

*Āsum-ga* in the Atharvaveda<sup>1</sup> seems to denote some sort of animal. It is qualified by the word 'young' (*śisuka*), and Roth<sup>2</sup> suggests that it may mean a bird ('swift-flying'), or that the expression denotes 'a foal going to its dam' (*āsu-ga*). Sāyaṇa, however, reads the accompanying word as *śusuka*, which he assumes to denote an animal. Bloomfield<sup>3</sup> renders the two words 'a swift (*āsumga*) foal (*śisuka*),' thus agreeing with one of Roth's suggestions in sense, though not in the explanation of *Āsumga*.

<sup>1</sup> vi. 14, 3.

<sup>2</sup> St. Petersburg Dictionary, s.v.

<sup>3</sup> *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, 464.

Cf. Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 291.

*Āśrama* ('resting-place') does not occur in any Upaniṣad which can be regarded as pre-Buddhistic. Its earliest use as denoting the stages of a Hindu's life is found in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.<sup>1</sup> In one passage<sup>2</sup> of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad reference is made only to the **Brahmacārin** and householder, to whom, as a reward for study, the procreation of children, the practice of Yoga, abstention from injury to living creatures, and sacrifices, freedom from transmigration are promised. In another place<sup>3</sup> three states are contemplated, but not as consecutive. The Brahmacārin may either become a householder or become an anchorite, or remain in his teacher's house all his life. Similarly, reference<sup>4</sup> is made to the death of the anchorite in the forest, or the sacrifice in the village. In contrast with all three<sup>5</sup> is the man who stands fast in Brahman (*Brahma-samstha*). In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad<sup>6</sup> the knower of the Ātman is contrasted with those who (1) study, or (2) sacrifice and give alms, or (3) are anchorites, and in another place<sup>7</sup> with those who sacrifice and make benefactions, and those who practice asceticism. This position of superiority to, and distinction from, the Āśramas became later a fourth<sup>8</sup> Āśrama,

<sup>1</sup> *Atyāśramin*, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, vi. 21; Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad, iv. 3, etc.

<sup>2</sup> viii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> ii. 23, 1.

<sup>4</sup> v. 10

<sup>5</sup> ii. 23, 1.

<sup>6</sup> iv. 2, 22. Cf. iii. 5.

<sup>7</sup> iii. 8, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Jābāla Upaniṣad, 4. Cf. Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, ii. 1, 7.