SECTION III. (Continued.)

CHAPTER VI. (Continued. Sub-Section (iii). THE SACRAMENTS MENTIONED IN THE YAJUR-VEDA.

The significance of the samskaras or sacraments.—Their dual aspect, conventional, unreal or formal, and real or metaphysical.—The supreme importance of upanayana.—The symbolical meaning of certain ceremonial articles connected with brahma-acharya.—The sixteen samskaras.

Thus we see that action bases itself on and is connected with cognition, and hence the ordinance that sacrifices should be performed after completing brahma-acharya. It is true that morning and evening havana, offering into the fire, is ordained during brahma-acharya also, but it has a special significance there. The Smriti-verse says: Having got together the fuel of samit or palasha (different kinds of wood) let him raise the fire, morning and evening. Here samit and palasha signify only study and the revision of the lessons. Samit indicates knowledge generally; palasha means the same with reference to practical application and action; agni is desire; the three correspond to the primal Trinity. Mutual discussion, the voluntary exposition of their special subjects to each other, by students, is havana. The 'mornings and evenings,' are the proper time for study.

When brahma-acharya has been completed successfully the desire for selfish results disappears. Hence the placing of the household life after it. Only in this wise, joy and sorrow being both seen to be naught, can the work of Brahman, duty, be performed steadfastly.

The begging for food enjoined upon brahma-acharis has also for object the removal of all false sense of pride and humiliation, and the realisation of all as Self. ¹

Because both knowledge and action are means to moksha, therefore is samskara, consecration, initiation, needed for all persons. Without such sacrament the realisation of Brahman cannot be accomplished. The rules as to caste, etc., are all connected with samskara. There are two primary divisions of caste, dvija, twice-born, and advija, non twice-born. The latter is the shudra, the servant of all beings. The

¹ And also, we may perhaps add, the circulation of a constant current of affection between the house-holders as a body and the students, their own children, as a body; an ideal and idyllic condition of the truest and highest socialism where anybody's child would be treated in any and every house as a child of that house, when he comes hungry, asking for food.
former is he who has been born from or by means of two kinds of sacrament. This class is sub-divided into brahma, kshatriya, and vaishya by correspondence to A, U, and M. The two kinds of consecration are the satya, true or real, and the asatya, false or apparent and conventional. The true consecration is connected with the knowledge of Brahma; the conventional one with the work, activity, or external forms and appearances and manifestations of Brahma. Above both is the third, viz., the asamskrtta, the unconsecrated or beyond consecration.

The true consecration is the conjunction, the harmonious emergence and union, of cognition and action, which is possible only when all three, viz., karma, jhana, and bhakti have been gained, and are evenly combined. But the gain of one only of these is also a sacrament, and that is a conventional one.

1 The current interpretation of dvija is 'born a second time' by means of the sacrament of upanayanana, the 'leading up' to the Teacher, (ultimately to Brahma, by means of the baptism of fire, the fire of heart-searching and world-searching, the fire of pain and sorrow out of which arises the introspective consciousness, the true second birth).

2 These words may perhaps be translated briefly and conveniently, by gnostics, pista, and energism (see Baldwin's Dictionary of Philosophy).

The nature of the birth and origin of all beings in one and the same, viz., a conjunction of purusha and Prakriti, Self and Not-Self, because of mutual desire. These beings are sub-divided into four kinds, minerals, vegetables, animals, and humans, corresponding to cognition, desire, action and the summation. These four are connected with sthula or dense matter and are perceivable by the physical senses. Before and after these four, too, extends an endless series, in correspondence with the rule of four; and within these four, again, are endless atoms, and a tetrad within each atom. All is thus transcendental and infinite, and, in this view, we see at once that all is relative and similar in respect of all action, i.e., of becoming or birth, stay, death, rebirth, etc.

All men are thus the same in birth; but their work is different and differentiates them in accordance with the predominance of cognition, or desire, or action, the fourth or summation, being the service of all, sudderahood.

He who simply serves all beings is the sudderaha; he has no clear knowledge, either of the relation of action and desire or of the summation. (This is the first stage). Of these sudras, he who begins to slightly know the Self, the Not-Self and the Negation, his consciousness begins to turn inwards from outwards; for and by means of this he restrains the
activity of the senses and strives after self-control, svā-vāṣhī-karaṇa, and thus attains vaishya-hood. This inward-turning of the consciousness is the true consecration. The unreal consecration, on the other hand, is the outer imitation thereof by taking up brahma-chaṇya and its duties, viz., the study of the inner or subjective and other sciences, whereby fitness for the true consecration is gained. In the condition of the shudra, to serve for personal gain is the imitation of the true service which is devoid of all expectation of return, and so constitutes aṣṭa-shudra-tva, false shudra-hood; whereas service based on the consciousness that all is produced from the one, even though it be external service with the immediate attention directed outward and the senses active, makes saṭ-shudra-tva, true or good shudra-hood. So the mere imitation,

1 It must be clear to the reader and should be borne in mind that the words saṭ and aṣṭa, real and unreal, true and false, have a technical sense in this work, and that the second has no disparaging or condemnatory implication. They correspond with metaphysical and physical, ideal and real, transcendental and empirical, abstract and concrete, principle and practice, theory and embodiment, rule and illustration, homogenous and heterogenous, generalisation and differentiation, universal and particular, law and instance.
cognition, action and desire by two (i.e., cognition and action?) gives the six; while the totality of them is the seventh.

This inward turning of the consciousness, then, is the second or satya, true and real, samskara, which brings about the second birth, or birth by means of the samskaras.

The upanayana (literally, leading up or guiding, and conventionally investiture with the sacred thread) is the chief of all sacraments. It can be accomplished only with the help of a sadguru, a true preceptor. When the understanding arises in the jiva that the whole of samasra is an inseparable compound of pleasure and pain, that pleasure can never be secured in the world unalloyed with and unmarred by pain, then is the proper time for this consecration. 'The maker of all this is Ishvara; I am the Atma; all is composed of Brahman, and Brahman is ananda itself qualified by sat and chit. How and why then is there all this doubt and illusion in this world, and this perplexing rotation of birth, life and death; how pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, love and hate? What and where is the law and order in all this? How and from what does all this arise?' When such reflections arise in the jiva then he seeks out his sadguru and obtains knowledge from him and becomes an upanita, 'the guided, the brought up, the initiated.' The obtaining of exact knowledge of the Three in their unity and diversity alone constitutes the true upanayana.

The formal and external representation of this is the conventional ceremony, known as upavita, also called the vratabandha, 'the binding on or taking up of the vow,' for from that time begins the observance of the vow of brahmacharya, which means study of the subjective sciences. All rejoice on the occasion, for the possibility of gaining Brahm comes near to them all at the time. They are glad that this boy, their relative, becomes a brahmachari, a 'walker' in Brahman, does everything as directed by his acharya, guide and preceptor, and with him studies this supreme science.

The outer mark of the ceremony is the putting on of the thread. But the real triple thread is the trinity of cognition, desire and action. A yajna or sacrifice is performed on the occasion, for the successful accomplishment of the study and the removal of all hindrances thereto, and the devas of this world and rashis, maharshis,

"Because he 'gathers together' the essential teachings of all true sciences, because he "induces others to act" according to them, because he himself "lives them"—therefore is he given the honored name of acharya."
brāhmaṇas, yogīs and other high beings are invoked and invited to it as witnesses of the ceremony; and all the assembled people pray to them: 'Do ye help in the fulfilment of this vow of brahma-charya, let this jīva's innermost desire turn to the study of the truth of Brahman.' And the father and the mother of the boy, having placed the sign and symbol of the thread upon him and taught him his new duties, send him away with the āchārya: 'Gowoefully and gladly, O beloved! and obey him in all things; study the science of Brahman, learn the truth, become Brahman and then return and happily engage in the work of this Samsāra.'

In accordance with the rule of cognition, desire and action (?) it is proper for the boy to maintain his connection with his family for an āhāra, a week, after the ceremony, and then he follows the āchārya to learn the Veda with its Âṅgas and Upāṅgas, and all the laws of the World-process.

This inward-turned consciousness belongs to the three varṇas, 'colors,' castes, only; hence they only have the right to the upa-viṣṇa. He who has

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1. Āhāra seems to be used for a week, in this work, instead of a day, which seems to be the modern interpretation of the word; or perhaps there is a difference between the old abhāh and the modern abah and ahan.

not the intelligence that can perform introspection and grasp subjective things, he is outside the pale of āt-va, twice-born-ness. Parama-rā, heredity, has also a place in this reference. Vaiśyas, kṣatryas and brāhmaṇas have the subjective consciousness by heredity. Those whose constant work is the inward-turning of the consciousness—the work of those born among such will also be similar; and, as all the world knows, the birth of every one is guided by his previous karma. As his karma has been, so is the man's family, business, wealth, race, country, pleasure, pain, etc., and also his caste. It is true that many have only the wish to be born in a higher caste and perform just enough karma to secure this. But they have not the power to do the duties of the caste. Yet, having been born there, they get the teachings that belong to and are current in that caste and so secure the wanting faculties in later births.

This division into castes and stages, these sacraments and sacrifices, belong, under different names and forms, to all times and all places. Analogies to them exist even amongst minerals and vegetables in subtle ways. They are only prominent amongst the humans, and this is so because these are the highest of the 'gross' kingdom, (i.e., the physical plane).

Those, then, who have been consecrated and initiated duly, according to law, acquire the
right to the subjective sciences. If the subjective or introspective bent appears in the śūdra he becomes a dviṣa. On the other hand, he who never gains this inward-consciousness and never turns to the inner sciences, he falls from the estate of the twice-born, though born as one. In this ever-crumbling Samsāra, composed of pleasure and pain, to be dejected over death and elated over birth, to exult over gains and wail under losses, is the meanest way of living; and not to know the simple truth about the All is to be truly fallen. Otherwise, indeed, from the standpoint of the Absolute, there is no misery and no glory.

For such reasons are directions given for the consecration of the three castes according to the subtle laws that govern their length of life, mental, physical, and superphysical powers, constitution, functions, and activity, etc. If the initiation does not take place before a particular age is reached, the jīva ‘falls’ because he has no further opportunity of being able to secure the subjective or introspective consciousness in this life.\(^1\)

Therefore have times, places, and ages been fixed for the consecration of the three castes respectively by the Elders of our race.

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\(^1\) The matter of the brain-cells ‘sets,’ so to say, as bones and muscles set and cannot be manipulated unless trained in the early years of life.

Consecration by sixteen sacraments, each subdivided into saṭ and aṣaṭ, real and formal, is in this wise laid down for the three castes. The three factors of the Logion, and their summation, multiplied by themselves,\(^3\) yield the sixteen. The times prescribed for their performance are based upon the ordinary length of human life. It is true that some die in infancy, others in childhood or in youth, and there is no period fixed unchangeably for the span of human life; still, in a general way, the length thereof is determined for and by each epochs; thus, each particular yuga or manvantara has its own normal and healthy span of life for its living creatures. Those who fall away from the laws of āchāra, right conduct, fall under other laws and are dealt with specially. The consecrations are based on what is common to the majority. As already indicated, the sub-divisions of real and formal or conventional sacraments correspond to cognition and action, respectively, desire being the hidden nexus. By permutations and combinations of these we get indeed an endless number of sacraments and they are all described as karma, kriyā, action and ritual, and are therefore dealt with in the Vajur-vedas, but sixteen are the more important.

\(^3\) That is to say, each being subdivided into four reflections of the original four, like the Vedas.
The passing through these sacraments is regarded as dharma, duty. Ordinarily they belong to the three castes, as said, but if a shudra should attain to the inward consciousness by means of service of others, then he too acquires a full right to be taken through all these sacraments by a sadguru, a ‘true’ teacher. As has been said: ‘On completing service all enter into the three castes. Serve all beings by thought, word and deed. So only, gradually, is the status of the vaishya gained, then that of the kshatriya, and lastly that of the brahma. Finally, becoming Brahma, the jiva can create new worlds. Briefly, the object and result of all these sacraments is the achievement of the consciousness that the all is I and the I is all.’

The Vedas mention the sixteen samkaras, but the Sutras only ten; this is because ten are primary and the remaining six secondary.