

strictest accordance with the ceremony for which they are repeated, or (if the sacrifice lasts for several or many days) when they have the characteristics of the respective days. If the form is vitiated, the whole sacrifice is lost. Mistakes being, on account of the so extremely complicated ritual, unavoidable, the sacrificial being was to be attended by a physician in the person of the Brahma priest (5, 34). Each mistake must be made good by a *prâyas'chitta*, i. e. penance, or propitiatory offering.

The power and significance of the Hotri-priests at a sacrifice consists in their being the masters of the sacred word, which is frequently personified by *Vâch*, i. e. Speech, who is identical with Sarasvatî, the goddess of learning in the later Hindu Pantheon. Speech has, according to the opinion of the earliest Hindu divines, the power of vivifying and killing. The sacred words pronounced by the Hotar effect, by dint of the innate power of *Vâch*, the spiritual birth of the sacrificer, form his body, raise him up to heaven, connect him with the prototypes of those things which he wishes to obtain (such as children, cattle, &c.) and make him attain to his full life term, which is a hundred years; but they are at the same time a weapon by means of which the sacrificer's enemies, or he himself (if the Hotar have any evil designs against him) can be killed, and all evil consequences of sin (this is termed *pâpman*) be destroyed. The power and effect of Speech as regards the obtaining of any particular thing wished for, mainly lies in the form in which it is uttered. Thence