

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland

<http://journals.cambridge.org/JRA>

Additional services for *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



Art. XI.—On the supposed Vaidik authority for the burning of Hindu Widows, and on the funeral ceremonies of the Hindus

Professor Wilson

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland / Volume 16 / January 1856, pp 201 - 214
DOI: 10.1017/S0035869X00156333, Published online: 14 March 2011

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0035869X00156333

How to cite this article:

Professor Wilson (1856). Art. XI.—On the supposed Vaidik authority for the burning of Hindu Widows, and on the funeral ceremonies of the Hindus. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, 16, pp 201-214 doi:10.1017/S0035869X00156333

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

ART. XI.—*On the supposed Vaidik authority for the burning of Hindu Widows, and on the funeral ceremonies of the Hindus.*
By PROFESSOR WILSON.

IN the lecture on the Vedas which I read during our last session I had occasion to notice some very remarkable passages in one of the Suktas, or Hymns of the R̥ich, relating to the disposal of the dead, and especially to the burning of widows, for which the hymn in question was always cited as authority. I stated then that the text quoted for that purpose had a totally different tendency, and that there was some reason to doubt if it was the ancient practice of the Hindus to burn their dead at all, quoting texts which seemed to enjoin burying, not burning. I added, however, that I had not had time to consider the passages with that care which they required, and that I communicated only the results of my first impressions. I have since examined the passages more deliberately, and propose now to offer to the Society the conclusions which I have deliberately formed; namely, that the text of the Rig Veda cited as authority for the burning of widows enjoins the very contrary, and directs them to remain in the world, and that, although the expressions relating to the disposal of the dead are somewhat equivocal, yet it seems most probable, upon a comparison with other texts and authorities, that the corpse was burned, although the ashes and bones were afterwards buried.

The Sūkta or hymn affording the ground of these observations, is a remarkable one: it is the second of the second Anuvāka of the tenth Maṅḍala, or the twenty-sixth to the twenty-eighth Varga of the sixth Adhyāya or section of the seventh Aṣṭaka. It is attributed to Sankusuka, the son of Yama, of course a fabulous attribution, and is addressed, at least in the earlier verses, to Mṛityu, or Death, and in the last to the Pitṛis, the Manes or progenitors. To leave no doubt of its purport, I propose to give the following translation of the entire Sūkta, as well as a transcript of the original Sanscrit.

1. Depart, Mṛityu, by a different path, by that which is thine own, different from the path of the Gods. I speak to thee who hast eyes, who hast ears. Injure not our female progeny, harm not our male.

2. Ye who approach the path of death, but are possessed of prolonged existence, ye who are entitled to reverence, prosperous with offspring and wealth, may ye be pure and sanctified.

3. May those who are living be kept distinct from the dead ; may the offering we present this day to the gods be propitious. Let us go with our faces to the east ; to dance and be merry, for we are in the enjoyment of prolonged life.

4. I place this circle [of stones] for the living, on this account, that no other may go beyond it. May they live a hundred years ; keeping death at a distance by this heap.

5. As days follow days in succession, and seasons are succeeded by seasons, as one man follows another, so Dhátṛi do thou prolong the lives of these [my kinsmen].

6. Reaching to old age with still-ascending life, and following active in succession as many as may be, may Twashṭṛi, being propitiated, grant you prolonged life.

7. May these women, who are not widows, who have good husbands, who are mothers, enter with unguents and clarified butter: without tears, without sorrow, let them first go up into the dwelling.

8. Rise up woman, come to the world of living beings, thou sleepest nigh unto the lifeless. Come ; thou hast been associated with maternity through the husband by whom thy hand was formerly taken.

9. Taking his bow from the hand of the dead, that it may be to us for help, for strength, for fame, [I say] here verily art thou, and here are we : accompanied by our valiant descendants, may we overcome all arrogant adversaries.

10. Go to the mother earth, this wide-spread blessed earth ; to the liberal man she is a maiden soft as wool ; may she protect thee from the proximity of the evil being.

11. Lie up [lightly] earth, oppress him not, be bounteous to him, treat him kindly, cover him, earth, as a mother covers an infant with the skirts of her garment.

12. May earth lying lightly up, stay well ; may thousands of particles [of soil] rest upon it ; may these abodes be ever sprinkled with clarified butter, and may they, day by day, be to him an asylum.

13. I heap up the earth above thee, and placing this clod of clay, may I not hurt thee ; may the Manes protect this thy monument, and Yama ever grant thee here an abode.

14. New days sustain me, as the feather upholds the shaft, but I restrain my voice now grown old, as the reins hold in a horse.

The language of this hymn is, as usual, sometimes obscure ; and may admit, if not in essentials, at least in some of the details, of a

different version from the above. I have had the advantage, however, of comparing my translation of verses 7 to 13 inclusive with a translation of the same, as I shall presently mention, by Dr. Max Muller, and except in one or two particulars of no very great importance, our versions agree. In verse 8, which has the most important bearing upon the question of Sati, there is no difference; and its meaning is confirmed by other circumstances which I shall presently notice.

In the first place, however, we must take the seventh verse, as it has been supposed to authorise the practice of the burning of the widow. It has been, no doubt correctly, thus translated by Mr. Colebrooke: "Om. Let these women, not to be widowed, good wives adorned with collyrium, holding clarified butter, consign themselves to the fire. Immortal, not childless nor husbandless, excellent; let them pass into fire, whose original element is water." From the Rig Veda.—As. Res. iv. p. 213.

Now this is evidently intended to be the same verse as the text before us, with the addition of the last clause, "whose element is water," for which we have no equivalent; the rest of the stanza may be readily compared and the variations accounted for.

Our verse has, "may these women not widows," *avidhavá*, a reading that at once overthrows the authority for cremation; as, if they are not widows, there is no necessity for their burning. A somewhat different version may be admitted, by interpreting the words "not to be widowed," although even in this case it implies the absence of the only condition upon which a woman's ascending the funeral pile depended; but *avidhavá* cannot be so rendered; it is present, not future. "Good wives" might be the rendering of *supatní*, although as an epithet it would be preferably "those having good husbands." In either case the reason for burning is wanting. The collyrium or unguents, and the ghee, are much the same in both, but, in the next phrase, "consign themselves to the fire,"—the versions are widely at variance.

The text has, in the first place, merely *samvīśantu*,—"let them enter," or as the commentator explains it,—“let them take their own place,” *svasthānam pravīśantu*; in the second half we have, "let them go up," *árohantu*; but it is not said, where to they are to go up; and here we have no doubt the origin of the error, if not a wilful alteration of the text,—the words are *árohantu yonim agre*, literally, "let them go up into the dwelling first;" the reading to which it has been altered is, *árohantu yonim agneh*, "let them go up to the place of the fire:" *agneh*, the genitive of *agni*, having been substituted for *agre*, locative of *agra* used adverbially: there is no doubt, however,

that the latter is the correct reading, not only by the concurrence of the manuscripts, and the absence of the visarga, the sign of the genitive, but by the explanation given by the commentator Sáyana himself a Brahman of distinguished rank and learning, and who explains it *sarveshám prathamata grīham ágachchantu*,—"let them come home first of all;" the phrase having reference, therefore, to some procession, one possibly accompanying the corpse, and having nothing whatever to do with consigning themselves to the fire.

The succeeding verse of the hymn is confirmatory of the purport of the preceding one. It would be rather inconsistent with any intention of burning the woman to enjoin her to repair to the world of living beings, *jīva-lokam*, the sense of which is wholly unequivocal, as we have proof in the verse of the Hitopadeśa: "acquirement of wealth, constant good health, a beloved mistress, a gentle wife, a dutiful son, and knowledge bringing emolument, are the six sources of happiness (*jīva-lokeshu*) in the world of living beings; *jīva-lokam* must, therefore, imply an exhortation to the widow to return to her social duties, cherishing the recollection, but not sharing the death of her husband. Sáyana explains the term precisely to this effect, when he interprets *jīva-loka*, *putra pautrādi*, "sons and grandsons," evidently understanding that the widow is to return to the bosom of her family.

The author of the Gṛihya sūtra Aśvaláyana furnishes further proof of what is meant, as he specifies the person who is to address the stanza to the widow, placed on the north of her deceased husband's head, and who is to be her husband's brother, or a fellow-student, or an old servant, and who, having thus spoken to her, is to take her away. The authority of the Sūtras is little inferior to that of the Veda; and here, therefore, we have additional and incontestable proof, that the R̥g Veda does not authorise the practice of the burning of the widow.

In order that there may be no room for cavil, I subjoin the whole of the hymn in the original, with Sáyana's comment on the seventh and eighth verses; the passage from the Sūtra also occurs subsequently.¹

-
- ¹ 1. परं मृत्यो अनुपरेहि पंथां चस्ते स्व इतरो देवघातान्
चक्षुभते शृण्वते ते ब्रवीमि मा नः प्रजां रीरिषो मोतवीरान् ॥
2. मृत्योः पदं योपयन्तो यदैतद्द्राघीय आयुःप्रतरं दधानाः
आप्यायमानाः प्रजया धनेन शुद्धाः पूताभवत यज्ञियासः ॥

The other prominent topic of the Sūkta, the disposal of the dead body, is of less importance, but is not without interest ; it is treated of especially in the three verses succeeding those relating to the widow, and the phraseology is certainly more in favour of burying than of burning. The consigning of the deceased to the earth, and the

3. इमे जीवा विमृतैरावष्टन्नभङ्गद्रा देवहुति नी अद्य
प्राञ्चो अगामनृतये हसाय द्राघीय आयुः प्रतरं दधानाः ॥
4. इमं जीवेभ्यः परिधिं दधामि मैषां नुगादपरोअर्थमेतं
शतं जीवंतु शरदः पुरूचीरंतर्मृत्युं दधतां पर्वतेन ॥
5. यथाहान्यनुपूर्वं भवंति यथा च्चतवश्चतुभिर्यति साधु
यथानुपूर्वमपरो जहात्येवाधातरायूंषि कल्पयैषां ॥
6. आरोहतायुर्जरसं वृणाना अनुपूर्वं यतमानायतिष्ठ
इह त्वष्टा सुजनिमा सजोषा दीर्घमायुः करति जीवसे वः ॥
7. इमा नारीरविधवाः सुपत्नीरांजनेन सर्पिषा संविशंतु
अनश्रवो ऽनमीवाः सुरत्वारोहंतु जनयो योनिमये ॥
8. उदीर्ध्वं नार्थभिजीवलोकं गतासुमेतमुपशेष एहि
हस्तग्राभस्य दिधिषोस्तवेदं पत्युर्जनिलमभिसंबभूथ ॥
9. धनुर्हस्तादाददानो मृतस्यास्मे चत्राय वर्चसे बलाय
अत्रैव त्वमिह वयं सुवीरा विश्वाः स्पृधो अभिमातीर्जयेम ॥
10. उपसर्पं मातरं भूमिमेतामुख्यचसं पृथिवीं सुशेवां
उर्णम्रदा युवति र्दक्षिणावत एषा त्वा पातु निश्चतेरुपस्थात् ॥
11. उच्छृंचस्व पृथिवि मा निबाधथाः सूपायनास्मै भव सूपवंचना
माता पुत्रं यथा सिचाभ्येनं भूम ऊर्णुहि ॥
12. उच्छृंचमाना पृथिवी सु तिष्ठतु सहस्रं मित उप हि अयंतां
ते शृहासो घृतश्चुतो भवंतु विश्वाहासै शरणाः संत्वत्र ॥
13. उत्ते स्तभामि पृथिवीं तत्परीमं लोगं निदधन्मो अहं रिषं
एतां स्तूणां पितरो धारयंतु ते ऽत्रा यमः सादना ते मिनोतु ॥

anxiety expressed that it may lie lightly upon, and may defend, his remains, is clearly enjoined, but it is possible that it may refer only to

14. प्रतीचीनेमामहनीष्वाः पर्षामिवादधुः

प्रतीचीं जग्भा वाचमश्वं रश्नया यथा ॥

The following is Sāyaṇa's commentary on the seventh and eighth verses.

7. इमानारीरिति ॥ अविधवाः धवः पतिः अविगतपतिकाः जीवङ्गर्तृका इत्यर्थः ॥ सुपत्नीः शोभनपतिकाः इमा नारीः नार्थ्यं आंजनेन सर्वतो ऽंजनसाधनेन सर्पिषा घृतेन अक्लनेत्राः सत्यः संविशंतु खगृहान् प्रविशंतु तथा अनश्रवः अश्रुवर्जिताः अरुदत्यः अनमीवाः अमीवा रोगस्तदूर्जिता मानसदुःखवर्जिता इत्यर्थः ॥ सुरक्षाः शोभनधनसहिताः । जनयः जनयंत्यपत्यमिति जनयो भार्याः ॥ ता अग्रे सर्वेषां प्रथमत एव योनिं गृहं । आरोहंतु आगच्छंतु । देवरादिकः प्रेतपत्नीमुदीर्ष्व नारीत्यनया भर्तृसकाशादुत्थापयेत् सूचितं च ॥

8. उदीर्ष्वेति । हे नारि मृतस्य पत्नि जीवलोकं जीवानां पुत्रपौत्रादीनां लोकं स्थानं गृहमभिलक्ष्य उदीर्ष्व अस्मात् स्थानादुत्तिष्ठ । ईर गती आदादिकः । गतासुमुक्त्वांतप्राणमेतं पतिं उपशेषे तस्य समीपे स्वपिषि तस्मात् त्वं एहि आगच्छ यस्मात् त्वं हस्तग्राभस्य पाणिग्राहं कुर्वतः दिधिषोः गर्भस्य निधातुः तवास्य पत्युः संबन्धादागतं इदं जमित्वं जायात्वं अभिलक्ष्य संभूय संभूतासि अनुसरणनिश्चयमकार्षीः तस्मादागच्छ ॥

From the expression *anuserāna niśchayam akārshīh*, "thou hast made the determination of following," it would appear as if Sāyaṇa considered the burning as only delayed; but, besides that subsequent burning is not consistent with the presence of the corpse, we must recollect the commentator expresses only the notion of his own time, or the 14th century, when of course the practice existed.—H. H. W.

the ashes and remaining bones after burning, the collection and formal burial of which is always directed. We have here also the analogy of other ancient people, by whom we know the dead were burned and the ashes entombed, over which a mound or monument was raised.

Mœrentes altum cinerem et confusa ruebant,
Ossa focis tepidoque ornabant aggere terræ.

And again :—

At pius Æneas ingenti mole sepulcrum
Imponit ———

And a common funeral inscription was :—

Sit tibi terra levis ;

although nothing but the reliquiæ were to be pressed upon.

So far, therefore, it is possible, that the verses refer only to the burying of the ashes and the bones, and that the bodies were burned. There are other passages in favour of this view of the subject, whilst the Grihya Sûtras are sufficiently explicit. The following directions for the burial of the dead are derived from the Sûtras of Aśvalâyana ; and as they differ in many respects from the actual practice described by Mr. Colebrooke in the seventh volume of the Asiatic Researches, and are obviously of a much more ancient and primitive character, they may be thought to deserve publication. I have been favoured with the version by Professor M. Müller, but I have verified it by comparison with the original text : the commentary which he has used I have not had the means of consulting.

“The burial ceremonies, as observed by the Brahmans during the Vaidik period, are explained in Asvalâyana’s Grihya-sûtras,¹ in the fourth or last chapter. The Grihya-sûtras describe what might be called the domestic or family rites of the Hindús. They lay down general rules which are to be observed at marriages, at the birth of a child, on the day of naming the child, at the tonsure and investiture of a boy, &c. In fact, they describe all those essential and purificatory ceremonies which are known under the general name of “Samskâra.”² Although in the performance of these festive rites, allowance is made for local customs, still, according to the Brahmans, these should be followed only as long as they are not opposed to the general and more

¹ It is necessary to observe that Professor Müller follows the German mode of expressing peculiar letters of the Sanskrit alphabet by *italics* : the sound *ch* is also rendered by *k*, and of *j* by *g*.—Ed.

² Cf. Wilson’s Sanskrit Dict. s. v.

sacred rules of the *Grihya-sûtras*. These general rules of the *Grihya* must be obeyed first, and the omission of any one of the ceremonies prescribed by them as “*nityâni karmâni*” or “obligatory rites,” is sinful. Here lies the distinction between the *Grihya* and *Srauta-sûtras*. The *Srauta-sûtras* describe the great sacrifices (*Havir-yagnâs* and *Soma-yagnâs*) which can be performed by rich people only, and which therefore are obligatory only under certain restrictions. They require the assistance of a number of priests, and great preparations of all kinds. They are called “*vaitânika*,” from “*vitâna*,” spreading, because the fire in which the oblations are to be burnt has to be spread or divided on three hearths (*dakshina*, *gârhapatya*, *âhavanîya*). This is done at the *Agnyâdhâna*, “the placing of the fires,” the first *Srauta* sacrifice which a Brahman has to perform after his marriage. Although the *Srauta* sacrifices are enjoined by the *Sruti* (the *Brâhmanas*), and the highest rewards on earth and in heaven are held out for their performance, still their non-performance is not sinful, as is that of the *Grihya* rites. Another characteristic of the domestic ceremonies is this, that the person for whose benefit they are performed is himself passive. It is only after his marriage that he becomes himself the *Yagamâna* or sacrificer, though even then he may still be assisted by other priests in the performance of his sacrifices. A third class of rites, besides the *Grihya* and *Srauta* ceremonies, are those laid down in the *Sâmaya-kârîka* or *Dharma sûtras*. They are rather observances based on secular authority than sacred rites. They detail the duties of a boy while living as *Brahma-kârin* or catechumen, in the house of his *Guru*. They determine the proper diet of a Brahman, what food may be eaten or not, what days should be kept for fasting, and what penance ought to be performed for neglect of duty. The duties and rights of kings and magistrates, civil rights, and even rules of social politeness, are determined by them in great detail. They are the principal source of the later law-books,¹ and are considered as sacred and indirectly revealed, because, according to the notions of the Brahmans, no law can derive its sanction except from a divine authority,

“All these *Sûtras* have come down to us, not as one single code, to be acknowledged as such by every Brahman, but in the form of various collections which are represented as the traditional property of some of the most prominent families or communities of India. The ceremonies described in these different collections of *Sûtras*, are almost identical in their general bearing. With regard to the *Srauta*

¹ See Morley's *Digest of Indian Cases*, Introduction, page cxcvi.

sacrifices, there are different collections of Sûtras for the different classes of priests, who have peculiar parts to perform at each sacrifice, and employ respectively the hymns as collected in the *Rig-veda*, *Sâma-veda*, or *Yagur veda-samhitâ*. However, each class of priests has again not one, but several collections of Sûtras, coinciding in many places almost literally, and kept distinct only by the authority of the name of their first collectors. The *Grihya* ceremonies, though they are less affected by the differences of the three or four classes of priests employed at the great sacrifices, are yet described in different collections of Sûtras belonging to the same classes, and depending apparently on the authority of one of the three or four collections of sacred hymns (*Rik*, *Sâma*, *Yagus*, *Atharvana*). Thus we have for the *Rigveda* or *Hotri* priests, the *Grihya-sûtras* of *Asvalâyana* and *Sânkhâyana*; for the *Sâma veda* or *Udgâtri* priests, the *Grihya-sûtras* of *Gobhila*; for the *Yagurveda* or *Adhvaryu* priests, the *Grihya sûtras* of *Pâraskara*, and several collections (*Baudhayana*, &c.) belonging to the *Tattirîya* branch; for the *Atharvana* the *Grihya sûtras* of *Kausika*.

“The ceremonies to be observed at a burial have been described in detail by *Asvalâyana* only, and it is possible that the burial was not considered as an essential part of that class of rites which is comprehended under the name of *Samskâra*. However, the burial also is an obligatory rite to be performed by others for the benefit of the dead, who of course performs as passive a part in it as could be required in a *Grihya* rite. The following details are taken from the *Grihya* ascribed to *Asvalâyana*.

“First comes some medical advice. If a person who keeps the sacrificial fires in his house be ailing, let him betake himself away from his home towards the east, north, or north-east, and carry his fires with him. People say that the fires love their home, and therefore they will wish to return home, and will therefore bless the sick and make him whole. After he has recovered, he should perform a *Soma-sacrifice*, or an animal-sacrifice, or a burnt-offering. But if he cannot afford to perform any of these sacrifices, he must go home without.

“But if he should not recover but die, then a piece of ground must be dug, south-east or south-west of the place where he lived and died. The ground should be slightly inclined toward the south or the south-east; or, according to others, to the south-west. It should be in length as long as a man with his arms raised, a fathom in width, and a span in depth. The burning and burying-ground (for both according to the Commentator are called *smasâna*) should be open on all sides, rich in shrubs, particularly of thorny and milky plants (as

has been explained before, *Asv. Grihya*, II. 7), and be elevated in such a manner that waters would run down on every side. The last requisite, however, belongs more particularly to a burning ground.

“How the body of the dead is first to be washed, how his nails, his hair, and his beard are to be cut, and similar matters, are not explained in this place, because, as our author says, they have been explained before, that is to say, in the *Srauta-sûtras* (*Asv. Sraut. Sûtras*, VI. 10). The case under consideration there was, what should be done if a person who is performing a great sacrifice, for which all preparations have been made, and where numbers of priests are engaged, should happen to die before the whole sacrifice, which, in some cases, may last for weeks, months, and years, is finished. Different views are entertained on this point, but the leading idea seems to be that a sacrifice once commenced is to be finished although the person who offers it should happen to die before. *Asvalâyana* says, that as soon as he dies his body should be carried to the place where the sacrificial utensils are cleaned, that there his nails, his hair, his beard, and the hairs on his body should be cut off, that the body should be anointed with spikenard, and a wreath of spikenard be placed on his head. He remarks, that in some places the ordure also is taken out of the body, and the body filled with melted butter and curds. The corpse is then covered with a new cloth, but so that the feet remain uncovered. The seam of the cloth is cut off, and must be kept by his sons.

“So much is to be supplied here from the *Srauta-sûtras*. After this the *Grihya-sûtras* continue. It is enjoined that a large quantity of sacred grass and melted butter should be kept in readiness. The melted butter, which is to be offered to the Manes, must be of a peculiar kind, a mixture of milk and butter, called *Prishadâgya*. It need not be mentioned that as the whole ceremony of burning and burying belong to the “ancestral rites,” the persons engaged in it have always to look toward the south-east, and to wear their brahmanical cord passing over the right and under the left shoulder.

“The relations of the deceased take his three sacred fires and his sacrificial implements and carry them to the place where the ground is prepared. Behind follow the old men, without their wives, carrying the corpse. Their number should not be even. In some places the corpse is carried on a wheel-cart drawn by an ox; an animal, either a cow, or a kid of one colour, or a black kid, is led behind by a rope tied to its left leg. This is called the *Anustaranî*, because it is afterwards to be strewed over the corpse and to be burnt with it. This, however, is optional; nay, some authors, for instance *Kâtyâyana*,

rather discountenance the custom, because after burning, it might become difficult to distinguish which were the bones of the man or the animal. Then follow his friends, the old ones first, the young ones last, their brahmanical cord hanging down, and their hair untied.

“After the procession has reached the ground, he who has to perform the sacrifice steps forth, walks three times round the place towards the left, sprinkles it with water with a branch of the *Samî-tree*, and repeats this verse of a hymn of the *Rig-veda* (x. 14, 9, or vii. 6, 13): “Depart, disperse, fly away [ye evil spirits]! The fathers (our ancestors) made this place for him (the dead). Yama grants him this resting-place, which is day and night sprinkled with waters.”

Thereupon the fires are placed on the borders of the pit, so that the *Ahavanîya* fire stands south-east, the *Gârhapatya* north-west, and the *Dakshina* fire south-west, and a person skilled in these matters piles the wooden pile in the midst of these fires. All is ready now for the corpse to be burnt. But before this is done, fresh water, as the commentary says, is to be brought in a *lamasa* or ladle, and a piece of gold is to be placed in the pit : oily seeds also are to be sprinkled over it. *Asvalâyana* mentions nothing about this, but only enjoins that grass should be strewed upon the pile; that the hide of the black antelope, the fur outside, should be spread over it; and that on this the corpse is to be placed, so that it lies north of the *Gârhapatya* fire, and with the head toward the *Ahavanîya* fire. His wife¹ is placed to the north of

¹ As this is a critical passage, I subjoin the *ipsissima verba* of *Asvalâyana* and his commentator.

उत्तरतः पत्नीं ॥ Com. ततः प्रेतस्योत्तरतः पत्नीं संवेशयन्ति ।
शायन्तीत्यर्थः । चितावेव उपशेष इति लिंगात् ॥ एतावद्वर्णत्रय
स्यापि समानं ॥

धनुश्च चत्रियाय ॥ Com. प्रेतः चत्रियश्चेद्भुनुरष्टुत्तरतः
संवेशयन्ति ॥

तामुत्थापयेद्देवरः पतिस्थानीयोऽन्तेवासी जरद्दासो वोदीर्घ
नार्यभि जीवलोकमिति ॥ Com. अथ पत्नीमुत्थापयेत् कः । देवरः
पतिस्थानीयः । स पतिस्थानीय उच्यते । अनेन ज्ञायते पतिकर्तृकं
कर्म पुंसवनादि पत्यसंभवे देवरः कुर्यादिति ॥ अन्तेवासी शिष्यः
। स वा । यो बद्ध कालं दास्यं कृत्वा वृद्धो ऽभूत् स वा ॥

her husband. If he be a Kshattriya, a bow also is placed there. The wife is then to be led away as already stated, and in respect of the bow, that also is to be removed by the same persons, with the repetition of the following *Rik*:

“I take the bow from the hand of the dead, to be to us help, glory and strength. Thou art there: we are still here with our brave sons; may we conquer all enemies that attack us.”—*Rv.* x. 18.

Hereupon he fixes the bow-string, walks round the pile, and after having broken the bow he throws it on the pile. If this act is performed by an old servant, somebody else must recite the verses for him, (because as a *Sûdra* he would not be allowed to recite sacred verses).

After this, according to the Commentary on the *Sûtras*, pieces of gold are to be placed on the seven apertures of the head, and oily seeds with butter are to be sprinkled over the dead. *Asvalâyana* himself proceeds to give rules as to how the different sacrificial implements, which are to be burnt with the dead, are to be attached to different parts of the corpse.

After this is done, the animal which was led behind is brought, the fat is cut out, and put like a cover over the face and head of the dead. The following verse is used at this occasion:

“Put on this armour [taken] from the cows [to protect thee] against Agni, and cover thyself with fat! that he, the wild one, who delights in flames, the hero, may not embrace thee, wishing to consume thee!”—*Rv.* viii. 16, 17.

The kidneys also are taken out and put into the hands of the dead with the following words:

“Escape on the right path the two dogs, the four-eyed, tawny breed of *Saramâ*; then approach the wise fathers who, happy with *Yama*, enjoy happiness.”—*Rv.* x. 14, 10.

The heart of the animal is put on his heart and, according to some,

कर्ता वृषलो जपेत् ॥ *Com.* जरद्दास उत्थापयितरि कर्ता
मंत्रं ब्रूयात् । अन्यदोत्थापयितैव मंत्रं ब्रूयात् ॥

धनुर्हस्तादादानो मृतस्वेति धनुः ॥ *Com.* धनुरित्यूचा
धनुरुत्थापयेत् । अपनयेदित्यर्थः ॥

The last word, “*apanayet*” (he may lead away), as an explanation of “*utthāpayet*” (he may lift up), which is applied to the bow and the wife, leaves no doubt that, according to the intention of the *sûtras*, the wife is to be removed from the pile, and not to be burned with the dead.

two cakes of ground rice. Others recommend these cakes only if the kidneys are wanting ; nay, according to some accounts, all these parts of the animal may be shaped of ground rice and be burnt instead of the real animal. However, where a real animal is burnt with the dead, it is first to be cut up, and the limbs so thrown on the dead that every limb of the animal lies upon a corresponding part of the corpse; the hide is to be thrown over the whole, and a libation to be made with the following words :

“Agni, do not destroy this vessel, which is dear to the gods and our exalted fathers ; this is the vessel from which the gods drink ; in it the immortals rejoice.”—Rv. x. 16, 8.

The chief performer of the sacrifice then kneels down on his left knee, and throws the oblations of *Agya* into the *Dakshina* fire, saying, “Svâhâ to Agni, the lover of Svâhâ, Svâhâ to the world, Svâhâ to Anumati, Svâhâ !

The fifth oblation is to be offered on the breast of the dead, with the following (not-*vaidik*) words : Thou (fire) hast been produced by him; may he be reproduced from thee, that he may obtain the region of eternal bliss !

Thereupon the word is given, “Light the fires at once !”

As the fires are burning round him, and consuming him, twenty-four verses of the *Rig-veda*, the same as specified in the *Srauta-sûtras*, are to be recited.

Then the dead body is left burning ; all turn to the left and go away without looking back. A verse is recited from the *Rv.* x, 31, 3:—

“These men are still alive and separated from the dead. There was to-day amongst us a holy invocation of the gods. Let us go forward now to dance and mirth; for we are leading a longer life !”

When they arrive at a place where there is flowing water,¹ they stop, immerse themselves, and on rising throw a handful of water into the air, while they pronounce the name of the deceased and that of his family. They then get out of the water, put on dry clothes, and after once wringing those they had on before, they spread them out toward the north and sit down there themselves till the stars are seen. According to others, they do not go home before sunrise. Then the young ones walk first, the old ones last. And when they arrive at their home, they touch (by way of purifying themselves) the stone, the fire, cow-dung, grain, oil, and water, before they step in. They must not cook food that

¹ This portion of the ceremonial is called the *udakakarma*, and described in other *Grihya-sûtras* also. *Yâgnavalkya* explains it in the beginning of the third book of his *Dharma-sâstra* ; *Manu* in the fifth book, verse 68. seq.

night, but according to some, food may be bought. Again, for those nights, they have to abstain from salt and spices.

After the death of a parent or spiritual father (Guru), reading of the Veda and alms-giving must be omitted for twelve days.

After the death of a near relative, the same abstinence must be observed for ten days. If they are females, the mourning lasts for ten days, if they had not been given away in marriage. The same number of days must be observed, if a spiritual teacher (Guru) die, though he was not a near relative. For other teachers (Akâryas), the mourning lasts three nights. The same for more distant relations; but if females, only if they had not been given away in marriage. Children also who die before breathing, or those still-born, are mourned for for three nights only. If a school-fellow dies, and if a Srotriya-brahman dies who lived in the same village, mourning is to be observed for one day.

It is to be remembered, however, that the corpse is still left smothering on the pile. Therefore Asvalâyana, in the fifth Section, proceeds to direct that after the tenth of the dark half (*i. e.*, of the waning moon) on odd days, (*i. e.*, on the 11th, 13th, or 15th), under any Nakshatra except Ashâdha, Phalgunî and Proshthapadâ, the bones must be collected. The general rules as to how people are to walk, &c., are the same as before. Milk and water are sprinkled on the spot with a samî-branch, and he who is doing this, walks thrice round the pile, always towards the left, saying: "Pale earth with pale leaves, propitious earth with blessed fruits! go and be well embraced by a frog (a shower of rain), and make this fire cheerful."—Rv. x. 16, 14.

The bones are to be taken up carefully with the thumb and the little finger, without cracking them. They are to be placed in a vessel, the feet first, the head last. For a man the vessel is to be a simple kumbhâ or water pot (without a spout); for a woman a simple kumbhî (with a spout). After the bones have been well put together, the place is to be swept with a broom (pavana), and the vessel or coffin is placed in a hole in a place over which the water cannot flow, except perhaps in the rainy season. It is now that the concluding verses of the hymn are recited: "Go to the mother earth," &c. (Rv. x. 31, 10.), as the earth is thrown upon the coffin and heaped up over the spot in which it is deposited.

Thereupon all walk home without looking back, and after they have performed an ablution, they offer the first Srâddha to the deceased (ekoddishtha), who thenceforth is enrolled amongst the Pitris or Manes, and receives oblations with them on their appointed days.