

It divides into two parts. The hymns 1-84 form a collection of the mythological (Apri) hymns of the Badhyasvas family, arranged according to their authorship and metre. The other part (hymns 85-191) contains the Apri hymns of the Bhrigus family. These hymns are all ascribed to Jamadagni, and are set strictly in the order of their diminishing length.

The Apri Hymns of the Badhyasvas (1-84).—

The collection of the Badhyasvas, along with a few excellent hymns to Agni and Indra, contains many that are sacerdotal, divinatory and mere poetical settings of legend.

Much of the later mythology is anticipated in the hymns addressed to the greater deities, and the distinctions between the local and universal aspects of the gods are already apparent. In hymn 9 occur verses used by the Brahmans at their daily ablutions.

“ May the divine waters be propitious to our worship.

May they flow round us and be our health and our safety ” (v. 4).

The dialogue between Yama and Yami—the divine rishis of the hymn 10—is a protest against the marriage of brother and sister. It is one of several hymns which relate to death and the power of Yama, the king of death. Fragments addressed to the spirit of the dying occur in 14, vv. 7, 8. A hymn connected with the burning of a corpse (16) contains the striking verses :—

“ Let the eye repair to the sun,
The breath to the wind,
Go thou to heaven or to the earth according to thy merit.
Or go to the waters if it suits thee there.
Or abide with thy members in the plants.
The unborn portion. burn that, Agni, with thy heat,
Let thy flames, thy splendour, consume it ” (vv. 3-4).

Agriculture has some recognition in hymns addressed to the cows (18), to the shepherd's god Pushan (26), to the rivers (75), etc. A prayer to the dice (34), is an excellent delineation of the troubles of the gambler, and the