted from conscription.

The Sultan called the Armenian and Greek Patriarchs and proposed to them conscription as an alternative for payment of taxes. They might thus serve to protect their motherland. They replied that if they went as soldiers to fight and died by the side of the Mohammedans, there would be some confusion about the interment of Christian soldiers. The Sultan's rejoinder to this was that it might be remedied by providing for both Mohammedan and Christian priests in each regiment, who would conduct the funeral service together when in the exigencies of battle the dead bodies of Christian and Mohammedan soldiers would have to be buried in a heap all together, and there could possibly be no harm if the souls of men of one religion heard in addition the funeral services meant for those of the other religion. But the Christians did not agree — so they continue to pay taxes. The surest reason of their not acquiescing in the proposal was their fear lest by living with the Mohammedans

they might turn Mohammedan wholesale. The present Sultan of Stamboul is a very hard-working man and he personally supervises everything, including even the arrangement of amusements, such as theatrical performances etc., in the palace. His predecessor, Murad, was really a most unfit man, but the present Sultan is very intelligent. The amount of improvement he has made in the condition of the State in which he found it at his accession is simply wonderful. The Parliamentary system will not be successful in this country.

At 10 in the morning we left Constantinople, passing a night and a day on the sea, which was perfectly placid. By degrees we reached the Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmora. In one of the islands of the Marmora we saw a monastery of the Greek religion. Formerly there was ample opportunity for religious education here, for it was situated between Asia on one side and Europe on the other. While out in the morning on a visit of the Mediterranean Archipelago we came across Professor Liper, whose acquaintance I had already made in the Pachiappa College at Madras. In one of the islands we came upon the ruins of a temple, which had probably been dedicated to Neptune, judging from its position on the sea-shore. In the evening we reached Athens, and after passing a whole night under quarantine we obtained permission for landing in the morning. Port Peiraeus is a small town, but very beautiful, having a European air about it in all respects, except that one meets now and then with one or two Greeks dressed in gowns. From there we drove five miles to have a look at the ancient walls of Athens which used to connect the city with the port. Then we went through the town; the Acropolis, the hotels, houses, and streets, and all were very neat and clean. The palace is a small one. The same day, again, we climbed the hillock and had a view of the Acropolis, the temple of the Wingless Victory, and the Parthenon, etc. The temple is made of white marble. Some standing remains of columns also we saw. The next day we again went to see these with Mademoiselle Melcarvi, who explained to us various historical facts relating thereto. On the second day we visited the temple of Olympian Zeus, Theatre Dionysius etc., as far as the sea-shore. The third day we set out for Eleusis, which was the chief religious seat of the Greeks. Here it was that the famous Eleusinian Mysteries used to be played. The ancient theatre of this place has been built anew by a rich Greek. The Olympian games too have been revived in the present times. They are held at a place near Sparta, the Americans carrying off the palm in them in many respects. But the Greeks won in the race from that place to this theatre of Athens. This year they gave undisputed proof of this trait of theirs in a competition with the Turks also. At 10 a.m. on the fourth day we got on board the Russian steamer, Czar, bound for Egypt. After reaching the dock we came to learn that the steamer was to start at 4 a.m. — perhaps we were too early or there would be some extra delay

in loading the cargo. So, having no other alternative, we went round and made a cursory acquaintance with the sculpture of Ageladas and his three pupils, Phidias, Myron, and Polycletus, who had flourished between 576 B.C. and 486 B.C. Even here we began to feel the great heat. In a Russian ship the first class is over the screw, and the rest is only deck — full of passengers, and cattle, and sheep. Besides, no ice was available in this steamer.

From a visit to the Louvre Museum in Paris I came to understand the three stages of Greek art. First, there was the Mycenaean art, then Greek art proper. The Achaean kingdom had spread its sway over the neighbouring islands and also mastered all the arts that flourished there, being imported from Asia. Thus did art first make its appearance in Greece. From the prehistoric times up to 776 B.C. was the age of the Mycenaean art. This art principally engaged itself in merely copying Asiatic art. Then from 776 B.C. to 146 B.C. was the age of Hellenic or true Greek art. After the destruction of the Achaean Empire by the Dorian race, the Greeks living on the continent and in the Archipelago founded many colonies in Asia. This led to a close conflict between them and Babylon and Egypt, which first gave rise to Greek art. This art in course of time gave up its Asiatic tinge and applied itself to an exact imitation of nature. The difference between Greek art and the art of other countries consists in this, that the former faithfully delineates the living phenomena of natural life.

From 776 B.C. to 475 B.C. is the age of Archaic Greek art. The figures are yet stiff — not lifelike. The lips are slightly parted, as if always in smiles. In this respect they resemble the works of Egyptian artists. All the statues stand erect on their legs — quite stiff. The hair and beard etc. and all carved in regular lines and the clothes in the statues are all wrapped close round the body, in a jumble — not like flowing dress.

Next to Archaic Greek art comes the age of Classic Greek art — from 475 B.C. to 323 B.C., that is to say, from the hegemony of Athens up to the death of Alexander the Great. Peloponnesus and Attica were the states where the art of this period flourished most. Athens was the chief city of Attica. A learned French art critic has written, "(Classic) Greek art at its highest development freed itself completely from the fetters of all established canons and became independent. It then recognised the art regulations of no country, nor guided itself according to them. The more we study the fifth century B.C., so brilliant in its art development — during which period all the perfect specimens of sculpture were turned out — the more is the idea brought home to our mind that Greek art owed its life and vigour to its cutting loose from the pale of stereotyped rules". This Classic Greek art had two schools — first, the Attic, and second, the Peloponnesian. In the Attic school, again, there were two different types — the first was the outcome of the genius of the gifted sculptor, Phidias, which a French

scholar has described in the following terms: "A marvel of perfection in beauty and a glorious specimen of pure and sublime ideas, which will never lose their hold upon the human mind". The masters in the second type of the Attic school were Scopas and Praxiteles. The work of this school was to completely divorce art from religion and keep it restricted to the delineation of merely human life.

The chief exponents of the second or Peloponnesian school of Classic Greek art were Polycleetus and Lysippus. One of these was born in the fifth century B.C., and the other in the fourth century B.C. They chiefly aimed at laying down the rule that the proportion of the human body must be faithfully reproduced in art.

From 323 B.C. to 146 B.C., that is, from the death of Alexander to the conquest of Attica by the Romans, is the period of decadence in Greek art. One notices in the Greek art of this period an undue attention to gorgeous embellishments, and an attempt to make the statues unusually large in bulk. Then at the time of the Roman occupation of Greece, Greek art contented itself merely by copying the works of previous artists of that country; and the only novelty there was, consisted in reproducing exactly the face of some particular individual.

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