

daughter, see Ait. Br. 3, 33) we may clearly perceive that Nâbhânedishṭha and the hymn in question refer to generation. This view is fully corroborated by the application of it at the sacrifice, as expounded by the Brâhmaṇam, and as even presupposed in the hymn itself.

We know from various passages of the Brâhmaṇas, that one of the principal acts of the sacrificial priests was to make a new body to the sacrificer, and produce him anew by mantras, and various rites, by making him mystically undergo the same process to which he owed his natural life. So, for instance, the whole Pravargya ceremony (see note 1 to pages 41-43), the Ajya and Pra-uga Shastras (see Ait. Br. 2, 35-38 ; 3, 2) of the morning libation, and the so-called Shilpa Shastras (6, 27-31) of the Hotṛi-priests are intended for this purpose. Of the latter the two Nâbhânedishṭha hymns form the two first parts, representing the seed effused, and its transformation to an embryo in its rudest state (see 6, 27). Nâbhânedishṭha is the sperm when effused ; after having undergone some change in the womb, it is called Narâs'aṁsa.¹⁵ That the hymn originally had such a mystical sense, is evident from the two first verses :

¹⁵ This idea must be very old ; for we find an unmistakeable trace of it in the Zoroastrian tradition. So we read in the Bundesh (page 80 in Westergaard's edition of the Pehlevi text) that the angel Nerioseng (*nerioseng yazd* = *narâs'aṁsa yajata* in Sanscrit) intercepted the three particles of sperm which Zoroaster is said to have once lost, and out of which the three great prophets, *Oshadar (bâmi)*, *Oshadar mâh*, and *Sosiosh* are expected to spring at the end of the world.