

## FIFTH CHAPTER.

(*The ceremonies of carrying the fire, Soma, and the offerings from their places in the Prâchîna-vam̃sa to the Uttarâ Vedi.*)

## 27.

The king Soma lived among the Gandharvas. The Gods and Rishis deliberated, as to how the king might be induced to return to them. *Vâch* (the goddess of speech) said, the Gandharvas lust after women. I (therefore) shall transform myself into a woman, and then you sell me to them (in exchange for Soma).<sup>1</sup> The gods answered, No! how may we live without thee? She said, sell me unto them; if you should want me, I shall return to you. Thus they did. In the disguise of a big naked woman she was sold (by the gods to the Gandharvas) in exchange for Soma. In imitation (of this precedent) they drive away an immaculate cow of one year's age, being the price <sup>2</sup> at which they purchase the king Soma. She (this cow) may, however, be rebought <sup>3</sup>; for *Vâch* (whom this cow, for which the Soma is bought, represents) returned to the gods. Thence the mantras (after Soma has been bought) are to be repeated with a low voice. After Soma has been bought, *Vâch* is with the Gandharvas; but she returns as soon as the ceremony of the Agniprayana is performed.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the meaning of the verb *pan*, which appears to be related to the Latin *pignus*, pawn.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of giving a cow, the sacrificer pays the price of a cow in money to the Brahman who brings him the Soma. To sell Soma is regarded as very disreputable. The seller is not admitted to the sacrificial compound nor invited to the great dinner which the sacrificer must give to Brahmans at the end of the sacrifice.

<sup>3</sup> As a rule, the cows given in *Dakshinâ*, cannot be rebought by the giver.