

long as he held a veto under the By-laws, he would exercise the power rigidly and with the utmost caution." This decision was in due course communicated to Mr. Dutt, who appears to be a man of considerable determination, and resolving not to be balked in his desire to become a Freemason, addressed a long appeal to the Earl of Zetland, then M.W. Grand Master in the course of which he mentioned, among other matters, as constituting a peculiar hardship in his case, that another Hindoo gentleman of his own rank in society had previously been proposed and initiated after making the following declaration: "I am not a Pantheist or a Polytheist. I do not identify my Creator with any one of His creatures. I believe in the existence of one Great Architect of the Universe, whose wish is the happiness of all His creatures, whose will is law, whose laws are impressed on the heart of every right-thinking individual, and whose never-failing justice shall reach the transgressors of His laws on the Great day of Judgment to come." This letter was dated the 9th November, 1863, and on the 7th February, 1865, Bro. W. Gray Clarke, the Grand Secretary, after apologising for a delay which had been unavoidable, as letters had to be written to India and information had to be gathered from different sources," informed Mr. Dutt that the Grand Master was not aware "that any objection had ever been raised against the initiation of anyone who professed a belief in the Great Architect of Heaven and Earth, and who was in other respects worthy to be admitted to the Order," and was "surprised to find that the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bengal had passed and had acted upon, a prohibitory law." Bro. Clarke added that this law had "since been removed," and consequently that there was nothing, "at least in as far as the Grand Master can infer, to prevent you or any other gentleman who believe in the one Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent God, and who in private life practice the sacred

duties of morality, from being initiated into the secrets and mysteries of our Order." The letter concluded with a reservation in respect of the Private Lodges, which had By-Laws of their own for the admission or rejection of candidates, and with which, provided they were not "inconsistent with the general laws of the Order," the Grand Master had no power to interfere. It may have been imagined that after such a letter, in which the law as to the admission of candidates—so far as the question of religion is concerned—was so fully and clearly explained, would have sufficed to enable Mr. Dutt to attain the object of his desires and become a Freemason, but the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bengal appears to have appealed against the order of the Grand Master, and again we find Mr. Dutt addressing himself to the authorities of Grand Lodge with a view to securing the removal of the obstacles to his admission into the Order. This we learn from a further letter from Bro. W. Gray Clarke, dated 19th October, 1865, in reply to one from Mr. Dutt of the 16th August preceeding, in which the G. Secretary, after again explaining that the G. Master has no power of interference, much less any intention to interfere, with "the individual feelings or opinions of any member of the Order," or "with any decision a Masonic Lodge might come to upon a ballot," informs his correspondent that "the Grand Master has since the meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bengal to which you refer, again refused to allow the objectionable By law to be retained," and that "any Lodge that is so disposed can admit you or any other native; but you must understand that no Lodge is compelled to do so."

The decision of Lord Zetland not "to allow the objectionable law to be retained" among the by-laws of the District Grand Lodge of Bengal had already been communicated to the District Grand Master in a letter dated the 23rd September, 1865, from which