

"The passage 'We know not, &c.,' is meant to be taken along with the "Injunction of the appointing of the *Ārshēya* priest. But inasmuch as the "passage does not signify either this action (of appointing) or anything "related to it, it cannot be accepted as having any authority bearing upon "that Action. For certainly, no ignorance, doubt or misconception, with "regard to Brāhmaṇahood could be of any use in the Sacrifice. Nor can "we admit that as a glorification which is contradictory to direct Percep- "tion. Nor, again, can the passage have any authority, so long as it only "speaks of mere ignorance of Brāhmaṇahood.

"It may be asked how this declaration of ignorance contradicts a fact "of direct Perception, when, as a matter of fact, among a certain number "of men resembling one another, the fact of one or many of them being a "Brāhmaṇa can be ascertained only by means of scriptures. But in reality "this is not a subject for scriptures; because the class *Brāhmaṇa* is as much "an object of ordinary perception as the class *tree*.

"Question: 'How can the class *Brāhmaṇa* be known by ordinary "men?'

"Answer: It is known by direct Sense-perception.

"Question: 'But, then, how is it that even when the person is before "our eyes, if we do not know the details of his parentage, &c., we are "unable to ascertain whether he is a Brāhmaṇa or not, until someone tells "us of it?'

“*Answer* : Well, the reason for this lies in the absence of proper faculties in us for perceiving the Brāhmaṇahood ; exactly in the same way as we are unable to recognise a certain object as the ‘tree’ until the meaning of the word has been explained to us.

“The following arguments might be urged against us : ‘The cases of the Brāhmaṇa and that of the Tree are not quite identical ; because even before the explanation of the word *tree*, the particular class denoted by the word has ever been recognised as differentiated from other classes, and inhering in all individual trees,—these latter appearing in the shape of a certain object with leaves, branches, &c. ; while in the case of the class *Brāhmaṇa* such is not the case (because there are no perceptible marks that could differentiate the Brāhmaṇa from other men) ; and, again, in the case of the Brāhmaṇa, even when one has fully comprehended the meaning of the word, he is unable, in the absence of other means, to ascertain the fact of a particular person being a Brāhmaṇa. For instance, neither the wearing of the sacred thread, nor the study of the Veda, can be the means of such ascertainment ; because these two features are common to all the three higher castes ; as for the work of teaching (which is laid down for the Brāhmaṇas exclusively), inasmuch as such Kshatriyas and Vaiçyas as have transgressed the limitations to their duties, are also found to be engaged in that work, this can serve only as a very doubtful index. In fact, all these can belong to Çūdras also,—such of them as are not mindful of their own specified duties and transgress the limitations laid down in the scriptures. Consequently none of these can serve as a sure index of Brāhmaṇahood. And if one were to accept a man as a Brāhmaṇa, without proper consideration, such a person would, as reasonably purchase a piece of shell, thinking it to be silver ?’

“These arguments, however, do not touch our position. The dissimilarity of the case of the class *tree* cannot affect our conclusion with regard to the perception of the class *Brāhmaṇa* ; specially as it has already been explained (in the section on *Ākriti*, in the *Çloka-vārtika*) that there are different methods for the cognition of different classes. (Consequently the fact of the process of cognising the class *Brāhmaṇa* not being exactly similar to that of the cognition of the class *tree*, cannot in any way invalidate our perception of the former).

“Thus, then, just as, in accordance with the exigencies of each individual case of the cognition of a class, we admit of various causes, in the shape of, (1) the sense of vision ; (2) the remembrance of a word that has its denotation extending over many individuals ; (3) proximity to the greatness of a certain individual ; (4) the perception of a particular form, and so forth,—exactly in the same manner, we could assume the remembrance of the caste of the progenitor (as the cause of the cognition

"of the class *Brāhmaṇa*, with reference to any individual *Brāhmaṇa*).
 "This relation of the progeny and the progenitor is directly perceptible
 "only with reference to the mother; while that with regard to others, it
 "will have to be cognised either by means of Inference, or upon the
 "Verbal Testimony of a trustworthy person.

"Nor is it necessary that the cause of sensuous perception should
 "always be such as has itself been perceived by means of the senses;
 "because we find the Eye, and the other organs of sense, often serving as
 "the means of perceiving such objects—as have never been cognised
 "before; and we have also proved (in the chapter on *Sense-perception*—
 "*Śloka-vārtika*)—that we often have a perception in accordance with the
 "contact of the Senses, which is mixed up with an intervening element of
 "memory; and it has also been shown that if a certain thing does not
 "happen to be perceived on the spur of the moment, it can never be
 "perceived even if a concentrated effort be made to bear upon it.

"The *Bhāṣya* itself says that on account of there being chances of the
 "mother having misbehaved, it would be extremely difficult to ascertain
 "the relationship of the child (with the father of a particular caste).
 "But this difficulty cannot deprive the cognition (of the class *Brāhmaṇa*)
 "of the character of Sense-perception; for certainly, if we have to climb
 "up to the top of a mountain in order to see an object, the character of
 "Sense-perception is not denied to the perception of that object. Then again,
 "because we may have found a certain woman to have misbehaved, that
 "cannot enable us to assume the same misbehaviour in the case of all women;
 "because such an assumption, being directly contradictory to all ordinary
 "experience, could never be valid; as we find that women of respectable
 "families always try their very best to save their character (and with
 "success). And it is for the sake of making their respective castes duly
 "and authoritatively recognised, that the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Kings* have in-
 "troduced the system of writing up and preserving their genealogical trees,
 "which serve to preserve and perpetuate the names of their forefathers.
 "And as these records distinctly point out the particular excellences
 "and defects of each family, it is always in accordance with these that;
 "we find people being attached to, or repulsed from, particular families.

"Nor is it necessary that the misbehaving of a woman
 "..... should produce a child of a mixed caste;
 ".....
 "..... It is
 "quite possible that such misbehaviour might subject the woman to
 "unpleasant experiences hereafter; but it can in no way make the child a
 "bastard.

"Nor, again, is it necessary that the misbehaviour should be with a man of different caste; and a child produced by one of the same caste as the mother cannot be said to be of a mixed caste.

"It is also laid down in the *Smṛtis* that even the bastard regains the original purity of the caste of his either parent, by a continuous excellence, or otherwise, of conduct and relationships, when he reaches the fifth or the seventh generation downwards (*i.e.*, if the conduct and relationship of each descendant remains good, the caste of the family reverts to the caste that is the higher of the two parents, and *vice versā*). And in this matter, the only factor for which we cannot have any authority than that of the scriptures, is that of the specific number of generations being five or seven; the rest is all based upon facts of ordinary experience.

"Thus then, just as in the case of some birds, though both the male and the female are exactly similar, yet we can easily distinguish the sex of each by certain characteristic marks,—so, in the same manner, we can recognise the class *Brāhmaṇa*, by means of direct Sense-perception, as aided by a remembrance of certain facts directly perceived (in times gone by) and handed down to us by an unbroken line of tradition.

"For these reasons, the assertion 'we know not whether we are *Brāhmaṇas*, &c.,' must be admitted to be contradictory to direct perception.

"This contradiction remains just the same even with regard to such people as have their *Brāhmaṇahood* based upon their own individual good conduct (as in the case of *Viṣvāmitra*); though as a matter of fact, there is no authority for differentiating castes by individual conduct. Because certain special rules of conduct are laid down as pertaining to the *Brāhmaṇas* that already exist; and so if the strict following of such rules were the cause of *Brāhmaṇahood*, there would be a mutual interdependence—the rules being based upon *Brāhmaṇahood*, and *Brāhmaṇahood* being based upon the following of the rules. And further, one and the same man would be a *Brāhmaṇa* when performing a good deed, and a *Çūdra* when doing a bad one; and thus there would be no fixity of the castes. Similarly when a man would be found to be performing an action that would give pain to a person, as well as afford him relief (as in the case of surgical operations), the person would come to be considered a *Çūdra* and a *Brāhmaṇa* at one and the same time, which would be an absurdity.

"The upshot of all these arguments is this: *Brāhmaṇahood* is not an aggregate of Pennance, &c.; nor is it a certain purification brought about by these; nor is it a caste manifested by these; what it really is, is a caste signified by the cognition of the caste of the parents; and as such, it is cognisable directly by Sense-perception.

“ Thus, then, the differentiation of the castes being accomplished in
 “ the manner shown above, such declarations as ‘ by doing such a deed for
 “ a month the Brāhmana becomes a Çūdra,’ and the like must be taken
 “ either as decrying the particular action, or as pointing to the fact of the
 “ person being no longer entitled to the specific duties laid down for the
 “ three higher castes.

“ And as before, the direct perception of the caste cannot be accepted
 “ to have, for an optional alternative, its non-cognition, which latter can
 “ only be held to be based upon the authority of a Vedic Injunction *assumed*
 “ (for the sake of the particular *Arthavāda* in question). But no such
 “ Injunction can be possible in the present case ; even though it were
 “ quite possible in the former case of *stealing* and *lying*, which are *actions*
 “ (and as such capable of forming the object of optional Injunctions) ;
 “ because the *caste* is a concrete object ; and as such, being of one uniform
 “ character, can never form the subject of any optional alternatives.