

Having laid aside his own implements (weapons), and taken up those of the Brahma, and having thus become Brahma, by means of the Brahma form, he returned to the sacrifice. Therefore they should proclaim him as a Dîkshita, with the name of his house-priest's ancestral fires, and invoke them also in the Pravara<sup>8</sup> prayer.

<sup>8</sup> By *pravara* which literally means "choice, particular address," (see 6, 14), we have to understand the invocation of the sacrificial fires lighted by the principal Rishi ancestors of the sacrificer. This invocation may comprise only one, or two, or three, or five ancestral fires, the name of which is *ârsheya*; the *pravara* becomes accordingly *ekârsheya*, *dvyârsheya*, *tryârsheya*, and *pañchârsheya*, i.e. having one or two, &c. Rishis. This invocation takes place at the very commencement of the sacrifice, after the fire has been kindled under the recital of the Sâmidhenî verses, and at the time of the Subrahmanyâ proclamation (see 6, 3) after the sacrificer has become in consequence of the initiatory rites, such as Dîkshâ, Pravargya, &c. a Dîkshita. As'val. gives in his S'râuta Sûtras (1, 3), the following rules regarding this rite:

यजमानस्याप्येयान्प्रवृणीते यावन्तः स्युः परं परं प्रथमं । पौरोहित्या-  
नराजविशां राजर्षीन्वा राज्ञां सर्वेषां मानवेति संशये. i.e. the Hotar particularly mentions the fires of the Rishi ancestors of the sacrificer, as many as he may have (one, or two, or three, or five). He mentions one after the other, but the first (in the general enumeration) is to be made the last (at the time of sacrificing). If the sacrificers happen to be Kshattriyas or Vais'yas, he mentions the fires of the Rishi ancestors of their Purohitas (house-priests), or the princely Rishis (*râjarshi*, who might have been their ancestors). If there should be any doubt, the word *mânava*, i.e. descended from or made by Manu, may be used in the case of all kings.

This explanation of the terms *pravara* and *ârsheya* have been already given by Max Müller (History of Ancient Sanscrit Literature, page 386) according to the authority of As'valâyana, and *Bâudhâyana*. It has been doubted, of late, by Dr. Hall (in his paper on three Sanscrit Inscriptions in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal of 1862, page 115), but without any sufficient reason. He says "*pravaras* appear to be names of the families of certain persons from whom the founders of Gotras were descended, and of the families of the founders themselves." But if this were the case, it would be surprising, that the founders of certain Gotras should claim to descent not only from one but from several Rishi ancestors. All the Gotras have eight great ancestors only, viz. Vis'vâmitra, Jamadagni, Bharadvâja, Gautama, Atri, Vasishtha, Kas'yapa, and Agastya. These occupy with the Brahmans about the same position as the twelve sons of Jacob with