

which are, as we have seen, more ancient than the majority of the hymns; 2) *Gâthâ*, i. e. stanzas, principally impromptus on sacrificial things, and topics of a more worldly nature, and *Itihâsas*, i. e. stories; 3) *Rules on the performance of the duties of the Hotripriests*; 4) *Theological expositions* of the meaning of mantras, sacred rites, &c. according to the teaching of the most eminent Brahmâ priests who preceded our author.

These materials were worked together by him, but not without many additions of his own, and with the view to present to the followers of his S'âkhâ a kind of encyclopædiæ of theological learning, and a supplement to their Veda. The theology of his S'âkhâ being founded on the hymns of the Rishis, and the latter being repeated by the Hotri-priests only at the sacrifices, he confined himself for the most part to the speculations of the Hotris and their duties. The aim of our author was like that of all other Brâhmaṇa compilers, a double one, viz. to serve practical as well as theoretical ends. From a practical point of view it was to be a guide to the repeaters of the mantras of the Rigveda in some of their most important performances; but as regards the theoretical one, the author intended to instruct them on the real ends of their profession, viz. to make the sacrificer, by means of the mystical power ascribed to the mantras, either attain to anything he might wish for, or if the Hotar should from some reason or other choose to do so, to deprive him through the same power of his property, children, and life.