

Ruchi again said, "O Fathers, the way of works is called *avidyā*, or ignorance, in the Vedas. How then can you exhort me to enter that path?"

The fathers thus solved this problem: "True it is that works are ignorance, this is not a false saying. Nevertheless works are necessary for the acquisition of knowledge. The mortification practised, with a view to emancipation, by wicked men who neglect the prescribed duties, leads them at length to infernal regions. Thou thinkest, O child, that thou art cleansing thy soul, but in truth thou art being soiled with sin from the neglect of prescribed duties. Even ignorance, like poison, is for the good of men." Arguments, such as these, produced conviction in the mind of Ruchi, and the deceased fathers vanished at once, "like a lamp blown out by the wind," and their terrestrial son succeeded, after the most gallant efforts, in obtaining a bride, and became the father of a hero named Rauchya.

The remainder of the Purāṇa is a repetition of the process of creation, and the rise of the early patriarchs, interspersed with devotional addresses, after the Magian model, to the sun and to fire, and giving the legendary annals of the age, until the time of a king named Dama. Professor Wilson considers this as rather an abrupt termination, and suggests the possibility of its being only the first part of the Purāṇa, though there is no second or supplementary part extant.

We incline to the opinion that no Purāṇa was composed in its integrity in the same age, or by the same person, excepting only the sectarian ones like the Śrī Bhāgavata. That the Mārcaṇḍeya, which is certainly not sectarian, was not composed in its integrity by the same person and in the same age, appears from the differ-