

false plaits of hair was not unknown in Vedic times. What was the difference between the braid referred to in the epithets *pr̥thū-ṣṭuka*,⁸ 'having broad braids,' and *viṣita-ṣṭuka*,⁹ 'having loosened braids,' and the Opaśa cannot be made out from the evidence available. Geldner¹⁰ thinks that the original sense was 'horn,' and that when the word applies to Indra¹¹ it means 'diadem.'

⁸ Rv. x. 86, 8.

⁹ Rv. i. 167, 5 (of Rodasi).

¹⁰ *Vedische Studien*, I, 131, quoting Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa, xiii. 4, 3, where *avy-opaśā* is used of cattle; but the sense may be figurative.

¹¹ Rv. viii. 14, 5.

Cf. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, 538, 539; Whitney, Translation of the Atharvaveda, 348.

Oṣadhi.—Roughly speaking, the vegetable world is divided in Vedic literature¹ between Oṣadhi or Vīrudh 'plants' and Vana or Vṛkṣa 'trees.' Oṣadhi is employed in opposition to Vīrudh to denote plants as possessing a healing power or some other quality useful to men, while Vīrudh is rather a generic term for minor vegetable growths, but sometimes,² when occurring beside Oṣadhi, signifies those plants which do not possess medicinal properties.

A list of the minor parts of which a plant is made up is given in the later Saṃhitās.³ It comprises the root (*mūla*), the panicle (*tūla*), the stem (*kānda*), the twig (*valśa*), the flower (*puṣpa*), and the fruit (*phala*), while trees⁴ have, in addition, a corona (*skandha*), branches (*śākhā*), and leaves (*parṇa*). The Atharvaveda⁵ gives an elaborate, though not very intelligible, division of plants into those which expand (*pra-stṛṇatīh*), are bushy (*stambinīh*), have only one sheath (*eka-śuṅgāh*), are creepers (*pra-tanvatīh*), have many stalks (*aṃśunnatīh*), are

¹ Rv. x. 97 and *passim*. Oṣadhi-*vānuspati* is a frequent compound, from the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (vi. 1, 1, 12) onwards. The medicinal properties of plants account for the epithet 'of manifold powers' (*nānā-vīryā*) applied to them in Av. xii. 1, 2.

² Taittirīya Saṃhitā, ii. 5, 3, 2.

³ *Ibid.*, vii. 3, 19, 1; Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā, xxii. 28.

⁴ Taittirīya Saṃhitā, vii. 3, 20, 1. Cf. Rv. i. 32, 5; Av. x. 7, 38.

⁵ viii. 7, 4, with Whitney's notes. Cf. Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, 579; Henry, *Les livres VIII. et IX. de l'Atharvaveda*, 58 et seq.