

offspring, any one be found who might cut them. By speaking these words, he presents these entrails to the slaughterers among the gods as well as to those among men.

The Hotar shall then say thrice: *O Adhrigu* (and ye others), *kill* (the animal), *do it well; kill it, O Adhrigâu*. After the animal has been killed, (he should say thrice :) *Far may it* <sup>18</sup> (the consequences of murder) be (from us). For *Adhrigu* among the gods is he who silences <sup>19</sup> (the animal) and the *Apâpa* (away, away!) is he who puts it down. By speaking those words he surrenders the animal to those who silence it (by stopping its mouth), and to those who butcher it.

The Hotar then mutters (he makes *japa*): “O slaughterers! may all good you might do abide by us! and all mischief you might do go elsewhere.” The Hotar <sup>20</sup> gives by (this) speech the order (for killing the animal), for Agni had given the order for killing (the animal) with the same words when he was the Hotar of the gods.

By those words (the *japa* mentioned) the Hotar removes (all evil consequences) from those who suffocate the animal and those who butcher it, in all that they might transgress the rule by cutting one

<sup>18</sup> *Apâpa*. This formula is evidently nothing but the repetition of the particle *apa*, away! It was very early misunderstood, as we may see from the very explanation given of it by the author of our Brâhmaṇam; for he takes it as *apâpah*, i. e. guiltless, and makes it the name of one of the divine slaughterers.

<sup>19</sup> He is the proper *S'amitâ* or silencer.

<sup>20</sup> The Hotar must recite at the sacrifice the whole formula, from “Ye divine slaughterers,” &c. The whole of it, consisting of many so-called *prâishas* or orders ought properly to be repeated, by the Adhvaryu, who generally calls upon the different priests to do their respective duties. This exception to the rule is here explained by a reference to what Agni, the model Hotar, had once done when officiating at a sacrifice brought by the gods.