

SECOND CHAPTER.

*(The remaining rites of the animal sacrifice.
The Prâtar-anuvâka).*

11.

(Why fire is carried round the sacrificial animal.)

The Devas spread the sacrifice. When doing so, the Asuras attacked them, intending to put an obstacle in their way (to prevent the successful performance of the sacrifice). The attack was made against the sacrificial post from the eastern direction after the animal had been consecrated by the Aprî verses (see 2, 4), and before the fire was carried round the animal. The Devas awoke, and surrounded for their own protection, as well as for that of the sacrifice, (the place) with a three-fold wall resembling fire. The Asuras seeing those walls shining and blazing, did not venture an attack, but ran away. Thus the Devas defeated the Asuras on the eastern side as well as on the western. For this reason the sacrificers perform the rite of carrying fire round (the animal, when consecrated), and have a mantra recited ; for they thus surround (the animal), with a three-fold wall shining like fire for their own protection and that of the sacrifice.

After the animal is consecrated, and fire carried around it, they take it northwards. They carry before it¹ a firebrand, meaning thereby that the animal is ultimately the sacrificer himself ; they believe that he will go to heaven having that light (the firebrand)

and Ilâ, the personification of food, called to appear. This "calling," of Ilâ is always the same. The formula is given in the As'val. S'r. Sûtras 1, 7 : इळेपह्ता सह दिवा०

¹ The Agnîdhra is performing this rite. See 2, 5.