

“The shores of the said sea in some places run out in shoals for 100 miles or more,¹ so that ships are in danger of grounding. And they cannot make the voyage but once a year, for from the beginning of April till the end of October the winds are westerly, so that no one can sail towards the west; and again 'tis just the contrary from the month of October till March. From the middle of May till the end of October the wind blows so hard that ships which by that time have not reached the ports whither they are bound, run a desperate risk, and if they escape it is great luck. And thus in the past year there perished more than sixty ships; and this year seven ships in places in our own immediate neighbourhood, whilst of what has happened elsewhere we have no intelligence. Their ships in these parts are mighty frail and uncouth, with no iron in them, and no caulking. They are sewn like clothes with twine. And so if the twine breaks anywhere there is a breach indeed! Once every year therefore there is a mending of this, more or less, if they propose to go to sea. And they have a frail and flimsy rudder like the top of a table, of a cubit in width, in the middle of the stern; and when they have to tack, it is done with a vast deal of trouble; and if it is blowing in any way hard, they cannot tack at all. They have but one sail and bearing at present the name of Siva-Samundra (the Sea or Lake of Siva) is a very holy and ancient site on an island in the Caveri south-east of Seringapatam, whilst the site we seek must have been on the coast. Perhaps, however, there is some indication of the existence of a place of importance on the coast in the name of which Samudra was an element, in passages of Firishta and Wassaf. The latter, in speaking of the civil wars of Maabar about this very time, says that the Raja had laid up 1,200 *krors* of gold besides jewels in the treasures of *Shahrmandi*; whilst the latter, after describing the prodigious spoils carried from the Peninsula by Malik Kafur in 1310, observes that he understood Dwara Samudra to have been since *destroyed by the encroachment of the sea*, and to lie in ruins. But Dwara Samudra the capital of the Belal Rajas was an inland city, which has been identified with Halabidu in Mysore (*Wassaf* in *Hammer Purgstall's Ilchane*, ii, 204; *Briggs's Firishta*, iv, 374).

¹ Here he refers apparently to the reefs and shoals between Ceylon and the mainland.