

APPENDIX V

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE VEDAS

The Hindus are enjoined to study the Vedas every day the Satapatha Brahmana explains the reasons for it. It says:

“There are only five great sacrifices, which are the great ceremonies, viz., the offering to living creatures,¹ the offering to men, the offering to the fathers, the offering to the gods, and the Veda-offering (*Brahma-yajna*). 2. Let an oblation be daily presented to living creatures. Thus the offering to them is fulfilled. Let (hospitality) be daily bestowed even down to the bowl of water; Thus is the offering to men fulfilled. Let the oblation to the gods be daily presented² as far as the faggot of wood. Thus is the offering to the gods fulfilled. 3. Next is the Veda-offering. This means private study³ (of the sacred books). In this Veda-sacrifice speech is the *juhu*, the soul the *upabhr̥it*, the eye the *dhruva*, intelligence the *sruva*,⁴ truth the ablution, and paradise the conclusion. He who, knowing this, daily studies the Veda, conquers an undecaying world more than thrice as great as that which he acquires who bestows this whole earth filled with riches. Wherefore the Veda should be studied. 4. Verses of the Rig-veda are milk-oblations to the Gods. He who, knowing this, daily reads these verses satisfies the gods with milk-oblations; and they being satisfied, satisfy him with property, with breath, with generative power, with complete bodily soundness, with all excellent blessings. Streams of butter, streams of honey flow as svadha-oblations to the fathers. 5. Yajush-verses are

¹ This sacrifice, as I learn from Prof. Aufrecht, consists in scattering grain for the benefit of birds, etc. See Bohtlingk and Roth's Lexicon, s. v. bali. In regard to the other sacrifices see Colebrooke's Misc. Essays, i. pp. 150, 153, 182 ff., 203 ff.

² In explanation of this Prof. Aufrecht refers to Katyayana's Srauta Sutras, iv. 1, 10 and Manu, iii. 210, 214, 218.

³ Svadhyayah sva-sakhadhyanam “Reading of the Veda in one's own sakha.”—comm.

⁴ These words denote sacrificial spoons or ladles of different kinds of wood. See the drawings of them in Prof. Muller's article on the funeral rites of the Brahmans, Journ. of the Germ. or. Sec. Vol. ix. pp. Ixxviii and Lxxx.

This is a six-page typed copy on ‘The Infallibility of the Vedas’ having no corrections or instructions by the author. The latter portion of this chapter is not available.—Ed.

offerings of butter to the gods. He who, knowing this, daily reads these verses, satisfies the gods with offerings of butter; and they, being satisfied, satisfy him, etc. (as in the preceding paragraph). 6. Saman-verses are soma-libations to the gods. He who, knowing this, daily reads these verses, satisfies the gods with soma-libations; and they being satisfied, satisfy him, etc. (as above). 7. Verses of Atharvan and Angiras (atharvangirasah¹) are oblations of fat to the gods. He who, knowing this, daily reads these verses, satisfies the gods with oblations of fat; and they etc. (as above). 8. Prescriptive and scientific treatises, dialogues, traditions, tales, verses and eulogistic texts are oblations of honey to the gods. He who, knowing this, daily reads these, satisfies the gods with oblations of honey; and they etc. (as above). 9. Of this Veda-sacrifice there are four Vashatkaras when the wind blows, when it lightens, when it thunders, when it crashes; wherefore when it blows, lightens, thunders, or crashes, let the man, who knows this, read, in order that these *Vashatkaras* may not be interrupted². He who does so is freed from dying a second time, and attains to an union with Brahma. Even if he cannot read vigorously, let him read one text relating to the gods. Thus he is not deprived of his living creatures.”

xi. 5, 7, 1 : “Now comes an encomium upon Vedic study. Study and teaching are loved. He (who practises them) becomes composed in mind. Independent of others, he daily attains his objects, sleeps pleasantly, becomes his own best physician. Control of his senses, concentration of mind, increase of intelligence, renown, capacity to educate mankind [are the results of study]. Increasing intelligence secures for the Brahman the four attributes of saintliness, suitable conduct, renown, and capacity for educating mankind. When so educated, men guarantee to the Brahman the enjoyment of the four prerogatives which are his due, reverence, the receipt of gifts, freedom from oppression, and from death by violence. 2. Of all the modes of exertion, which are known between heaven and earth, study of the Veda occupies the highest rank, (in the case of him) who, knowing this, studies it. Wherefore this study is to be practised. 3. On every occasion when a man studies the Vedic hymns he (in fact) performs a complete *ceremonial of sacrifice*, i.e. whosoever, knowing this, so studies. Wherefore this study, etc., etc. 4. And even when a man perfumed with unguents adorned with jewels, satiated with food, and reposing on a comfortable couch, studies the Veda he (has all the merit of one who) performs penance

¹ The Atharva Samhita is so called.

² See Bothlingk and Roth's Lexicon, s. v. chhambat.

(left) to the very tips of his nails¹: (such is the case with him) who, knowing this, studies. Wherefore etc. 5. Rig-veda-verses are honey, Sama-verses butter, Yajus-verses nectar (*amrita*). When a man reads dialogues (*vakovakya*) and legends these two sorts of composition are respectively oblations of cooked milk and cooked flesh. 6. He who, knowing this, daily reads Rig-veda verses, satisfies the gods with honey; and they, when satisfied, satisfy him with all objects of desire, and with all enjoyments. 7. He who, knowing this, daily reads Sama-verses, satisfies the gods with butter; and they, when satisfied, etc. (as before). 8. He who, knowing this, daily reads Yajus-verses, satisfies the gods with nectar; and they, etc. (as before). 9. He who, knowing this, daily studies dialogues and the different classes of ancient stories, satisfies the gods with milk—and flesh-oblations; and they, etc. (as before). 10. The waters move. The Sun moves. The Moon moves. The constellations move. The Brahman who on any day does not study the Veda, is on that day like what these moving bodies would be if they ceased to move or act. Wherefore such study is to be practised. Let a man therefore present as his offering a verse of the Rig-veda, or the Saman, or the Yajush, or a Gatha, or a Kumvyā, in order that the course of his observances may not be interrupted.”

Manu also supports the Satapatha Brahmana. He says:

“The Veda is the eternal eye of the fathers, of Gods, and of men; it is beyond human power and comprehension; this is a certain conclusion. Whatever traditions are apart from the Veda, and all heretical views, are fruitless in the next world, for they are declared to be founded on darkness. All other (books) external to the Veda, which arise and pass away, are worthless and false from their recentness of date. The system of the four castes, the three worlds, the four states of life, all that has been, now is, or shall be, is made manifest by the Veda. The objects of touch and taste, sound, form, and odour, as the fifth, are made known by the Veda, together with their products, qualities, and the character of their action. The eternal Veda supports all beings; hence I regard it as the principle instrument of well-being to this creature, man. Command of armies, royal authority, the administration of criminal justice, and the sovereignty of all worlds, he alone deserves who knows the

¹ This sentence is differently rendered by Professor Weber, Ind. Stud. x. p. 112, as follows: “He burns (with sacred fire) to the very tips of his nails.” In a later page of the same Essay we are told that according to the doctrine of a teacher called Naka Maudgaly as stated in the Taittiriya Aranyaka, the study and teaching of the Veda are the real tapas svadhyaya-pravachane eva tad hi tapah). In the text of the Aranyaka itself, vii. 8, it is declared that study and teaching should always accompany such spiritual or ritual acts as satyam, tapas, dama, sama the *agnihotra* sacrifice, etc. See Indische Studien, ii. 214, and x. 113.

Veda. As fire, when it has acquired force, burns up even green trees, so he who knows the Veda consumes the taint of his soul which has been contracted from works. He who comprehends the essential meaning of the Veda, in whatever order of life he may be, is prepared for absorption into Brahma, even while abiding in this lower world.”

Manu however is not satisfied with this. He goes much beyond and enunciates the following new doctrine—

“By Sruti is meant the Veda, and by Smriti the institutes of law: the contents of these are not to be questioned by reason, since from them (a knowledge of) duty has shone forth. The Brahman who, relying on rationalistic treatises¹, shall condemn these two primary sources of knowledge, must be excommunicated by the virtuous as a sceptic and reviler of the Vedas 13. To those who are seeking a knowledge of duty, the sruti is the supreme authority.”



¹ This, however, must be read in conjunction with the precept in xii. 106, which declares arsham dharmopadesam cha veda-sastravirodhina yas tarkenanusandhatte sa dharman veda naparah “He, and he only is acquainted with duty, who investigates the injunctions of the rishis, and the precepts of the smriti, by reasonings which do not contradict the Veda.”

PART II

Social

According to the original Table of Contents by the author Part I and Part III are classified as Religious and Political respectively while Part II is not given any classification. However, this part is classified as 'Social' on one of the pages from Riddle No. 21. This Part contained six riddles including 'The Riddle of Women' entitled 'Why did the Brahmins degrade the Indian Women?'. This chapter has already been included in Vol. No. 3 of this series under the title 'Revolution and Counter-Revolution' vide Ch. 17. Hence it is excluded from this volume.

