

be as ancient as any which have been assigned to the Chhandas period.

I may instance here the hymn required at the horse sacrifice (Rigveda, 1, 162) and the Nâbhânedishtha Sûkta (10, 61; on its origin, see Ait. Br. 5, 14). The former is assigned by Max Müller⁶ to the Mantra period (between 1000-800) on no other ground but because of its containing technical terms of the sacrificial art. But this reason is certainly not sufficient to make it late. On the contrary its rather unpolished style, its poor imagery, its beginning with the invocation of the most ancient triad of Indian gods, *Mitra*, *Varuna*, and *Aryaman*, the very names of which deities are even to be met with kindred nations, such as the Iranians and Greeks, the mentioning of several sacrificial priests by obsolete and uncommon names,—all these circumstances combined tend to show, that it is rather one of the earliest than one of the latest productions of Vedic poetry. We find in it the sacrificial art, if compared with its description in the Brâhmaṇas, in its infancy, yet containing all the germs of the later system. Because of almost all incidents attendant upon a sacrifice being mentioned in this hymn, it affords us the best means for investigating into the extent and development of the sacrificial art at the time of its composition. Let us point out some of the most remarkable facts which may be elicited from it.

⁶ History of Ancient Sanscrit Literature, page 553.