

thereby frustrating his enemy, Vasishtha, who claimed to be the only royal priest.

Of the other rishis of this Mandala, four are described as sons of Visvamitra.

The poetry of the chief rishi reflects a highly developed sacramentalism. There is a hymn addressed to the post to which sacrificial victims were tied. Another describes Agni as the enjoyed and enjoyer, the food and the feeder, and as presiding over earth, mid-heaven, and heaven in the three forms of fire, air, and the sun.

Visvamitra and his sons had the gift of ordinary orthodox hymn writers, not highly endowed with poetic talent, but well instructed in the rules and phrases made acceptable by usage.

Two hymns (15-16) credited to Utkila, surpass them all in animation and poetic imagery, which is lavished upon Agni, "radiant with great glory, protector at the breaking of the dawn, showerer of benefits, beholder of men, radiant in darkness."

Of the fifty-eight hymns in *Mandala IV.* all but three are ascribed to Vamadeva. Trasadasyu, a royal sage, devoted part of his hymn (42) to his own praise:—

1. "Twofold is my empire, that of the whole Kshatriya race, and all the immortals are ours. The gods associate me with the acts of Varuna.
2. "I am King Varuna, on me the gods bestow those chief energies that destroy Asuras."

Two hymns by the sons of Suhotra—Purumilha and Ajanulha—are addressed to the Aswins.

Vamadeva addressed two hymns (26, 27,) to the Hawk, the personification of Parabrahma, who carried the Soma to the gods. The Mandala is rich in legendary lore (*cf.* 5, 16¹⁰⁻¹², 18⁸, 19³, 28¹, 30⁴⁻¹¹, 33⁴⁻⁸, 50), and contains some vigorous war-songs, *e.g.* :—

5. "Slacken the strong (bows) of the malignant kings, destroy those who are hostile, whether kindred or allied.
13. "By valour thou (Indra) hast carried off the wealth of Sushna, when thou hadst demolished his cities.