

be attended to. (If one should observe a Hotar commencing the As'vina Shastra with the verse *agnim manaye*) one should say to him, "if (a Shastra) has been commenced with repeatedly mentioning *agni*⁴ fire, the Hotar will (ultimately) fall into the fire (be burnt by it)." Thus it always happens. Thence the Hotar ought to commence with the verse: *agnir hotâ grihapatiḥ*. This verse contains in the terms *grihapati* house-father, and *janima* generations, the propitiation (of the word *agni* fire, with which it commences, and is therefore not dangerous) for attaining to the full age. He who has such a knowledge attains to his full age (of one hundred years).

8.

(The race run by the gods for obtaining the As'vina Shastra as a prize.)

Among (all) these deities who were running the race, Agni was with his mouth (the flames) in advance (of all others) after they had started. The As'vins (closely) followed him, and said to him, "Let us both be winners of this race." Agni consented, under the condition that he should also have a share in it (the As'vina Shastra). They consented, and made room also for him in this (As'vina Shastra). This is the reason that there is in the As'vina Shastra a series of verses addressed to Agni.

The As'vins (closely) followed Ushâs. They said to her, "Go aside, that we both may be winners of the race." She consented, under the condition that they should give her also a share in it (the As'vina Shastra). They consented, and made room also for

⁴ The verse in question contains four times the word *agni*. This is regarded as inauspicious. The deity should not be always mentioned with its very name, but with its epithets.