

Rigveda he is celebrated as having been blinded by his father for slaying one hundred rams for a she-wolf, and as having been restored to sight by the Ásvins, a legend of quite obscure meaning.

*Cf. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 52.*

Ṛṇa, 'debt,' is repeatedly mentioned from the Rigveda<sup>1</sup> onwards, having apparently been a normal condition among the Vedic Indians. Reference is often made<sup>2</sup> to debts contracted at dicing. To pay off a debt was called *ṛṇam sam-nī*.<sup>3</sup> Allusion is made to debt contracted without intention of payment.<sup>4</sup>

The result of non-payment of a debt might be very serious: the dicer might fall into slavery.<sup>5</sup> Debtors, like other malefactors, such as thieves, were frequently bound by their creditors to posts (*dru-pada*),<sup>6</sup> presumably as a means of putting pressure on them or their friends to pay up the debt.

The amount of interest payable is impossible to make out. In one passage of the Rigveda and Atharvaveda<sup>7</sup> an eighth (*sapha*) and a sixteenth (*kalā*) are mentioned as paid, but it is quite uncertain whether interest or an instalment of the principal is meant. Presumably the interest would be paid in kind.

How far a debt was a heritable interest or obligation does not appear. The Kausika Sūtra<sup>8</sup> regards three hymns of the

<sup>1</sup> ii. 27, 4, etc., usually in a metaphorical sense.

<sup>2</sup> Rv. x. 34, 10; Av. vi. 119, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Rv. viii. 47, 17—Av. vi. 46, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Av. vi. 119, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Rv. x. 34. *Cf. Lüders, Das Würfelspiel im alten Indien, 61.*

<sup>6</sup> Rv. x. 34, 4, seems to refer rather to the binding and taking away as a slave, though Pischel, *Vedische Studien*, 1, 228, explains it as the binding of a debtor for non-payment, interpreting the obscure verse i. 169, 7, in the same way. But Av. vi. 115, 2, 3, may refer to debt, and if this is the meaning the

allusion to binding to a post as a punishment is clear. See, however, Bloomfield, *Hymns of the Atharvaveda*, 528, n. 1; Whitney, *Translation of the Atharvaveda*, 364, who interprets the hymn as referring only to sin. Rv. i. 24, 13, 15; Av. vi. 63, 3=84, 4; 121, 1 *et seq.*, are general; while Rv. vii. 86, 5; Av. xix. 47, 9; 50, 1, refer to the binding of thieves in the stocks. *Cf. Taskara.*

<sup>7</sup> Rv. viii. 47, 17=Av. vi. 46, 3.

<sup>8</sup> xlvi. 36-40. See Caland, *Altindisches Zauberritual*, 154; Bloomfield, *op. cit.*, 528.