CHAPTER III.

DEFINITION OF THE VEDAS.

SAYANA'S MISTAKE REGARDING THE DEFINITION:

The great commentator of the Vedas - Sayana - who lived and wrote at a time when the sun of the Vedic traditions had long set, defines the Veda as "\( \text{मन्त्र} + \text{ब्राह्मण} \)" and then he adds that "\( \text{मन्त्र} + \text{ब्राह्मण} \)" i.e. the definition of the Veda as the sum of Mantras and Brähmanas is a faultless one. Then he refers to the Yajña Paribhaṣa of Āpastamba where the "name of the Veda is given to the Mantras and Brähmanas". But this definition of the Veda, given by Sayana is ridiculous as he could not discriminate between the Mantra portion and the Brähmana portion. This fact he himself has admitted.

This definition of the Veda, given by Sayana is based on the following statement of Katyāyana:-

"\( \text{मन्त्र} + \text{ब्राह्मण} = \text{सूक्त} + \text{वैदिक} + \text{वेद} \)"

ONLY MANTRA PORTION IS VEDA:

But S. Dayānanda was the first among the modern scholars to explode this view and to demonstrate that the Samhitās only formed the Vedas and they alone were to be regarded as eternal, infallible, as Vedas in fact. The Brähmanas and Upaniṣads themselves profess to be mere parasites of the Vedas and devote themselves respectively to
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the elucidation of the ritualistic and the philosophical portions of the Vedas. No Samhita, on the other hand, profess to hang upon any other Samhita as its parasite and devote itself to explain any portion of the others. Hence, Dayananda says:

"अ साम्हितायां वेदविविध सत्वां सहित, भ्राम्मानः इत्यादि.
कृत्वा साम्हितायां वेदबाल्य अनुवादित, तत्र साम्धाई तत्रस्माद्.
तत्रतुलिते साम्हितायां वेदः इत्यादि. तत्र तत्राद्वितीय शब्दालोच्चिते वेदः इत्यादि"

i.e. "The Brāhmaṇas do not deserve to be called by the name of the Veda. Because they have been given the names of the Purāṇa and Itiḥāsa. They are elucidations of the Vedas and are not the words of God but merely the works of the Seers and the products of human intellect; also because all other Sages than Kātyāyana have refused to call them by the name of Veda."

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SAMHITAS AND BRAHMANAS:

1. NO STORIES IN THE VEDAS:

   This is quite true. The Brāhmaṇas do contain narratives of human beings while the Vedas are free from stories and tales:
   (a) अयस्य गृहि: विविधाय विविधानः,
   (b) सिद्धान्तः विविधाय विविधाय विविधानः, etc. (CHU.)

   It must be pointed out here that some scholars have tried to deduce some historical detail from the Samhitās but no story, beginning with "There was &c" and "There lived once, &c" such as are of common occurrence in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, has been found in the Vedas (Samhitās) even by the Europeans who always smell out history in every nook and corner of a literature.

2. EVIDENCE OF PATANJALI:

   Tradition plays a great part in clearing up matters such as we are now discussing and all the evidence derived from this source is in favour of the view that the Samhitās only form the Vedas proper."
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Patañjali, the great grammarian always quotes from the Samhitās to illustrate the special rules applicable to Vedic Sanskrit without quoting a single line or phrase from the Upaniṣads or Brāhmaṇas; his non-Vedic illustrations include passages from both the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads.

Moreover, the Brāhmaṇas are the explanatory books on the Vedas. Here the Vedic stanzas are repeated and explained later on. Hence the Brāhmaṇas are the glosses of the Vedas. How can commentary be given the same position as that of the original one? For instance:

While explaining the Yajur Veda verse "TRYAYUSAM etc." (III.62) the Satapatha says:

(a) "नेन्द्रमन्त्रोऽवमतिः स्म: यो नेत्रमन्त्रोऽवमतिः स्म:। यो नेत्रमन्त्रोऽवमतिः स्म:। (§B. VII. 7.)

(§B. VII. 5)

(b) "स्म: यो नेत्रमन्त्रोऽवमतिः स्म:। यो नेत्रमन्त्रोऽवमतिः स्म:। यो नेत्रमन्त्रोऽवमतिः स्म:। (§B. I. 7.)

Here we clearly find that the Vedic stanzas are being explained. Thus the Brāhmaṇas are merely a commentary on the Veda.

4. THE TITLE:

The very title of these books i.e. Brāhmaṇa indicates that these works are not the Vedas. Brahma means here Veda and their explanatory books are called Brāhmaṇas. The following instances may...
again prove it:—

(a) The first verse of the Yajur Veda is explained in the (SB. I. 7.1).

(b) The Rg Veda verse (I. 24.3) has been explained in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (I. 16).

(c) The first verse of the Sāma Veda is explained in Tāndya Brāhmaṇa (XI. 2.3).

Moreover, the four Vedas are the revealed books. They are words of God. But the Brāhmaṇas are human creation and were composed by Sages.

5. CRITICISM AGAINST OTHER BRAHMANAS:

As the Brāhmaṇas are man-made works, they contain criticism of other similar works. Sometimes they contain contradictory statements to each other. It clearly shows that they cannot be given the title of the Veda.

6. ACCENT:

The accent plays an essential part in the language of the Vedas while the same is lacking in the Brāhmaṇas.

7. THE MAHĀ BHAŚYA:

The author of the Mahā Bhāṣya clearly declares that the Brāhmaṇa works were composed by the Brāhmaṇa Seers who understood the four Vedas for the elucidation of the original text:

"अन्तः प्रवेश प्रत्येकं यत्र निर्देशः।
जयेन येव नृत्याधिकारीः
सर्वो दृष्टिः चेति च विचारे
त्रिवेणोज्जितेः स्वयं विश्वासः॥"

(V. I. 1)

8. KĀṬYĀYANA:

Kātyāyana, on whose authority, Sayana includes the Brāhmaṇas in the Vedas, clearly distinguishes between the two in the following verse:

"प्राचीनं वाच्यं एवं, (I. 18) । (I. 19)
In these quotations Katyāyana himself creates distinction between the Veda and the Brāhmaṇa which he calls as Bhāṣya.

9. YĀŚKA:

(a) The evidence of Yāśka, the author of the Nirukta, goes to establish the fact that the Brāhmaṇas are beyond the scope of the word Veda. He always quotes from the Vedas as Nigama and the Brāhmaṇas are quoted separately as Brāhmaṇa:-

" सत्त्वात् वर्णपदोऽपि ब्राह्मणोऽऽपि " (V. 3.3 -4, 5.4, 8.9)
" वृत्तात् ब्राह्मणोऽऽपि " (VII. 12, XIII. 10)

(b) Yāśka often disregards or shows a bit contempt to Brāhmaṇas but he has reverence for the Vedas always:-

" अलर्क सरस्वती त्रिवणिस्तः ब्राह्मणाच्छ वैनः " (VII. 24)

(c) He, again, quotes self-contradictory statement from the Brāhmaṇas for which no stress or importance is to be attached. He says:-

" पुरुषो निम्नचरणेन, संवरो विभा, ग्रिहाः "
(VII. 24)

(d) The following quotation from Yāśka states in clear terms that only the Mantras were revealed, and the tradition of oral transmission refers only to them:-

" निःश्च त्वरितो सुभद्राः सुवर्णाः प्रतिग्रुः " त्रिसरीः
रोहिणि देवं यो न आदेवो उपडते वर्षानां स्रवयोः"
(I. 20)

(e) According to him, the Brāhmaṇas repeat what has already been ordained by the Mantras for the fuller explanation:-

" सप्तो ब्रह्मनां ज्ञाराध्यं ब्राह्मणां विनिधोः "
(I. 16)
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The Brahmans are, therefore, "UDITANUVADA" (i.e. repition of what has already been ordained) and cannot claim the position of the original Veda.

10. THE HIMSA:

Jaimini, the author of Himsa, confirms this view by saying:

"..." (XXXII)
"..." (3. 1.2)
"..." (3. 1.3)

11. GOPATHA:

In Gopatha Brahmana itself the Brahmanas are separately stated from the Vedas:

"..." (II. 3.60)
"..." (II. 3.62)
"..." (IV. 3.105)

The last aphorism quoted above shows that the Brahmanas and Kalpas which are the works of the ancient Sages, Brāhma, &c, are Vedic glosses only. And for this reason they have been given the names of Purāna (and Itihāsa). If in these aphorisms the intention had been to call the Chandas and the Brahmanas by the name Veda, the use of the word Chandas in the above mentioned aphorism would be meaningless, because the term Brāhma (which in that case would include the term Chandas) had been already used in the first aphorism cited above. Thus it is clear that Panini does not give the name of the Veda to Brahmanas.
CONCLUSION:

Moreover, the Brāhmaṇas and Upanisads are full of quotations from the Samhitās, the latter, though quoting from one another, do not quote a single line from the former.

In the light of this overwhelming evidence nothing but over-adulation and mis-directed sense of reverence can lead one to place any other work on the same level with the Vedas. If the Vedas are looked upon as the revelation, it is a positive insult to them to give to any human book, however, sublime and excellent, the same reverence as to them.

And none of the ancient masters has gone so far off except Katyāyana whose position must be accounted for by his excessive reverence for all that facilitated the study of the Vedas.