


VARIOUS



***SACRED
BOOKS
OF THE EAST***

VARIOUS

A mannequin is shown from the chest up, wearing a vibrant, multi-colored headscarf with intricate floral and geometric patterns. The scarf features shades of orange, red, blue, and green. The mannequin is also wearing a black garment. The background is dark, making the colors of the scarf stand out. The text 'VARIOUS' is in the top left, and 'SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST' is in a large, bold font at the bottom.

***SACRED
BOOKS
OF THE EAST***

Various

Sacred Books of the East

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The Vedic Hymns are among the most interesting portions of Hindoo literature. In form and spirit they resemble both the poems of the Hebrew psalter and the lyrics of Pindar. They deal with the most elemental religious conceptions and are full of the imagery of nature. It would be absurd to deny to very many of them the possession of the truest poetic inspiration. The scenery of the Himalayas, ice and snow, storm and tempest, lend their majesty to the strains of the Vedic poet. He describes the storm sweeping over the white-crested mountains till the earth, like a hoary king, trembles with fear. The Maruts, or storm-gods, are terrible, glorious, musical, riding on strong-hoofed, never-wearying steeds. There is something Homeric, Pindaric in these epithets. Yet Soma and Rudra are addressed, though they wield sharp weapons; and sharp bolts, i.e., those of the lightning, are spoken of as kind friends. "Deliver us," says the poet, "from the snare of Varuna, and guard us, as kind-hearted gods." One of the most remarkable of these hymns is that addressed to the Unknown God. The poet says: "In the beginning there arose the Golden Child. As soon as he was born he alone was the lord of all that is. He established the earth and this heaven." The hymn consists of ten stanzas, in which the Deity is celebrated as the maker of the snowy mountains, the sea and the distant river, who made fast the awful heaven, He who alone is God above all gods,

before whom heaven and earth stand trembling in their mind. Each stanza concludes with the refrain, "Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?"

We have in this hymn a most sublime conception of the Supreme Being, and while there are many Vedic hymns whose tone is pantheistic and seems to imply that the wild forces of nature are Gods who rule the world, this hymn to the Unknown God is as purely monotheistic as a psalm of David, and shows a spirit of religious awe as profound as any we find in the Hebrew Scriptures.

It is very difficult to arrive at the true date of the Vedas. The word Veda means knowledge, and is applied to unwritten literature. The Vedas are therefore the oldest Sanscrit writings which exist, and stand in the same class with regard to Hindoo literature as Homer does with regard to Greek literature. Probably the earliest Vedas were recited a thousand years before Christ, while the more recent of the hymns date about five hundred before Christ. We must therefore consider them to be the most primitive form of Aryan poetry in existence.

There is in the West a misunderstanding as to the exact meaning of "Vedic" and "Sanskrit"; for the latter is often used as if it were synonymous with Indian; whereas, only the later Indian literature can be classed under that head, and "Vedic" is often used to indicate only the Vedic Hymns, whereas it really denotes Hymns, Bráhmanas, Upanishads, and Sutras; in fact, all literature which orthodox Hindoos regard as sacred. The correct distinction then between the Vedic and the Sanscrit writings is that of holy writ and profane literature.

E.W.

VEDIC HYMNS

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TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

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In the beginning there arose the Golden Child. As soon as born, he alone was the lord of all that is. He established the earth and this heaven:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He who gives breath, he who gives strength, whose command all the bright gods revere, whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He who through his might became the sole king of the breathing and twinkling world, who governs all this, man and beast:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He through whose might these snowy mountains are, and the sea, they say, with the distant river; he of whom these regions are indeed the two arms:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He through whom the awful heaven and the earth were made fast, he through whom the ether was established, and the firmament; he who measured the air in the sky:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by his will, look up, trembling in their mind; he over whom the risen sun

shines forth:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

When the great waters went everywhere, holding the germ, and generating light, then there arose from them the breath of the gods:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

He who by his might looked even over the waters which held power and generated the sacrifice, he who alone is God above all gods:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

May he not hurt us, he who is the begetter of the earth, or he, the righteous, who begat the heaven; he who also begat the bright and mighty waters:—Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?

Pragâpati, no other than thou embraces all these created things. May that be ours which we desire when sacrificing to thee: may we be lords of wealth!

TO THE MARUTS¹

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I

Come hither, Maruts, on your chariots charged with lightning, resounding with beautiful songs, stored with spears, and winged with horses! Fly to us like birds, with your best food, you mighty ones! They come gloriously on their red, or, it may be, on their tawny horses which hasten their chariots. He who holds the axe is brilliant like gold;—with the tire of the chariot they have struck the earth. On your bodies there are daggers for beauty; may they stir up

our minds as they stir up the forests. For yourselves, O well-born Maruts, the vigorous among you shake the stone for distilling Soma. Days went round you and came back, O hawks, back to this prayer, and to this sacred rite; the Gotamas making prayer with songs, pushed up the lid of the cloud to drink. No such hymn was ever known as this which Gotama sounded for you, O Maruts, when he saw you on golden wheels, wild boars rushing about with iron tusks. This comforting speech rushes sounding towards you, like the speech of a suppliant: it rushed freely from our hands as our speeches are wont to do.

II

Let us now proclaim for the robust host, for the herald of the powerful Indra, their ancient greatness! O ye strong-voiced Maruts, you heroes, prove your powers on your march, as with a torch, as with a sword! Like parents bringing a dainty to their own son, the wild Maruts play playfully at the sacrifices. The Rudras reach the worshipper with their protection, strong in themselves, they do not fail the sacrificer. For him to whom the immortal guardians have given fulness of wealth, and who is himself a giver of oblations, the Maruts, who gladden men with the milk of rain, pour out, like friends, many clouds. You who have stirred up the clouds with might, your horses rushed forth, self-guided. All beings who dwell in houses are afraid of you, your march is brilliant with your spears thrust forth. When they whose march is terrible have caused the rocks to tremble, or when the manly Maruts have shaken the back of heaven, then every lord of the forest fears at your racing,

each shrub flies out of your way, whirling like chariot-wheels. You, O terrible Maruts, whose ranks are never broken, favorably fulfil our prayer! Wherever your glory-toothed lightning bites, it crunches cattle, like a well-aimed bolt. The Maruts whose gifts are firm, whose bounties are never ceasing, who do not revile, and who are highly praised at the sacrifices, they sing their song for to drink the sweet juice: they know the first manly deeds of the hero Indra. The man whom you have guarded, O Maruts, shield him with hundredfold strongholds from injury and mischief—the man whom you, O fearful, powerful singers, protect from reproach in the prosperity of his children. On your chariots, O Maruts, there are all good things, strong weapons are piled up clashing against each other. When you are on your journeys, you carry the rings on your shoulders, and your axle turns the two wheels at once. In their manly arms there are many good things, on their chests golden chains, flaring ornaments, on their shoulders speckled deer-skins, on their bellies sharp edges; as birds spread their wings, they spread out splendors behind. They, mighty by might, all-powerful powers, visible from afar like the heavens with the stars, sweet-toned, soft-tongued singers with their mouths, the Maruts, united with Indra, shout all around. This is your greatness, O well-born Maruts!—your bounty extends far, as the sway of Aditi. Not even Indra in his scorn can injure that bounty, on whatever man you have bestowed it for his good deeds. This is your kinship with us, O Maruts, that you, immortals, in former years have often protected the singer. Having through this prayer granted a hearing to man, all these heroes together have become well known by their

valiant deeds. That we may long flourish, O Maruts, with your wealth, O ye racers, that our men may spread in the camp, therefore let me achieve the rite with these offerings. May this praise, O Maruts, this song of Mândârya, the son of Mâna, the poet, ask you with food for offspring for ourselves! May we have an invigorating autumn, with quickening rain!

III

For the manly host, the joyful, the wise, for the Maruts bring thou, O Nodhas, a pure offering. I prepare songs, like as a handy priest, wise in his mind, prepares the water, mighty at sacrifices. They are born, the tall bulls of heaven, the manly youths of Rudra, the divine, the blameless, pure, and bright like suns; scattering raindrops, full of terrible designs, like giants. The youthful Rudras, they who never grow old, the slayers of the demon, have grown irresistible like mountains. They throw down with their strength all beings, even the strongest, on earth and in heaven. They deck themselves with glittering ornaments for a marvellous show; on their chests they fastened gold chains for beauty; the spears on their shoulders pound to pieces; they were born together by themselves, the men of Dyu. They who confer power, the roarers, the devourers of foes, they made winds and lightnings by their powers. The shakers milk the heavenly udders, they sprinkle the earth all round with milk. The bounteous Maruts pour forth water, mighty at sacrifices, the fat milk of the clouds. They seem to lead about the powerful horse, the cloud, to make it rain; they milk the thundering, unceasing spring. Mighty they are, powerful, of

beautiful splendor, strong in themselves like mountains, yet swiftly gliding along;—you chew up forests, like wild elephants, when you have assumed your powers among the red flames. Like lions they roar, the wise Maruts, they are handsome like gazelles, the all-knowing. By night with their spotted rain-clouds and with their spears—lightnings—they rouse the companions together, they whose ire through strength is like the ire of serpents. You who march in companies, the friends of man, heroes, whose ire through strength is like the ire of serpents, salute heaven and earth! On the seats on your chariots, O Maruts, the lightning stands, visible like light. All-knowing, surrounded with wealth, endowed with powers, singers, men of endless prowess, armed with strong rings, they, the archers, have taken the arrow in their fists. The Maruts who with the golden tires of their wheels increase the rain, stir up the clouds like wanderers on the road. They are brisk, indefatigable, they move by themselves; they throw down what is firm, the Maruts with their brilliant spears make everything to reel. We invoke with prayer the offspring of Rudra, the brisk, the pure, the worshipful, the active. Cling for happiness-sake to the strong company of the Maruts, the chasers of the sky, the powerful, the impetuous. The mortal whom ye, Maruts, protected, he indeed surpasses people in strength through your protection. He carries off booty with his horses, treasures with his men; he acquires honorable wisdom, and he prospers. Give, O Maruts, to our lords strength glorious, invincible in battle, brilliant, wealth-acquiring, praiseworthy, known to all men. Let us foster our kith and kin during a hundred winters. Will you then, O

Maruts, grant unto us wealth, durable, rich in men, defying all onslaughts?—wealth a hundred and a thousand-fold, always increasing?—May he who is rich in prayers come early and soon!

IV

Sing forth, O Kanvas, to the sportive host of your Maruts, brilliant on their chariots, and unscathed,—they who were born together, self-luminous, with the spotted deer, the spears, the daggers, the glittering ornaments. I hear their whips, almost close by, when they crack them in their hands; they gain splendor on their way. Sing forth the god-given prayer to the wild host of your Maruts, endowed with terrible vigor and strength. Celebrate the bull among the cows, for it is the sportive host of the Maruts; he grew as he tasted the rain. Who, O ye men, is the strongest among you here, ye shakers of heaven and earth, when you shake them like the hem of a garment? At your approach the son of man holds himself down; the gnarled cloud fled at your fierce anger. They at whose racings the earth, like a hoary king, trembles for fear on their ways, their birth is strong indeed: there is strength to come forth from their mother, nay, there is vigor twice enough for it. And these sons, the singers, stretched out the fences in their racings; the cows had to walk knee-deep. They cause this long and broad unceasing rain to fall on their ways. O Maruts, with such strength as yours, you have caused men to tremble, you have caused the mountains to tremble. As the Maruts pass along, they talk together on the way: does anyone hear them? Come fast on your quick steeds! there are worshippers for you

among the Kanvas: may you well rejoice among them. Truly there is enough for your rejoicing. We always are their servants, that we may live even the whole of life.

V

To every sacrifice you hasten together, you accept prayer after prayer, O quick Maruts! Let me therefore bring you hither by my prayers from heaven and earth, for our welfare, and for our great protection; the shakers who were born to bring food and light, self-born and self-supported, like springs, like thousandfold waves of water, aye, visibly like unto excellent bulls, those Maruts, like Soma-drops, which squeezed from ripe stems dwell, when drunk, in the hearts of the worshipper—see how on their shoulders there clings as if a clinging wife; in their hands the quoit is held and the sword. Lightly they have come down from heaven of their own accord: Immortals, stir yourselves with the whip! The mighty Maruts on dustless paths, armed with brilliant spears, have shaken down even the strong places. O ye Maruts, who are armed with lightning-spears, who stirs you from within by himself, as the jaws are stirred by the tongue? You shake the sky, as if on the search for food; you are invoked by many, like the solar horse of the day. Where, O Maruts, is the top, where the bottom of the mighty sky where you came? When you throw down with the thunderbolt what is strong, like brittle things, you fly across the terrible sea! As your conquest is violent, splendid, terrible, full and crushing, so, O Maruts, is your gift delightful, like the largess of a liberal worshipper, wide-spreading, laughing like heavenly lightning. From the tires of

their chariot-wheels streams gush forth, when they send out the voice of the clouds; the lightnings smiled upon the earth, when the Maruts shower down fatness. Prisni brought forth for the great fight the terrible train of the untiring Maruts: when fed they produced the dark cloud, and then looked about for invigorating food. May this praise, O Maruts, this song of Mândârya, the son of Mâna, the poet, ask you with food for offspring for ourselves! May we have an invigorating autumn, with quickening rain!

VI

The Maruts charged with rain, endowed with fierce force, terrible like wild beasts, blazing in their strength, brilliant like fires, and impetuous, have uncovered the rain-giving cows by blowing away the cloud. The Maruts with their rings appeared like the heavens with their stars, they shone wide like streams from clouds as soon as Rudra, the strong man, was born for you, O golden-breasted Maruts, in the bright lap of Prisni. They wash their horses like racers in the courses, they hasten with the points of the reed on their quick steeds. O golden-jawed Maruts, violently shaking your jaws, you go quick with your spotted deer, being friends of one mind. Those Maruts have grown to feed all these beings, or, it may be, they have come hither for the sake of a friend, they who always bring quickening rain. They have spotted horses, their bounties cannot be taken away, they are like headlong charioteers on their ways. O Maruts, wielding your brilliant spears, come hither on smooth roads with your fiery cows whose udders are swelling; being of one mind, like swans toward their nests, to enjoy the sweet

offering. O one-minded Maruts, come to our prayers, come to our libations like Indra praised by men! Fulfil our prayer, like the udder of a barren cow, and make the prayer glorious by booty to the singer. Grant us this strong horse for our chariot, a draught that rouses our prayers, from day to day, food to the singers, and to the poet in our homesteads luck, wisdom, inviolable and invincible strength. When the gold-breasted Maruts harness the horses to their chariots, bounteous in wealth, then it is as if a cow in the folds poured out to her calf copious food, to every man who has offered libations. Whatever mortal enemy may have placed us among wolves, shield us from hurt, ye Vasus! Turn the wheels with burning heat against him, and strike down the weapon of the impious fiend, O Rudras! Your march, O Maruts, appears brilliant, whether even friends have milked the udder of Prisni, or whether, O sons of Rudra, you mean to blame him who praises you, and to weaken those who are weakening Trita, O unbeguiled heroes. We invoke you, the great Maruts, the constant wanderers, at the offering of the rapid Vishnu; holding ladles and prayerful we ask the golden-colored and exalted Maruts for glorious wealth. The Dasagvas carried on the sacrifice first; may they rouse us at the break of dawn. Like the dawn, they uncover the dark nights with the red rays, the strong ones, with their brilliant light, as with a sea of milk. With the morning clouds, as if with glittering red ornaments, these Maruts have grown great in the sacred places. Streaming down with rushing splendor, they have assumed their bright and brilliant color. Approaching them for their great protection to help us, we invoke them with this worship, they whom Trita may bring

near, like the five Hotri priests for victory, descending on their chariot to help. May that grace of yours by which you help the wretched across all anguish, and by which you deliver the worshipper from the reviler, come hither, O Maruts; may your favor approach us like a cow going to her calf!

VII

I come to you with this adoration, with a hymn I implore the favor of the quick Maruts. O Maruts, you have rejoiced in it clearly, put down then all anger and unharness your horses! This reverent praise of yours, O Maruts, fashioned in the heart, has been offered by the mind, O gods! Come to it, pleased in your mind, for you give increase to our worship. May the Maruts when they have been praised be gracious to us, and likewise Indra, the best giver of happiness, when he has been praised. May our lances through our valor stand always erect, O Maruts! I am afraid of this powerful one, and trembling in fear of Indra. For you the offerings were prepared—we have now put them away, forgive us! Thou through whom the Mânas see the mornings, whenever the eternal dawns flash forth with power, O Indra, O strong hero, grant thou glory to us with the Maruts, terrible with the terrible ones, strong and a giver of victory. O Indra, protect thou these bravest of men, let thy anger be turned away from the Maruts, for thou hast become victorious together with those brilliant heroes. May we have an invigorating autumn, with quickening rain!

VIII

O Maruts, that man in whose dwelling you drink the Soma, ye mighty sons of heaven, he indeed has the best guardians. You who are propitiated either by sacrifices or from the prayers of the sage, hear the call, O Maruts! Aye, the powerful man to whom you have granted a sage, he will live in a stable rich in cattle. On the altar of this strong man Soma is poured out in daily sacrifices; praise and joy are sung. To him let the mighty Maruts listen, to him who surpasses all men, as the flowing rain-clouds pass over the sun. For we, O Maruts, have sacrificed at many harvests, through the mercies of the storm-gods. May that mortal be blessed, O chasing Maruts, whose offerings you carry off. You take notice either of the sweat of him who praises you, ye men of true strength, or of the desire of the suppliant. O ye of true strength, make this manifest with might! strike the fiend with your lightning! Hide the hideous darkness, destroy every tusky fiend. Make the light which we long for!

IX

Endowed with exceeding vigor and power, the singers, the never flinching, the immovable, the impetuous, the most beloved and most manly, have decked themselves with their glittering ornaments, a few only, like the heavens with the stars. When you have seen your way through the clefts, like birds, O Maruts, on whatever road it be, then the clouds on your chariots trickle everywhere, and you pour out the honey-like fatness for him who praises you. At their racings the earth shakes, as if broken, when on the heavenly paths they harness their deer for victory. They the sportive, the roaring, with bright spears, the shakers of the

clouds have themselves glorified their greatness. That youthful company, with their spotted horses, moves by itself; hence it exercises lordship, invested with powers. Thou indeed art true, thou searchest out sin, thou art without blemish. Therefore the manly host will help this prayer. We speak after the kind of our old father, our tongue goes forth at the sight of the Soma: when the singers had joined Indra in deed, then only they took their holy names;— these Maruts, armed with beautiful rings, obtained splendors for their glory, they obtained rays, and men to celebrate them; nay, armed with daggers, speeding along, and fearless, they found the beloved domain of the Maruts.

X

What then now? When will you take us as a dear father takes his son by both hands, O ye gods, for whom the sacred grass has been trimmed? Where now? On what errand of yours are you going, in heaven, not on earth? Where are your cows sporting? Where are your newest favors, O Maruts? Where the blessings? Where all delights? If you, sons of Prisni, were mortals, and your praiser an immortal, then never should your praiser be unwelcome, like a deer in pasture grass, nor should he go on the path of Yama. Let not one sin after another, difficult to be conquered, overcome us; may it depart together with greed. Truly they are terrible and powerful; even to the desert the Rudriyas bring rain that is never dried up. The lightning lows like a cow, it follows as a mother follows after her young, when the shower of the Maruts has been let loose. Even by day the Maruts create darkness with the water-bearing

cloud, when they drench the earth. Then from the shouting of the Maruts over the whole space of the earth, men reeled forward. Maruts on your strong-hoofed, never-wearying steeds go after those bright ones, which are still locked up. May your felines be strong, the chariots, and their horses, may your reins be well-fashioned. Speak forth forever with thy voice to praise the Lord of prayer, Agni, who is like a friend, the bright one. Fashion a hymn in thy mouth! Expand like the cloud! Sing a song of praise. Worship the host of the Maruts, the terrible, the glorious, the musical. May they be magnified here among us.

XI

Let your voice-born prayers go forth to the great Vishnu, accompanied by the Maruts, Evayâmarut, and to the chasing host, adorned with good rings, the strong, in their jubilant throng, to the shouting power of the Maruts. O Maruts, you who are born great, and proclaim it yourselves by knowledge, Evayâmarut, that power of yours cannot be approached by wisdom, that power of theirs cannot be approached by gift or might; they are like unapproachable mountains. They who are heard with their voice from the high heaven, the brilliant and strong, Evayâmarut, in whose council no tyrant reigns, the rushing chariots of these roaring Maruts come forth, like fires with their own lightning. The wide-striding Vishnu strode forth from the great common seat, Evayâmarut. When he has started by himself from his own place along the ridges, O ye striving, mighty Maruts, he goes together with the heroes, conferring blessings. Impetuous, like your own shout, the strong one

made everything tremble, the terrible, the wanderer, the mighty, Evayâmarut; strong with him you advanced self-luminous, with firm reins, golden colored, well armed, speeding along. Your greatness is infinite, ye Maruts, endowed with full power, may that terrible power help, Evayâmarut. In your raid you are indeed to be seen as charioteers; deliver us therefore from the enemy, like shining fires. May then these Rudras, lively like fires and with vigorous shine, help, Evayâmarut. The seat of the earth is stretched out far and wide, when the hosts of these faultless Maruts come quickly to the races. Come kindly on your path, O Maruts, listen to the call of him who praises you, Evayâmarut. Confidants of the great Vishnu, may you together, like charioteers, keep all hateful things far, by your wonderful skill. Come zealously to our sacrifice, ye worshipful, hear our guileless call, Evayâmarut. Like the oldest mountains in the sky, O wise guardians, prove yourselves for him irresistible to the enemy.

XII

O Syâvâsya, sing boldly with the Maruts, the singers who, worthy themselves of sacrifice, rejoice in their guileless glory according to their nature. They are indeed boldly the friends of strong power; they on their march protect all who by themselves are full of daring. Like rushing bulls, these Maruts spring over the dark cows, and then we perceive the might of the Maruts in heaven and on earth. Let us boldly offer praise and sacrifice to your Maruts, to all them who protect the generation of men, who protect the mortal from injury. They who are worthy, bounteous, men of perfect

strength, to those heavenly Maruts who are worthy of sacrifice, praise the sacrifice! The tall men, coming near with their bright chains, and their weapon, have hurled forth their spears. Behind these Maruts there came by itself the splendor of heaven, like laughing lightnings. Those who have grown up on earth, or in the wide sky, or in the realm of the rivers, or in the abode of the great heaven, praise that host of the Maruts, endowed with true strength and boldness, whether those rushing heroes have by themselves harnessed their horses for triumph, or whether these brilliant Maruts have in the speckled cloud clothed themselves in wool, or whether by their strength they cut the mountain asunder with the tire of their chariot; call them comers, or goers, or enterers, or followers, under all these names, they watch on the straw for my sacrifice. The men watch, and their steeds watch. Then, so brilliant are their forms to be soon, that people say, Look at the strangers! In measured steps and wildly shouting the gleemen have danced towards the cloud. They who appeared one by one like thieves, were helpers to me to see the light. Worship, therefore, O seer, that host of Maruts, and keep and delight them with your voice, they who are themselves wise poets, tall heroes armed with lightning-spears. Approach, O seer, the host of Maruts, as a woman approaches a friend, for a gift; and you, Maruts, bold in your strength, hasten hither, even from heaven, when you have been praised by our hymns. If he, after perceiving them, has approached them as gods with an offering, then may he for a gift remain united with the brilliant Maruts, who by their ornaments are glorious on their march. They, the wise

Maruts, the lords, who, when there was inquiry for their kindred, told me of the cow, they told me of Prisni as their mother, and of the strong Rudra as their father. The seven and seven heroes gave me each a hundred. On the Yamunâ I clear off glorious wealth in cows, I clear wealth in horses.

XIII

Those who glance forth like wives and yoke-fellows, the powerful sons of Rudra on their way, they, the Maruts, have indeed made heaven and earth to grow; they, the strong and wild, delight in the sacrifices. When grown up, they attained to greatness; the Rudras have established their seat in the sky. While singing their song and increasing their vigor, the sons of Prisni have clothed themselves in beauty. When these sons of the cow adorn themselves with glittering ornaments, the brilliant ones put bright weapons on their bodies. They drive away every adversary; fatness streams along their paths;—when you, the powerful, who shine with your spears, shaking even what is unshakable by strength—when you, O Maruts, the manly hosts, had yoked the spotted deer, swift as thought, to your chariots;—when you had yoked the spotted deer before your chariots, hurling thunderbolt in the fight, then the streams of the red-horse rush forth: like a skin with water they water the earth. May the swiftly-gliding, swift-winged horses carry you hither! Come forth with your arms! Sit down on the grass-pile; a wide seat has been made for you. Rejoice, O Maruts, in the sweet food. Strong in themselves, they grew with might; they stepped to the firmament, they made their seat wide. When Vishnu saved the enrapturing Soma, the Maruts

sat down like birds on their beloved altar. Like heroes indeed thirsting for fight they rush about; like combatants eager for glory they have striven in battles. All beings are afraid of the Maruts; they are men terrible to behold, like kings. When the clever Tvashtar had turned the well-made, golden, thousand-edged thunderbolt, Indra takes it to perform his manly deeds; he slew Vritra, he forced out the stream of water. By their power they pushed the well aloft, they clove asunder the rock, however strong. Blowing forth their voice the bounteous Maruts performed, while drunk of Soma, their glorious deeds. They pushed the cloud athwart this way, they poured out the spring to the thirsty Gotama. The Maruts with beautiful splendor approach him with help, they in their own ways satisfied the desire of the sage. The shelters which you have for him who praises you, grant them threefold to the man who gives! Extend the same to us, O Maruts! Give us, ye heroes, wealth with valiant offspring!

XIV

Who are these resplendent men, dwelling together, the boys of Rudra, also with good horses? No one indeed knows their births, they alone know each other's birthplace. They plucked each other with their beaks; the hawks, rushing like the wind, strove together. A wise man understands these secrets, that Prisni, the great, bore an udder. May that clan be rich in heroes by the Maruts, always victorious, rich in manhood! They are quickest to go, most splendid with splendor, endowed with beauty, strong with strength. Strong is your strength, steadfast your powers, and thus by the

Maruts is this clan mighty. Resplendent is your breath, furious are the minds of the wild host, like a shouting maniac. Keep from us entirely your flame, let not your hatred reach us here. I call on the dear names of your swift ones, so that the greedy should be satisfied, O Maruts, the well-armed, the swift, decked with beautiful chains, who themselves adorn their bodies. Bright are the libations for you, the bright ones, O Maruts, a bright sacrifice I prepare for the bright. In proper order came those who truly follow the order, the bright born, the bright, the pure. On your shoulders, O Maruts, are the rings, on your chests the golden chains are fastened; far-shining like lightnings with showers, you wield your weapons, according to your wont. Your hidden splendors come forth; spread out your powers, O racers! Accept, O Maruts, this thousandfold, domestic share, as an offering for the house-gods. If you thus listen, O Maruts, to this praise, at the invocation of the powerful sage, give him quickly a share of wealth in plentiful offspring, which no selfish enemy shall be able to hurt. The Maruts, who are fleet like racers, the manly youths, shone like Yakshas; they are beautiful like boys standing round the hearth, they play about like calves who are still sucking. May the bounteous Maruts be gracious to us, opening up to us the firm heaven and earth. May that bolt of yours which kills cattle and men be far from us! Incline to us, O Vasus, with your favors. The Hotri priest calls on you again and again, sitting down and praising your common gift, O Maruts. O strong ones, he who is the guardian of so much wealth, he calls on you with praises, free from guile. These Maruts stop the swift, they bend strength by strength, they

ward off the curse of the plotter, and turn their heavy hatred on the enemy. These Maruts stir up even the sluggard, even the vagrant, as the gods pleased. O strong ones, drive away the darkness, and grant us all our kith and kin. May we not fall away from your bounty, O Maruts, may we not stay behind, O charioteers, in the distribution of your gifts. Let us share in the brilliant wealth, the well-acquired, that belongs to you, O strong ones. When valiant men fiercely fight together, for rivers, plants, and houses, then, O Maruts, sons of Rudra, be in battles our protectors from the enemy. O Maruts, you have valued the praises which our fathers have formerly recited to you; with the Maruts the victor is terrible in battle, with the Maruts alone the racer wins the prize. O Maruts, may we have a strong son, who is lord among men, a ruler, through whom we may cross the waters to dwell in safety, and then obtain our own home for you. May Indra then, Varuna, Mitra, Agni, the waters, the plants, the trees of the forest be pleased with us. Let us be in the keeping, in the lap of the Maruts; protect us always with your favors.

XV

Sing to the company of the Maruts, growing up together, the strong among the divine host: they stir heaven and earth by their might, they mount up to the firmament from the abyss of Nirriti. Even your birth was with fire and fury, O Maruts! You, terrible, wrathful, never tiring! You who stand forth with might and strength; everyone who sees the sun, fears at your coming. Grant mighty strength to our lords, if the Maruts are pleased with our praise. As a trodden path

further a man, may they further us; help us with your brilliant favors. Favored by you, O Maruts, a wise man wins a hundred, favored by you a strong racer wins a thousand, favored by you a king also kills his enemy: may that gift of yours prevail, O ye shakers. I invite these bounteous sons of Rudra, will these Maruts turn again to us? Whatever they hated secretly or openly, that sin we pray the swift ones to forgive. This praise of our lords has been spoken: may the Maruts be pleased with this hymn. Keep far from us, O strong ones, all hatred, protect us always with your favors!

XVI

Come hither, do not fail, when you march forward! Do not stay away, O united friends, you who can bend even what is firm. O Maruts, Ribhukshans, come hither on your flaming strong fellows, O Rudras, come to us to-day with food, you much-desired ones, come to the sacrifice, you friends of the Sobharis. For we know indeed the terrible strength of the sons of Rudra, of the vigorous Maruts, the liberal givers of rain. The clouds were scattered, but the monster remained, heaven and earth were joined together. O you who are armed with bright rings, the tracts of the sky expanded, whenever you stir, radiant with your own splendor. Even things that cannot be thrown down resound at your race, the mountains, the lord of the forest—the earth quivers on your marches. The upper sky makes wide room, to let your violence pass, O Maruts, when these strong-armed heroes display their energies in their own bodies. According to their wont these men, exceeding terrible, impetuous, with strong and unbending forms, bring with them beautiful light. The