

## FOURTH CHAPTER.

(On the origin, meaning, and universal nature of the Agnishtoma as the model of other sacrifices. On the Chatushtoma and Jyotishtoma.)

## 39.

(On the origin of the name "Agnishtoma," and its meaning.)

The Devas went to war with the Asuras, in order to defeat them. Agni was not willing to follow them. The Devas then said to him, "Go thou also, for thou art one of us." He said, "I shall not go unless a ceremony of praise is performed for me. Do ye that now." So they did. They all rose up (from their places), turned towards Agni, and performed the ceremony of praising him. After having been praised, he followed them. He having assumed the shape of three rows, attacked in three battle lines the Asuras in order to defeat them. The three rows were made only of the metres (*Gâyatrî*, *Trishtubh*, *Jagatî*). The three battle lines are only the three libations. He defeated them beyond expectation. Thence the Devas put down the Asuras. The enemy, the incarnate sin (*pâpman*), the adversary of him who has such a knowledge, perishes by himself.

The Agnishtoma is just as the *Gâyatrî*. The latter has twenty-four syllables (if all its three padas are counted) and the Agnishtoma has twenty-four Stotras and Shastras.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> That is to say, twelve Stotras or performances of the Sâma singers, and twelve Shastras or recitations of the Hotri-priests. To each Stotra a Shastra corresponds. The twelve Shastras are as follows :—(A) At the morning libation—1) the Ajya and 2) Pra-uga to be repeated by the Hotar, 3) the Shastra of the Maitrâvaruṇa,