

The Mandala displays advanced theological thought, e.g. :—

“Slay us not for one sin, not for two, not for three; O hero, slay us not for many” (45¹⁴, 31², etc.).

Its pantheon is full :—

“May the three-and-thirty deities sit down upon the sacred grass” (38¹).

The deities are clearly characterised in pointed phrases.

The Valakhilya Hymns.—Eleven Valakhilya or supplementary hymns are inserted after the forty-ninth hymn of this Mandala. They are a late and independent group, and were not taken into account in the older arrangement of the Veda, according to authorship. They were added when the scholastic division of the Rig, by eighths (Ashtakas), and lessons (Adhyayas), was made.

Their character may be estimated from the following selection :—

“Great indeed is Indra’s might, I have beheld it. Thy gift approaches. O foe to the Dasyu.

“A hundred white oxen shine like stars in the heaven—by their size they have almost held up the heavens.

“A hundred bamboos, a hundred dogs, a hundred dressed hides, a hundred bundles of balbaya grass, and four hundred red mares are mine.

“May ye have the gods propitious to you, O descendants of the Kanva family, living through youth after youth, step out vigorously like steeds.

“Let them praise the seven yoked steeds. Great is the strength of that which is not yet full grown” (Hymn 7¹⁻⁵).

Mandala IX.—The ninth Mandala is unique in the Veda, inasmuch as it is almost exclusively devoted to one deity. Of the one hundred and fourteen hymns three only, viz., 5, 66, 67, are dedicated to a god other than Soma. It is peculiar also in the arrangement of its hymns. The first sixty are set in the order of diminishing length. The remainder show no marks of order.

Whilst it contains some of the most ancient pieces in the Rig Veda the collection itself must be late, since its formation