

their reign. They marched out in several divisions and deliberated. Agni marched out with the Vasus, and deliberated. Indra did so with the Rudras; Varuna with the Adityas; and Brihaspati with the Visve Devas. Thus all, having severally marched out, deliberated. They said, "Well, let us put these our dearest bodies ²² in the house of Varuna the king, (*i. e.*, water); he among us who should out of greediness transgress this (oath, not to do any thing which might injure the sacrificer), he shall no more be joined with them." ²³

in it. He then takes a vessel (*Kaṁsâ*, a goblet) into which, after having placed it on the Vedi, he puts by means of a *Sruva* the melted butter contained in the *Dhruvâ*. He puts five times the *Sruva* in the *Dhruvâ* and each time after a piece of melted butter having been taken out, a *Yajus* (sacrificial formula) is repeated, viz : *âpataye tvâ grihṇâmi* ; *paripataye tvâ grihṇâmi* ; *tânûnaptre tvâ grihṇâmi* ; *s'âkvarâya tvâ grihṇâmi* ; *sakmann ojishthâya tvâ grihṇâmi* (see Black Yajurveda 1,2,10,2. ; Vâjasaneyâ-Saṁh. 5, 5, where *grihṇâmi* and *tvâ* are only put once). All priests with the sacrificer now touch the vessel (*Kaṁsa*) in which the *âjya* or melted butter thus taken out of the *Dhruvâ* had been put. They may touch however the *âjya* (melted butter) by means of a stalk of Kus'a grass. When touching the butter, they all repeat the formula : *anâdhrishṭam asi*, &c. (Bl. Y. 1, 2, 10, 2.) "thou art inviolable." All the seven Hotars then put their hands in the *madantî*, a copper vessel, which is filled with water. This latter ceremony, only performed by the Hotars, is regarded as the symbolical deposition of the priests' own bodies in the "house of Varuna," which is only a poetical expression for the copper vessel filled with water.

As to the name *tânûnaptram* one is induced to refer it to *tanûnapât*, a name of Agni, by which he is invoked in the *Prayâjas* and which occurs along with others at this very ceremony. But I doubt whether the name *tânûnaptram* has here anything to do with *Agni tanûnapât*. The latter word means only, one's own son, or one's own relative. By taking this solemn oath the sacrificer and the officiating priests come as it were into the closest contact with one another, bound by ties as strong as family ties. The term, therefore, means only : contracting of the closest relationship, brotherhood.

²² Sây. understands by this expression "wife and children." But this interpretation is doubtful to me.

²³ This is the formula of the oath, which is very ancient in language, as the forms : *Saṁgacchatâi*, 3rd pers. sing., conjunct., middle voice, and, *bhavishâd*, conjunct. of the aorist, clearly prove.