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THE SKANDA-PURĀṄA

Translated and Annotated by
Dr. G.V. TAGARE

PART XX

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help in the publication of the volumes in this series.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch (s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

AGP	S.M. Ali's <i>The Geography of Purāṇas</i> , PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	<i>Ancient Indian Historical Tradition</i> , F.E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsi das (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	<i>Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology</i> Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	<i>Agni Purāṇa</i> , Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
AV	<i>Atharva Veda</i> , Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
BdP	<i>Brahmāṇda Purāṇa</i> , MLBD, Delhi, 1973
BG	<i>Bhagavadgītā</i>
BhP	<i>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</i> , Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br	<i>Brāhmaṇa</i> (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BsP	<i>Bhavisya Purāṇa</i> , Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BVP	<i>Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa</i> , GM, 1955-57
CC	<i>Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi</i> by Hemādri
CVS	<i>Carana Vyūha Sūtra</i> by Saunaka, Com. by Mahīdāsa
DB	<i>Devī Bhāgavata</i> , GM, 1960-61
De or	<i>The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval</i>
GDAMI	<i>India</i> , N.L. De/Dey, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
DhS	<i>Dharma Sūtra</i> (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
GP	<i>Garuḍa Purāṇa</i> , ed. R.S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964
GS	<i>Gṛhya Sūtra</i> (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	<i>History of Dharma Śāstra</i> , P.V. Kane, G.O.S.
JP	<i>Purāṇa</i> (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	<i>Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra</i>
KP	<i>Kūrma Purāṇa</i> , Veṅkateśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971

LP	<i>Liṅga Purāṇa</i> , GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu	<i>Manusmṛti</i>
Mbh	<i>Mahābhārata</i> , Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	<i>Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa</i>
MN	<i>Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇī</i> , Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	<i>Matsya Purāṇa</i> , GM, 1954
MW	M. Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	<i>Nāradīya</i> or <i>Nārada Purāṇa</i> , Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PdP	<i>Padma Purāṇa</i> , GM, 1957-59
PE	<i>Purāṇic Encyclopaedia</i> , V. Mani, English Version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or	<i>Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs</i>
PRHRC	R.C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
RV	<i>Rg Veda</i> , Svādhyāya Maṇḍal, Aundh
Śat Br	<i>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</i>
SC or SMC	<i>Smṛti Candrikā</i> by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SkP	<i>Skanda Purāṇa</i>
SP	<i>Śiva Purāṇa</i>
VāP	<i>Vāyu Purāṇa</i>
VR	<i>Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa</i>
VdP	<i>Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa</i>
VmP	<i>Vāmana Purāṇa</i>
VP	<i>Viṣṇu Purāṇa</i>
VrP	<i>Varāha Purāṇa</i>

SKANDA PURĀNA

BOOK VII: PRABHĀSA KHANḍA

SECTION I: PRABHĀSA-KSETRA MĀHĀTMYA

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

Greatness of Jāmadagnyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Rāmeśvara situated within a distance of thirty *Dhanus* to the north-west of Gopīśvara. The Liṅga has a great power. It is destructive of sins.

O goddess of Devas, when the terrible murder of his mother was carried out by Paraśurāma carrying out the behest of his father, he felt great distress in his mind. He was utterly disgusted. But Jamadagni, the great ascetic, became pleased with him.

5-6. Then the delighted sage granted him the boon of the resuscitation of Reṇukā. In this manner, although the lady of excellent complexion was brought back to life, O goddess, the highly lustrous son of Jamadagni got disgusted with aversion. He came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and performed a wonderful penance.

7. After installing the great god Śaṅkara, the benefactor of the worlds, he performed penance for more than a hundred divine years. Thereat Maheśvara was pleased.

8. He granted him all desires and stationed himself there. So the great sage Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma) became contented.

9-10. After killing Kṣatriyas, he conquered the earth twenty-one times. The sage of exalted mind created (the holy pit of) *Pañcanada* in Kurukṣetra, O lady of excellent countenance, and filled it with the blood of the Kṣatriyas. The highly powerful sage freed himself from indebtedness to the Pitṛs.

11. Thus after annihilating Kṣatriyas and offering the (different

parts of the) earth to Brāhmaṇas, he became contented. His valour was glorified in all the three worlds.

12. That Liṅga was installed by him in the splendid holy spot of Prābhāsika. A man who devoutly worships that deity may be sinful but he is rid of all sins and goes to the world of the Consort of Umā.

13. A man who keeps awake there during the night of the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, obtains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice and rejoices in heaven like Devas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Greatness of Citrāṅgadeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the shrine of Lord Citrāṅgadeśvara. The Liṅga is stationed within a distance of twenty *Dhanus* to the south-west thereof (i.e. Jāmadagnyeśvara).

O my beloved, O goddess of Devas, after realizing that the holy spot is very sacred the Liṅga was installed by Citrāṅgada, the Lord of Gandharvas. After propitiating Maheśvara, the Gandharva performed a very severe penance.

One who is endowed with emotional fervour and adores that Liṅga, attains the world of Gandharvas and rejoices along with Gandharvas.

There, on the thirteenth lunar day of the bright half, a devotee should duly bathe Śiva and worship by means of different kinds of flowers, sweet scents and incense in due order. He gets everything cherished in his mind and desired to possess.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Greatness of Rāvaṇeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Rāvaṇeśvara stationed between south and south-west of the former shrine (Citrāṅgadeśvara) within a distance of sixteen *Dhanus*.

It was installed by the Ten-headed Demon (Rāvaṇa) and is destructive of all sins.

O goddess, the very terrible Rākṣasa, the descendant of Pulastya named Rāvaṇa, was ambitious to conquer all the three worlds. He moved about in his Puṣpaka. Once his aerial chariot Puṣpaka came to a standstill while going through the path of the firmament. On seeing his Puṣpaka rendered motionless, Rāvaṇa got highly surprised.

5-6. He sent Prahasta to the earth saying: "What is this? The movement of this chariot was never obstructed in all the three worlds including mobile and immobile beings. Go to the earth and find out why my aerial chariot Puṣpaka has come to a standstill." Thereupon, O goddess, he went hurriedly to the surface of the earth.

7. He saw Śrīsomeśa, the highly resplendent lord of the chiefs of Devas, eulogized by groups of hundreds and thousands of Suras.

8. After seeing him, O my beloved, Prahasta reported everything in detail to the Lord of Rākṣasas. He told him about what was seen in the centre of the holy spot.

Prahasta said:

9-10. O mighty Lord of Rākṣasas, Śiva's own holy place well-known as Prabhāsa is resorted to by the Gaṇas and Gandharvas. There Śaṅkara, Lord Someśvara, is present himself. He is eulogized all round by sages, Vālakhilyas and others such as *Abbhakṣas* (those who subsist on water), *Vāyubhakṣas* (those who take in air as food alone) and *Dantolūkhalins* (those who make their teeth do the job of the mortar i. e. they bite paddy etc., remove the husk therefrom and eat the same).

11. Due to the power of that Lord, this Puṣpaka does not move ahead. The Lord who cannot be transgressed by Suras and Asuras cannot be transgressed and passed over.

Īśvara said:

12. On hearing these words Rāvaṇa became surprised as evidenced by his staring eyes. He got down to the earth and visited Someśa.

13. O goddess of Devas, he worshipped him with the greatest devotion by means of various kinds of gems, garments, sweet scents, flowers and unguents.

14. On seeing Rāvaṇa, the Lord of the Rākṣasas, the citizens became afraid, O beautiful woman, and fled in all directions.

15. Everything became void. Only the Lord was present here. At this time, an unembodied speech announced:

16-18. "O mighty ten-headed one, in this Uttarāyana period, on the occasion of the pilgrimage during the religious procession of the Lord, the destruction of all sins takes effect. Crowds of common people and Brāhmaṇas have come here from far-off places. But they are afraid of danger from Rākṣasas. They flee in all directions. O great Rākṣasa, do not be an obstacle in their pilgrimage and religious procession.

On seeing Lord Someśvara a men shall wash off all the sins incurred during the periods of boyhood, youth or old age."

19. Thereupon, the leading Rākṣasa went to a cave in a very isolated place. With deep devotion, he installed a Liṅga.

20. Then, O goddess of Devas, he dedicated himself unto it. Along with all (his people) the Lord of Rākṣasas observed fast and worshipped the Liṅga.

21. He kept awake at night with vocal and instrumental music going on in front of the deity. Then at mid-night the unembodied speech spoke:

22-25. "O sinless mighty ten-headed one, I am pleased with you. With my favour the entire region of the three worlds shall come under your control. Undoubtedly I shall be present here always.

O Lord of Rakṣasas, men who, endowed with devotion, worship this Liṅga, will become invincible to enemies. They will attain the great Siddhi undoubtedly with my favour."

After saying thus, O beautiful lady, the Bull-emblemed One stopped.

Rāvaṇa too became pleased. After worshipping Maheśvara Liṅga again and again he got into the Puṣpaka and went to the land desired by him in his ambition to conquer all the three worlds.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Greatness of Saubhāgyeśvarī

Īśvara said:

1-4. Then, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Gaurī, the bestower of *Saubhāgya* (good luck and conjugal felicity) stationed within a distance of five *Dhanus* to the west of Rāvaṇeśa.

It is there that the fair lady Arundhatī herself performed a very severe penance. Desirous of *Saubhāgya* she engaged herself in the adoration of Gaurī. By the power of that goddess, she attained great Siddhi.

He who devoutly worships her, O lady of excellent countenance, on the third lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, shall attain *Saubhāgya* (great fortune and conjugal felicity) in the next birth. O goddess of Devas, there need be no hesitation in believing this.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

Greatness of Paulomīśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the great Liṅga to the north-west of Rāvaṇeśvara within a distance of thirty *Dhanus*.

2. It is installed by Paulomī and is deservedly named

Paulomiśvara. The installed Liṅga fulfills all desires and destroys all sins.

3-5. When Suras engaged in battle were killed by Tāraka, the three worlds were captured by him and the status of Indra was adopted by himself. Śakra became extremely distressed. In his anguish due to fear, he disappeared. His wife Indrāṇī became emaciated due to grief, O goddess. Desirous of Indra's victory, Śambhu was propitiated by her. Becoming pleased thereby, Mahādeva spoke to that lady of splendid eyes:

The holy lord said:

6. An extremely powerful son named Śaṇmukha will be born to us. He will slay Tāraka, the king of Daityas.

7-9. You can go free from worry. Further, listen to my words. He who worships this Liṅga of us situated here shall certainly become my Gaṇa and come to my presence.

On being told thus, that chaste lady went to the place where the king of Devas was present. She was rid of all miseries and became free from the fear of all Daityas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

Greatness of Śāṇḍilyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine named Śāṇḍilyeśvara within a distance of sixteen Dhanus to the west of the shrine of Brahmā. That Liṅga is of great efficacy. By viewing it, sins are destroyed.

The great Brāhmaṇa-sage named Śāṇḍilya is remembered as the charioteer of Brahmā. He was a great saint of great refulgence, perfectly stabilized in true knowledge. He had conquered all his sense-organs.

He came to Prabhāsa, installed the great Liṅga situated to the north of Someśa and performed a very severe penance.

5. O my beloved, he himself worshipped the deity for a hundred years according to the reckoning of gods. Thereby

he derived what he desired and became satisfied that he had done his duty.

6. He acquired Aṇīmā (Minuteness) and other powers (Siddhis) with the favour of Nandiśvara. By visiting the deity a man becomes free from all sins immediately.

7. O my beloved, a man may commit sins in his boyhood, youth or old age knowingly or unknowingly. By viewing Śāṇḍilyeśvara all those sins are destroyed.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

Greatness of Kṣemaṅkareśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Kṣemeśvara situated to the north thereof and to the south-east of Kapāleśa.

It is situated within a distance of fifteen Dhanus from Kapāleśvara. The Liṅga is of great efficacy and destroys all sins.

Formerly there was a king of great power named Kṣemamūrti. Penance was performed there for a very long time by that noble-souled one.

Thereafter, with his mind sanctified by devotion, he installed that Liṅga. By viewing that deity, one attains welfare. His undertaking succeeds peacefully.

5. In every birth he shall achieve all his desires and become richly endowed. The Kṣemeśvara Liṅga is thus famous as the destroyer of sins.

6. It bestows all desirable things on men. On being heard, it bestows Saubhāgya (good fortune and conjugal felicity). It is remembered that by viewing it one gets the merit of gifting a hundred cows.

7. Hence one who desires the benefit of the holy place should always resort to that Liṅga.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

Greatness of Sāgarāditya

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Sāgarāditya situated to the west of Bhairavesa, Rudra and Mrtyuñjaya. It is situated not very far from Kāmeśa in the direction of south and south-east.

It destroys all ailments and removes all sorts of poverty. O great goddess, it was installed by the noble-souled Sagara.

This Sagara was the slayer of his foes. He had sixty thousand sons. He got the sons by propitiating the Sun-god there.

King Sagara was such a famous overlord. O goddess, here this ocean extends to many Yojanas. It is glorified as extending to eighty thousand Yojanas.

5. It was in this Manvantara that this ocean was dug up in all the four directions by the sons of Sagara. Therefore, O goddess, the ocean is glorified by the name Sāgara.

6. Lord Bhāskara, who steals away (evaporates) waters, was installed by that king whose age-old glory as recorded in the Purāṇa works is being sung even today.

7. By viewing that deity, a man will not be sluggish, blind, poor or miserable. He shall never be separated from his near and dear ones. He will not be sick nor will he be a sinner.

8. A devotee should subdue all the sense-organs and observe fast on the sixth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, O goddess. He should sleep before the deity at night.

9. On the seventh lunar day, after getting up he should devoutly worship the Sun-god. He should feed Brāhmaṇas with devotion. He should never be miserly in spending money (for this purpose).

10. Even by means of well-performed penance and Yajñas with plenty of monetary gifts, men do not attain that goal which those who resort to the Sun-god attain.

11. If the adoration is carried out devoutly even by means of Dūrvā grass (sprouts and shoots) Bhānu (the Sun-god) bestows the benefit rarely attained by means of all Yajñas.

12. Hence, by means of all efforts, one should adore the

Sun-god alone. By worshipping Bhānu, Janaka and others have attained *Siddhi* (spiritual perfection).

13. The Sun-god alone is the Lord of all Devas; he is the Lord of all the subjects; he is the Lord of all the worlds; he is the immanent soul of all. The Sun alone is the root of the three worlds; he is the supreme deity.

14-15. One should meditate on the Sun-god in the following order and having the following colours: The Sun-god is tawny-coloured in *Vasanta* (spring); in *Grīṣma* (summer) he is as lustrous as gold; during rainy season he is white in colour. Bhāskara is greyish-white in *Śarad* (autumn). He is copper-coloured in *Hemanta* (early winter). Ravi is red in colour in *Śiśira* (late winter).

16. After worshipping the deity in accordance with injunctions, the devotee should restrain his soul and all the sense-organs. He should read (recite) the thousand names of the Sun-god which destroy all sins.

The Devī said:

17. O Lord Śaṅkara, be pleased to tell me the thousand names or something else equivalent to these thousand names.

Īśvara said:

18. There is no necessity to recite all the thousand names. Recite this splendid prayer. I shall enumerate to you all the splendid, secret and sacred names. Learn them with concentration.

19-21. This prayer of twenty-one names is a great favourite of the great Soul. They are: *Vikartana*, *Vivasvān*, *Mārtanya*, *Bhāskara*, *Ravi*, *Lokaprakāśaka* (Illuminator of the worlds), *Śrīmān*, *Lokacakṣus* (Eye of the worlds), *Graheśvara* (Lord of the planets), *Lokasākṣin* (Witness of the worlds), *Trilokeśa* (Lord of the three worlds), *Kartā*(Maker), *Hartā* (Remover), *Tamisrahā* (Remover of darkness), *Tapana*, *Tāpana*(Scorcher), *Śuci* (Pure), *Saptāśvavāhana* (Having seven horses for vehicle), *Gabhastihasta* (Having rays for hands), *Brahmā* and *Sarvadevanamaskṛta* (Bowed to by all the Devas).

22. This prayer is famous as *Stavarāja*. It bestows health of the body, increase in wealth and great fame. It is famous in all the three worlds.

23-24. He who eulogizes *Arka* (Sun-god) by means of this prayer during the two junctures of rising and setting, remaining pure himself, O great goddess, is rid of all sins. Rich with all desires fulfilled, he goes to the world of the Sun-god. Thus, O goddess, the greatness pertaining to Sāgarārka has been spoken to you. On being listened to it suppresses all miseries and destroys great sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

Greatness of Ugraseneśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the great shrine of Akṣamāleśvara situated within a distance of fifty Dhanus in the north-east corner of Sāgarārka.

This Yugalinga of great fulgence removes sins. The name Akṣamāleśvara was glorified formerly but now its name Ugrasenes'vara is well known.

The Devī said:

3. The Liṅga was known earlier by the name Akṣamāleśvara. Be pleased to narrate, O Lord, how it became otherwise (i.e. of a different name).

Īśvara said:

4. O great goddess, formerly there was a chaste lady named Akṣamālā born in a low caste. She was engrossed in the pious rites and duties of chaste ladies.

5-6. Once, as time rolled by, there occurred a severe famine. O great goddess, sages were upset in their minds because they were overcome by hunger. They came to know that a Cāṇḍāla had a large store of grain. Eager to obtain food, they went to the abode of the Cāṇḍāla and requested the base-born one:

7-9. “O *Antyaja* of great intellect, save us by donating food. We are afflicted with hunger, emaciated in limbs and it is doubtful whether our life will be sustained any longer.

You are blessed and worthy of adoration. You will not be (derisively) called *Antyaja* because there is a store of grain in your abode in spite of this devastating disaster (of famine).

When the land is blighted by drought, when vegetation has disappeared, if someone feeds only one Brāhmaṇa, it is as though a crore of them have been fed."

The Antyaja said:

10. A wonderful thing is seen here now. It has no parallel. The sages have come to my abode seeking food.

11. Brāhmaṇas are not expected to accept food from even a Śūdra, still more so from an *Antyaja*.

12. If a person (i.e. Brāhmaṇa) eats cooked or uncooked food from a Śūdra he is reborn as a rural pig or as a member of his (the Śūdra's) family.

13. Food from a Brāhmaṇa is (regarded as) real nectar; food from a Kṣatriya is like milk; food from a Vaiśya, they call as the real food; and food from a Śūdra is remembered as something like blood.

14. The following things cause downfall of even a very resplendent person: food from a Śūdra, association with a Śūdra, sitting by the side of a Śūdra and the acceptance of food from a Śūdra.

15. If an *Agnihotri* (Fire-worshipper) Brāhmaṇa does not refrain from the food of a Śūdra, his (Brāhmaṇa's) very soul, his knowledge of the Vedas and the sacred fires he nourishes (worships)—all these perish in his case.

16. If a Brāhmaṇa dies with the food from a Śūdra in his stomach, that Brāhmaṇa becomes a Piśāca within six months.

17. If a Brāhmaṇa performs *Agnihotra* (gives libation) with the cooked food of a Śūdra, he is born as a Cāṇḍāla after death and that Śūdra attains divinity.

18. If anyone eats continuously for a month food from a Śūdra, he has verily attained the state of a Śūdra in this very birth. After death he is again born as a Śūdra.

19-21. (Acceptance of) the food of a king takes away one's fiery splendour; the food of a Śūdra, the Brāhmaṇical lustre; the food of a goldsmith takes away longevity; that of a cutter of hide (shoe-maker) takes away one's reputation. The food of a *Kāruka* (artisan) kills the progeny; that of a *Nirnejaka*

(washerman) takes away vital strength. The food from a crowd and a harlot severs one from his people (ex-communicates). The food from a physician is like the pus from an ulcer. The food from a wanton, unchaste woman is like semen. The food from a usurer is like excretion and that from a person selling weapons like faeces.

22. The sin resulting from eating the food from these is incurred a thousand times if the food of one who sells his daughter is taken even once.

23. The sin resulting from eating the food of that person (i.e. a daughter-seller) a thousand times is incurred if the food of an *Antyaja* is eaten even once.

24. So, why do you, O leading Brāhmaṇas who are conversant with sacred rites and piety, seek to take food from me, a Cāṇḍāla, a base soul ?

The Sages said:

25. If a person on the verge of extinction of life esteems (accepts) any type of food, he is not smeared with sin just as the sky is not with mud.

26. When he was hungry Ajigarta rushed at his son to kill him, but he was not adversely afflicted by sin inasmuch as he was trying to satisfy his hunger.

27-29. Bharadvāja and his sons were distressed with hunger in a desolate forest. They seized many cows. Brhajjyoti of exalted mind rushed at Gīta when he was distressed due to hunger. Viśvāmitra who could clearly discriminate between what is Dharma and what is Adharma took the flesh of the thigh of a dog from the hands of a Cāṇḍāla. In his distress he desired (to eat) even the flesh of a dog, but he did not fall down from piety. Vāmadeva who wanted to save his life was not smeared with sin.

30. Bearing in mind all these, O dear one of pious inclinations, do not hesitate now. Give food, do give food to us who are pleading as suppliants.

The Cāṇḍāla said:

31. If this is so, your purpose (supply of food) has been certainly accepted. Therefore, let this girl, my daughter, be accepted (in marriage) by your honours.

32. Whoever is the foremost among you, your leader, he should definitely marry her. Thereafter, O Brāhmaṇas, I shall give you food for a year as desired by you.

Īśvara said:

33. On being told thus, O goddess, the sages bowed down their heads in shame. After duly considering this matter, they made Vasiṣṭha to marry (the girl).

34. Vasiṣṭha of exalted mind called this *Āpaddharma* (a duty adopted under duress whenever life is threatened by imminent calamity) and he had a vision of the subsequent times. He married the Antyaja damsels named Akṣamālā. Later she became famous in all the three worlds as Arundhatī.

35. When she restrained the (movement of the) solar disc by means of her own refulgence, she became Arundhatī and came to be honoured by Devas and Dānavas.

36. Just as a river becomes one with the sea after confluence with that sea, so a woman too comes to have the same status and features as the husband with whom she becomes united (in marriage).

37. Akṣamālā, born of a base caste and community, attained respectability when united with Vasiṣṭha, like Śārṅgi when united with Mandapāla. (But in Mbh, Ādi 232-233 sage Mandapāla transformed himself into a Śārṅgi bird to create children and got a place in heaven.)

38. In due course the noble-souled Seven Sages came to the holy spot of Prabhāsa in the company of Arundhatī.

39. They sent her to the various Tīrthas that grant all Siddhis.

40. While they were in search thus, the fair lady Arundhatī saw a Liṅga embedded in a grove of trees.

41-43. On seeing the Lord of the chiefs of Devas, she got the ability of remembering her previous birth: 'In my previous birth, during the period of *Rajas* (menses) Śiva, the Lord of Devas, was certainly adored here in an ignorant manner. So as the result of the Karma, the status (birth) of Antyaja was attained by me in spite of my Brāhmaṇahood. Which Lord can be considered on a par with Śambhu in all the three worlds? Though angry he has bestowed his kingdom unto persons practising restraint?'

44. Thinking thus, she remained engaged there itself, O my beloved. She adored that Liṅga for a hundred years as per reckoning of gods.

45. It is on account of the power thereof, that she is seen in the sky. If the chaste lady Arundhatī is seen, she dispels all sins.

46-47. Thus the deity Akṣamāleśvara has been duly extolled unto you.

Then at the close of Dvāpara, when a part of the juncture with Kali elapsed, the son of Andhāsura became famous by the name Ugrasena. For the sake of getting a son, he came to Prabhāsa and came across this Liṅga.

48. He understood that it was the deity named Akṣamāleśvara and realized its wonderful efficacy. He propitiated Mahādeva for fourteen years and begot the son who was later known as Karṇsāsura.

49-51. Ever since then, the deity became Ugraseneśvara. It is destroyer of all sins of all creatures, thanks to its vision and touch.

It is said that great sins like those of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, imbibing liquor, theft, defiling the wife of preceptor etc., perish by viewing that deity.

In the auspicious month of Bhādrapadā on the occasion of R̥ṣipāñcamī (fifth day in the bright half of Bhādrapada) one who worships Akṣamāleśvara, is rid of the fear of hell.

52-53. For the purpose of the destruction of all sins and for attaining infinite happiness after death, they recommend the gift of cows, food and water there.

Thus, O goddess, the greatness pertaining to Akṣamāleśvara has been narrated to you. It suppresses sins. On being listened to it dispels misery.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTY

Greatness of Pāśupateśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the deity Pāśupateśvara situated on the eastern

side of Ugraseneśvara, to the south-east of Gopāditya and to the south of Dhruveśa. It is destroyer of all sins. The Liṅga is situated to the east of Gopāditya (also). It fulfills all desires when one visits it. In this Yuga it is called by the name Santośeśvara.

4. Since the Lord is pleased with the ascetics there, the Liṅga is well-known all over the earth by the name Santoṣa.

5. O great goddess, this is a *Yugaliṅga* and the abode of Siddhis. It is highly lustrous. It is the place of Pāśupata devotees and is a panacea for persons who are afflicted with disease in the form of sins.

6. O renowned lady, four sages, Vāmadeva, Sāvarṇi, Aghora and Kapila have achieved their Siddhi in that Liṅga. They have attained Siddhi in the unsullied primordial Lord through that Liṅga.

7. In the forest, in the vicinity of that Lord, there is the spot of Lakṣmī called Śrīmukha. O great goddess, it is resorted to by persons of perfect mastery in Yoga.

8. Excellent Pāśupatas are engaged in the adoration of my Liṅga there. It is as a place of their habitation that the forest has been created by the goddess.

9. In the centre thereof, O lady of excellent hips, is situated a Liṅga facing east. The great sages, the devotees of Paśupati, beginning with Aghora have become Siddhas therein. They went to Śiva's place with the present physical body itself.

10. Residence for ever in that auspicious shrine in the holy place of Prabhāsa, the abode of Suras and Siddhas, appeals to me very much. It is the most beautiful and most lovable of all holy spots.

11. O goddess, Pāśupatas are engaged in meditation on me there. All of them are my sons. They observe celibacy.

12. They have subdued their sense-organs. They are quiescent. They have conquered anger. Those Brāhmaṇas are performers of penance. By the power of that Liṅga, they have attained great Siddhis.

13. Hence, an excellent Brāhmaṇa resident of that holy spot, should always adore that deity.

The Devī said:

14-17. O Lord, O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, O redeemer

from the ocean of worldly existence, have mercy on me and narrate to me details of the observers of holy vows in that highly meritorious shrine pertaining to you, the Pāśupata Yoga, the excellent greatness of the Liṅga, the ancient name of the deity and how it is to be worshipped by excellent men and how Pāśupatas attained heaven along with their physical bodies.

Īśvara said:

18-20. O fair lady, the great Yoga of Pāśupata is being enquired by you, so also, O lady of excellent vows, the power of the Liṅga as well as that of those who have adopted my *Vrata* in that Liṅga, O goddess. O lady of great refulgence, the primordial name of the Lord having no beginning is also being asked by you. O lady of excellent buttocks, the Pāśupata *Vrata* is great and its duration is very long. These devotees who observe this *Vrata* in the manner as has been mentioned, cause wonder unto me as well. My mind yearns (and is very eager) to bless them.

Sūta said:

21. O Brāhmaṇas, the goddess became highly surprised on hearing the words of Hara. She spoke these words to her husband, the Lord of all the worlds.

The Devī said:

22. O Lord, I too have earnestness and curiosity (to know) what your holiness did then ? O great god, if I am your beloved, do tell it to me.

23. On hearing her words, Mahādeva spoke to her: "Listen, O goddess, I shall explain the activities of my devotees."

24. On seeing their steadfast adherence to penance, the first Lord of Suras spoke these words to the devotees (who were) standing at the sides with bowed heads.

Īśvara said:

25. O Nandikeśa, do hurry to that place where my sons (devotees) perform my severe and elaborate *Vrata* which is very difficult to be performed (by ordinary persons).

26. By the power of that holy spot as well as of their constant devotion to me, those sages of excellent holy vows have achieved supernatural powers in their own physical forms.

27. Hence, O Nandin, do go to that splendid holy spot of Prabhāsa at my behest and invite them all on my behalf. Do bring them to Kailāsa quickly.

28. Take this resplendent lotus bud along with its stalk. Offer this bud (flower) on the top of the Liṅga and bring only this stalk here.

29. Dispatched thus by Śambhu, the Lord of Devas, Nandin went to the Prabhāsa Kṣetra from the Kailāsa resort.

30. On seeing the Liṅga of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas as well as those leading Yogins, he became overwhelmed with great surprise.

31. There some of them were engaged in meditation. Some had resorted to the practice of Yoga. Some explained the texts and others were pondering or conducting discourses.

32. Others were adoring the Liṅga. Still others were paying obeisance to it. Some were circumambulating and prostrating before the Liṅga with the eight limbs (touching the ground).

33. Some were eulogizing with Bhāvayajña (Yajña offered mentally), Some were worshipping by means of splendid flowers in the form of non-injury.

34. Some had Bhasma Snāna (bath by means of holy ash smeared over the body). Others were having bath with Gaṇḍukas*(?) In this manner the assemblage of the sages was engaged in feverish activity.

35. On seeing them in such a state and minutely observing everything pertaining to them, Nandin reflected thus mentally.

36-37. 'I have come to this region. None takes cognisance of me. I have not been asked by anyone. 'Where have you come from'? Whose guest are you ? All of these are full of haughtiness. They never care to talk to me.' After thinking thus he approached the Liṅga.

38. The flower was separated by cutting away the stalk and offered to the Liṅga by Nandin. After adoring the Liṅga of Paśupati, Lord Nandin carefully took up the stalk and spoke to the sages.

* The reading should have been Guṇḍuṣa (water in the hollow of both palms).

Nandikeśvara said:

39. I have come to the vicinity of your honours at the bidding of the Lord of Devas. The Lord of Devas commands the assembly of the groups of sages.

40. "All of you should go to that place where the eternal Lord is present. I shall go to the abode of Lord Bhava taking you all with me. Get up quickly. We shall go to Kailāsa, the most excellent one among mountains."

41. All those Brāhmaṇas remained silent. They made gestures indicating "Nandin, you may go ahead. We shall come afterwards".

42. On being intimated thus, Nandin hastened back. With his inner soul burning with rage, he reported everything (to the Lord).

Nandikeśvara said:

43. O Lord, I had been to that place where those Yogins stayed. Though I waited there, I was not welcomed by anyone.

44. O Lord, none of them even looked at me nor they spoke to me. O Lord, the lotus flower was placed by me on the top of the Liṅga.

45. O Lord Maheśvara, I informed the leading Yogins: "You have been commanded by the Lord of Devas : 'Come here. Do not delay'."

46. On hearing this, O Lord, those great sages said (intimated by gestures): "You go, do not delay. We shall come close behind."

47. O Lord, when this was intimated I came here quickly. Do take this stalk, O my Lord, be pleased to do (as you deem fit).

48. Here is a doubt of mine. It behoves you to dispel it now. O Mahādeva, how can they come without me. O Mahādeva, O Maheśvara, this is my doubt. Do tell me.

Īśvara said:

49. Listen, O Nandin, this is the mystery regarding those sages of purified souls. These Siddhas cannot be seen by others, even by Suras, barring me.

50. They have been sanctified by their devotion to me.

They know the Yoga pertaining to Śaṅkara. Note this wonderful thing, O Nandin. I shall show it to you now.

51. You see the stalk brought by you here. They have penetrated it in a subtle form by means of the power of their Yogic achievement.

52. On being told thus then, Nandin was wonder-struck and his eyes beamed. He saw the great sages stationed in the centre of the stalk like atoms.

53. Just as minute dust particles are seen in the rays of the sun, so also the sages were severally seen in the centre of the stalk.

54. On seeing thus, the eyes of Nandin sparkled with wonder. In such a great state of wonderment he did not utter anything.

55. On noticing this curious thing the goddess spoke these words: "O great Lord, what is seen? O Maheśvara, why are you so elated with joy?"

56. As these words were uttered by the goddess Maheśvara spoke thus:

Īśvara said:

57. These noble souls are fully endowed with Yogic power. They are engaged in the Yoga pertaining to Paśupati. They have propitiated me stationed in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra and so have attained such spiritual powers. They have the power to go anywhere as they please.

58. When the Lord of Devas said thus, those sages of great splendour came out of the lotus stalk by means of Yogic Māyā. They circumambulated the Lord who stood away from the goddess.

The goddess said:

59. Why don't these Brāhmaṇas of evil conduct look at me? This is surprising O Mahādeva, kindly do explain.

Īśvara said:

60-61a. These sages of great penance have great spiritual powers. They do not look at you because you are the Prakṛti.

On being told thus by the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas, the Daughter of the Mountain became furious. The lady of excellent buttocks with her anger expressed on the face, imprecated them :

61 b-63. "O haughty men of evil conduct, you will face destruction due to infatuation for women. At the advent of Kali Age, you will become covetous of gifts from kings. You will be engaged in worshipping the Lord as means of living. You will be maintaining yourself by the money belonging to the Liṅga. In Kali Yuga, you will become fondly attached to prostitutes. You will become confused and boycotted by all the people as a result of the destruction of the property of the Lord (temple)."

64. When this curse was pronounced upon the noble-souled sages, all the chiefs of Suras propitiated Gaurī.

65. At the instance of the Lord of Devas, she became pleased once again. The Lord took up the stalk and threw it to the southern quarter.

66. That stalk fell in the middle of the Prabhāsa Kṣetra. That itself became a Liṅga well known as Mahānala.

67. At the advent of Kali Age, it came to be called Dhruveśvara. It is stationed to the north-east of Pāśupateśvara.

68. Earlier it was known by the name Anādiśa and afterwards as Pāśupateśvara. It thus stationed itself as the destroyer of sins in the great holy spot of Prabhāsa.

69. This holy spot of mine is excellent for the purpose of observing my Vrata. This Liṅga termed Anādiśa is the great Brahman.

70. There is no doubt about it that Brāhmaṇas will attain Siddhi and Mukti (liberation) here. They will attain salvation in six months with the same body.

71. May this Liṅga be visited for effecting liberation from the worldly existence. It is of difficult access unto ordinary people. It grants salvation. The mystic knowledge of Pāśupata is well established in this Liṅga.

72. He who devoutly worships this throughout the month of Māgha, attains the merit of performing all Kratus (sacrifices) and offering holy gifts.

73. Gold should be offered there by those who are desirous of getting the full benefit of a perfect pilgrimage.

74. Thus, O goddess, the sin-destroying greatness of Pāśupateśvara has been described duly for the sake of the

liberation from the bondage of being a Paśu.

75. It is said that Brāhmaṇa is the most worthy of adoration among all the castes. Only he is authorised in the worship of Pāśupateśvara.

76. This Pāśupata Vrata that has become the first and foremost universal Vrata of all the deities, has been explained by me as the well established pathway whereby the Devas proceed to all the *Bhuvanas* (worlds).

77. A Rudrādhyāyī (one who recites the Vedic Rudra Mantras) covered with holy ash and lying on the bed of holy ash becomes rid of all sins incurred by imbibing liquor, ravishing preceptor's wife, stealing (gold) and slaying a Brāhmaṇa.

78. One should take up the holy ash uttering the Mantra beginning with the word *Agni* and smear his limbs therewith. Ash should be collected when the fire has cooled down in the abodes of the residents (of the holy spot).

79. Agni became *Bhasma* (holy ash), Vāyu became *Bhasma*. Jala (Water) became *Bhasma*, Sthala (the earth) became *Bhasma*. Everything became *Bhasma*. One who is not initiated should not touch these i.e. not smear it over the eyes.

80-81. It should be collected by Brāhmaṇas and never by Śūdras; a Śūdra is never eligible for the Pāśupata Vrata which is auspicious. I am born in every Yuga adopting the body of a Brāhmaṇa (only Brāhmaṇas are authorized in the auspicious Pāśupata Vrata).

82. There is no doubt about this that even base men placed in *Karīṣa* (holy ash) attain the region of Śiva whether it is in the house of a Cāṇḍāla or in a cremation ground, or in royal pathways or in the middle of highway.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Greatness of Dhruveśvara

Śrī Devī said:

1. How did that shrine and Liṅga mentioned by your worship as well-known by the name Nāleśvara become Liṅga Dhruveśvara ?

Īśvara said:

2. Listen, O goddess, I shall explain the greatness of Dhruveśvara, on listening to which a man is released from the bondage of the worldly existence.

3. There was a son of a king named Uttānapāda. He was called Dhruva. He was a noble soul richly endowed with perfect knowledge. He was omniscient and had a pleasant appearance.

4. O goddess, once he came to Prabhāsa, the excellent holy spot. O fair lady, he performed an elaborate and extremely terrible penance.

5. After installing Maheśvara, he devoutly worshipped him for a period of a thousand years according to the divine reckoning and eulogized with various kinds of hymns and prayers.

6. I shall recite to you that prayer whereby I became delighted.

Dhruva's Prayer:

Dhruva said:

7. I seek refuge in Śaṅkara who bestows succour and who, by pressing with his lotus-like feet, steadied the lofty-peaked Kailāsa that was being shaken by the ten-headed Rāvaṇa resembling the peak of Kailāsa.

8. I seek refuge in Śaṅkara who bestows succour and by whom all Asuras and Dānavas surrounded by the Vidyādharaś and groups of Uragas (serpents) were denied the fruit further but rendered free from attachment to the results of their actions, by making them *Jīvanmukta* (souls free from Saṁsāra while alive).

9. I seek refuge in that Śaṅkara who bestows succour, under whose control the entire visible universe remains forever, who enjoys (makes use of) all the worlds by means of his eight cosmic bodies, and who is the cause of the great causes of all causes.

10. I seek refuge in that Śaṅkara who bestows succour and who formerly became extremely angry and cut off the tender lotus-like fifth head of Brahmā by means of the tip of the nail of the lotus-like left hand.

11. I seek refuge in that Śaṅkara who bestows succour.

Lord Śaṅkara is the bestower of boons. The blazing *Vivasvān* (Sun-god) devoutly bows down to his feet and eulogizes with words without impurities and free from lethargy and weariness. Thereby he can dispel darkness by means of his rays.

12. A man who restrains himself and always remains pure and perfect, recites, in the assembly of Brāhmaṇas this prayer of sweet import, composed by Dhruva, goes to the beginningless Śivaloka.

13. O goddess, I became pleased with the noble-souled Dhruva of sanctified heart, even as he eulogized thus. When the thousand years were concluded, I spoke to Dhruva:

14-16. "Dear son, welfare unto you. I am pleased with you. Now you have become free from impurities. I shall give you divine vision. Look at me freed from all ailments.

Whatever excellent benefit has been all along cherished by you mentally, I shall grant unto you. Do tell me quickly.

I have been devoutly propitiated by you. There is no doubt about it. I shall grant you even that inaccessible region whether of Brahmā or Viṣṇu or Śakra or another."

Dhruva said:

17. It is known to me that the region of Brahmā, of Viṣṇu and of Mahendra is characterized by a return (unto this world therefrom). I do not even mentally covet all these.

18. If you are pleased with me, O Lord, do grant me devotion fully free from impurities. O Bull-embleded One, do stay in this Liṅga always.

Īśvara said:

19. Everything requested thus was granted indeed. His abode was rendered steady and permanent. That is the great region of Viṣṇu (too).

20. He who worships that Liṅga on the New-Moon day of the month of Śrāvaṇa or on the Full-Moon day in the month of Aśvayuk, obtains the merit of a horse-sacrifice.

21. A man without a son gets a son. One who seeks wealth obtains wealth. He becomes handsome and fortunate and enjoys all pleasures. He becomes an expert in all scriptural texts. He goes to Rudraloka by means of an aerial chariot yoked with swans. He is honoured there.

22. He who expounds or listens to this beautiful glory of Dhruva honoured by groups of both Asuras and Suras, becomes quiescent and goes to Rudraloka, the eternal abode of all happiness. He is honoured by the leaders of the groups of Suras and Dānavas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

Greatness of Siddhalakṣmī

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should visit the shrine of the excellent Vaiṣṇavī Śakti. It is situated not very far from Someśa in the north-eastern direction.

Here the presiding deity of the shrine is well-known as Siddhalakṣmī. The first *Piṭha* (seat or shrine) in the Cosmic Egg is what is well-established in Prabhāsa; There, O my beloved goddess, in the great *Piṭha*, Yoginīs, both Earth-stalkers and Sky-stalkers, sport about as they please, accompanied by Bhairava.

4. Jālandhara (the second great *Mahāpiṭha*) and Kāmarūpa (are also *Piṭhas*). The glorious Rudranṛsiṁha is the fourth excellent *Piṭha*.

5. There are also *Piṭhas* such as the great *Piṭha* Ratnavīrya and Kāsmīra *Piṭha*. O goddess, he who is familiar with these *Piṭhas* is a *Mantravit* (one conversant with Mantras).

6. O great goddess, the excellent *Piṭha* in Saurāṣṭra, which is the basic support of all the *Piṭhas*, is well known by the name Mahodaya. It is the place where the knowledge facilitating the assumption of a form as one pleases, is effective even today.

7. In the *Piṭha* there, the goddess well-known as Mahālakṣmī is stationed. She suppresses all sins and lends auspiciousness to all activities.

8. Where is the fear due to Alakṣmī (inglorious poverty) unto that man who devoutly worships her on Śrīpañcamī day (the fifth lunar day in the bright half of Māgha) strictly in accordance with the injunctions, with sweet scent, flowers etc.?

9-11. A devotee should seat himself in the vicinity of Mahālakṣmī on the northern side (for facing north) and perform the Japa of the queen of Mantras well-known as Siddhalakṣmī. With due observance of initiation, holy ablution etc., the Mantra is to be repeated a hundred thousand times duly. *Homas* are to be performed by repeating the Mantra ten thousand times with *Trimadhu* (sugar, honey and ghee), coconuts etc. If it is performed thus there is no doubt about this that Lakṣmī becomes manifest. She will grant desired Siddhis in this world as well as in the other.

12 *Siddhi* (perfect achievement of spiritual power) is within the grasp of that person who devoutly worships her duly on the third, eighth and fourteenth lunar days.

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CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

Greatness of Mahākālī

Īvara said:

1-3. O goddess, the deity well-known as Mahākālī is stationed there itself in the crevasse of the nether worlds on the great *Piṭha* situated beneath.

She subdues all miseries. She destroys all enemies. She should be adored duly at midnight on the eighth day of dark half, with sweet scents, flowers, incense, *Kravya* (raw meat) and oblations.

A woman devotee should perform the worship with *Phalatraya* (three types of fruits), remaining pure in person. For a year during bright halves of the months, she should worship the goddess in accordance with the injunctions. The fruits should, of course, be given away to a Brāhmaṇa duly.

4-5. O beautiful lady of Suras, the following grains and lentils should be avoided at night: *Nispāva*, *Āḍhaki*, *Mudga*, *Māṣa*, *Kulitthaka*, *Masūra*, *Rājamāṣa*, *Godhūma*, *Tripuṭa*, *Cañaka*, *Vartala*, *Makuṣṭha* and others.

6. O goddess, these should not be eaten as long as *Gaurīvrata* is being performed. I shall mention the meritorious fruit thereof. Listen to it even as it is being narrated.

7. Neither wealth nor grains shall become exhausted in her house. For seven successive births that woman shall never be miserable, unlucky or distressed.

8. The *Vrata* pertaining to Goddess Mahākālī has been described along with its greatness. If it is performed, it is conducive to the destruction of sins and the fulfilment of all desires.

9. Thus, O goddess, the greatness of Mahākālī has been extolled. O great goddess, the *Piṭha* of the holy spot gives success in the employment of Mantras.

10. On the ninth day in the bright half of Aśvayuj, a devotee should keep vigil at night. A devotee who offers oblations in the form of adoration, should recite the Mantra at night at will. He should be gentle in mind. He shall obtain the excellent Siddhi as desired.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

Greatness of Puṣkarāvartakā

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to River Puṣkarāvartakā situated not far from Brahmakuṇḍa, on the northern side.

Formerly, as the Yajña of the noble-souled Soma was going on, Brahmā had come to Prabhāsa Kṣetra along with groups of Suras.

He had been invited by R̥ksarājā (the Moon, Soma) for the purpose of installing Somanātha as promised earlier by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds: "As long as I continue to stay in the mortal world for any reason, obeisance should be offered thrice a day (during the periods of junction) in Tripuṣkara."

5. In the meantime, the auspicious hour had come. The period was recommended as the auspicious hour by the Brāhmaṇas thinking about deities.

6. On coming to know that Pitāmaha was about to proceed ahead towards Puṣkara for the purpose of Sandhyā (prayer at the prescribed hours of junction) *Rātrinātha* (the Lord of night namely Soma, Moon) said these words:

7. "This period alone is reckoned as the auspicious hour by persons conversant with astrology. May the arrangement be so made as to avoid lapse of the auspicious time."

8. Having come to know that the time was propitious Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, concentrated his mind and thought of the Puṣkaras mentally.

9. O auspicious and splendid lady of excellent complexion, on being remembered by Brahmā, those (Puṣkaras) manifested themselves immediately on the resplendent banks of the river.

10. There arose whirlpools (in the river) of three sizes large, medium and small. Then, Brahmā the grandfather of the worlds, gave her (the river) a name.

11-13. "With my favour, the splendid river will become well-known from today by the name Puṣkarāvartakā. A man who takes his holy bath here and offers libation to the Pitṛs with devotion, will attain what is desired and the merit befitting the Tripuṣkara. If an excellent man offers libation thereon the third lunar day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the satisfaction (of the Pitṛs) shall last for ten thousand Kalpas."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Śītalāgaurī

Īśvara said:

1-3. A pilgrim should visit the misery-quelling goddess stationed there itself. Earlier she was well-known as Śītalā in Dvāpara Yuga. But in Kali Age she is famous as *Kali-duḥkhāntakārī* (she who quells miseries of Kali Age).

If adored with ardent devotion, she will make the bodies of children cool (*Śītala*) and free from ailments. Hence she is remembered as *Śītalā*.

In order to dispel swellings (boils) in the case of children, *Masūras* should be properly measured and pounded.

4. The same is placed before Śītalā uttering, "May the children be free from ailments". Thereby there shall be suppression of *Visphoṭa* (swelling, boils), *Carcikā*(small boils) etc. as well as *Vāta*(rheumatic complaints) etc.

5. Śrāddha should be performed there and Brāhmaṇas should be fed.

6. Camphor, flowers, musk, excellent sandalpaste, saffron and sweet scents should be offered. The food offering shall be pudding made with ghee. After dedicating it to the goddess, everything should be given to a couple.

7. On the ninth day in the bright half a splendid garland of Bilva should be offered to the goddess. Thereby the devotee shall attain all Siddhis.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Greatness of Lomaśeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Lomaśeśvara. It is situated within a distance of seven Dhanus to the east of *Duhkhāntakāriṇī*.

O goddess of Devas, a great Liṅga was installed by the great sage Lomaśa in the middle of the cave, after performing a great penance very difficult to be performed.

O my beloved, when the three and a half crores of Heaven-dwellers beginning with Indra perish he too shall perish.

4. Indras are as many as there are hairs on the body. When Indra perishes duly, a hair (of the sage) may fall down.

5. Thus, with the favour of Īśa, Lomaśa became long-lived. By the time Lomaśa completes his life-span, six Brahmās would have perished.

6. He who devoutly worships that Liṅga adored by Lomaśa shall also attain long life, happiness and freedom from sickness and sorrow.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

Greatness of Kaṅkāla-bhairava

Īśvara said:

1-3. A pilgrim should visit the excellent Kṣetrapāla stationed there itself, named Kaṅkālabhairava. He was employed by Bhairava for the protection of that holy spot from evil-minded living beings.

If the devotee of noble soul residing in Puṣkara Kṣetra worships that deity devoutly on the fifth lunar day in the bright half of Śrāvaṇa, and on the eighth lunar day of the month of Āśvina, by means of oblations, flowers etc. duly, the deity protects him like his own son and removes all the obstacles.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

Greatness of Tṛṇabindviśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. The deity named Tṛṇabindviśvara is stationed within a distance of five Dhanus to the west thereof (i. e. of Kaṅkālabhairava). It was installed with perfect devotion, O goddess, after the leading sage Tṛṇabindu had performed an elaborate penance, drinking only a drop of water from the tip of a blade of Darbha every month. Thus he propitiated Īśvara for many years and attained the greatest Siddhi in the Prābhāsika Kṣetra of great fulgence.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

Greatness of Citrāditya

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Citrāditya to the south thereof (i.e. of

Tṛṇabindvīśvara) in the vicinity of Brahmakunda. O goddess of Devas, he has great power. He is the destroyer of all types of poverty.

O goddess, formerly there was a righteous soul named Mitra on the earth He was a Kāyastha, always engaged in the welfare of all living beings.

He used to have close physical intimacy with his wife only during the prescribed days after menstruation. He had two children. O lady of excellent countenance, one was a boy of great refulgence named Citra. He had a daughter called Cīrā who was a girl of great beauty and good habits that embellished her.

5. Immediately after the birth of these two, Mitra met with his death. His excellent wife entered the funeral pyre along with him.

6. Those two wretched children were brought up by the sages. They grew up in the great forest engaging themselves in *Vratas* even while they were yet children.

7. They came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra, installed the great deity Bhāskara, the water-thief (evaporator), and performed an elaborate penance.

8. The righteous-souled (Citra) worshipped the deity with incense, garlands and unguent. He joined his palms in veneration and eulogized Lord Sūryadeva by means of the sixty-eight names enumerated by Vasiṣṭha.

Citra said:

9. I bow down to Lord Bhāskara, the master of the firmament. He is the primordial Lord, the Lord of the universe, the destroyer of sins and ailments.

10. (I bow down) to the thousand-rayed, thousand-eyed god with thousand lustrous rays.

Epithets of the Sun-god and his sacred places:

11. I shall eulogize that Lord endowed with secret epithets. At daybreak, he is Muṇḍīra-Svāmin at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean. At midday he is Kālapriya resorting to the banks of Yamunā.

12. At dusk he is at Mūlasthāna (modern Multan) on the banks of Candrabhāgā (modern Chinab) where Sāmba (Kṛṣṇa's son) engaged himself in holy fast and achieved Siddhi.

13. (I eulogize) Lohitākṣa at Vārāṇasī, Bṛhanmukha in Gobhilākṣa and the highly lustrous Vṛddhāditya in Pratiṣṭhāna in Prayāga.

14. (I praise) Dvādaśāditya in Kotyakṣa, Gaṅgāditya in Caturghaṭa and Naimiṣa and Goghna and Bhadra stationed in Bhadrapuṭa.

15. (I eulogize) Vijayāditya in Jaya, Svarṇavetasa in Prabhāsa, Sāmantā in Kurukṣetra and Trimantra in Ilāvṛta.

16. They know as stationed, Kramaṇāditya in Mahendra, Siddheśvara in Ṙṇa, Padmabodha in Kauśāmbī (Kosam near Allahabad) and Divākara in Brahmagāthā.

17. (I bow to) Caṇḍakānti in Kedāra, Timirāpaha in Nitya, Śivadvāra in Gaṅgā-Mārga and Āditya in Bhūpradīpana.

18. (I bow to) Harīṣa on Sarasvatītīra (the banks of Sarasvatī), Viśvamitra in Pṛthūdaka (Pehoa in Karnal District, Punjab), Naradvīpa in Ujjayinī and Amaladyuti in Siddha.

19. (I bow to) Sūrya in Kuntikumāra, Vibhāvasu in Pañcanadī, (Punjab), Vimalāditya in Mathurā and Saṃjñāditya in Saṃjñika.

20. (I eulogize) Mārtāṇḍa stationed in Śrīkaṇṭha, Daṁśaka in Daśārṇa (Eastern Malwa), Lord Gopati in Godhana and Karṇa in Marusthala (Marwar in Rajasthan).

21. (I eulogize) Puṣpa in Devapura, Keśavārka in Lohita, Śārdūla in Vaidiṣa (Vidiṣā) and Vāruṇavāsin in Śoṇa.

22. (I eulogize) Sāmbākhya in Vardhamāna, Śubhamākara in Kāmarūpa, Mihira in Kānyakubja and Mandāra in Punyavardhana.

23. (I bow to) Kṣobhaṇāditya in Gandhāra (Kandhar, Afghanistan), Amaradyuti in Laṅkā, Karṇāditya in Campā (Bhagalpur, Bihar) and Subhadarśin in Prabodha.

24. (I bow to) Pārvatya in Dvārāvatī (Dvārkā, Gujarat), Himāpaha in Himavanta, Mahāteja in Lauhitya (Assam) and Dhūrjaṭi in Amalāṅga.

25. (I bow to) Kumārākhya (one named Kumāra) in Rohika, Padmasaṁbhava in Padma, Dharmāditya in Lāṭa (South Gujarat) and Sthavira in Mardaka.)

26. (I bow to) Sukhaprada in Kauberī, Gopati in Kosala (Oudh), Padmadeva in Konkaṇa and Tāpana in Vindhya mountain.

27. (I bow to) Tvaṣṭṛ in Kāśmīra, Ratnasāṁbhava in Caritra, Hemagarbhastha in Puṣkara and Sūrya in Gabhastika.

28. (I bow to) Mujhāla in Prakāśā, Prabhākara in Tīrthagrāma,

Rillakāditya in Kāmpilya (modern Kampil, Farrukhabad District, U.P.) and Dhanavāsin in Dhanaka.

29. (I bow to) Anala on the banks of Narmadā and Gamanādhika everywhere. (Thus the devotee shall repeat) the sixty-eight (shrines) of Lord Bhāskara of unlimited lustre.

30. A man who is pure and powerful and gets up early in the morning and recites these or listens to these (names of the Sun-god) is rid of all sins.

31. One who seeks a kingdom gets a kingdom; one who seeks wealth gets wealth, one who seeks sons gets sons, and one who seeks happiness gets happiness.

32. One who is distressed due to ailments is rid of ailments; one who is in bondage is released from bondage. Yes, the man attains whatever other things he may desire.

Īśvara said:

33. Even as Citra of a soul free from impurities eulogized thus, the Thousand-rayed Lord Sun became pleased with him after a long time.

34. He said, "Dear son, welfare unto you, O devotee of excellent holy vows, choose your boon."

35. He said "O Lord of hot, severe, blazing rays, if you are pleased with me give me perfection in all activities and knowership as well"

36. O lady of excellent complexion, that was duly assented to by the Sun-god. Thereupon, Citra the scion of the family of Mitra, attained omniscience.

37-39. The God of Death, Dharmarāja, came to know that he had been endowed with extremely remarkable intellect. He thought, 'If this highly intelligent one becomes my writer (Clerk), I will be able to achieve everything and be extremely carefree.' O beautiful lady, while Dharmarāja was thinking thus, Citra went to Agnitūrtha in the salt ocean for the sake of his daily ablution. Even as he entered it, he was carried off by the servants of Yama.

40. O great goddess, he was carried off bodily by the servants carrying out the behests of Yama. This Citra came to be known by the name Citragupta. He became the scribe recording the conduct of all mortal beings.

41. Thereupon, O lady of excellent countenance, the deity came to be known by the name of Citrāditya in the world.

42. If a man regulates his diet and worships the deity on the seventh lunar day, he will never meet with poverty and misery in the course of seven succeeding births.

43. There itself, the pilgrim should make the gift of a horse along with a sword in a sheath as well as gold to a Brāhmaṇa. Thus the benefit of the pilgrimage will be realized.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTY

Greatness of Citrapathā River

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the river Citrapathā situated in the vicinity of Brahmakūḍa in the centre of the shrine Citrāditya.

O beloved goddess of Suras, when the highly intelligent Citra was bodily carried off by the messengers of Yama carrying out his behests, his sister who was there came to know of it. She became extremely miserable. O goddess, the sister of that noble-souled one became the river Citrā and entered the great ocean in search of her kinsman (brother). Brāhmaṇas assigned her the name Citrapathā. It was in this manner, O lady of excellent complexion, that the river came to flow there.

6. A man who takes his holy bath there and visits Citrāditya goes to that great region where Lord Divākara (Sun) is present.

7. O goddess, that river has vanished in this Kali Age. She may rarely be seen in rainy season. It is very difficult to see her.

8. Holy ablution and pious gifts offered (there) are specially destructive of sins.

9-10. After taking food or before taking food, at night or by day, on festive occasions or at odd hours, whether one is personally clean or not, O beloved, whenever the river is visible she should be viewed. The viewing is authorized. There is no restriction of time.

11. On seeing the river, O great goddess, the Pitṛs stationed in heaven sing Sāman Mantras, dance and laugh.

12. (They say) 'If anyone born of our family performs Śrāddha here, he will be causing delight to us as long as the Kalpa lasts.'

13. By realizing this, a man should get a Śrāddha performed there and have his holy bath there for the sake of destroying all sins, and also for the delight of the Pitṛs.

14. Thus, O goddess, it has been narrated as to how the river Citrapathā reached Prabhāsa and settled here as destroyer of sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYONE

Greatness of Kapardicintāmaṇi

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to that shrine where Kapardin is stationed. It is situated not far therefrom (i. e. Citrapathā river) on the northern side. Like another Cintāmaṇi (wish-yielding philosopher's stone). O goddess, it bestows the object thought of.

2. O goddess of Devas, on the fourth lunar day coinciding with a Tuesday, the deity should be bathed, adored with various kinds of excellent food offerings and propitiated. By propitiating Vighnarāja, one shall attain all desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYTWO

Greatness of Citreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Citreśvara situated within a distance of seven Dhanus to the south-south-east thereof (i.e. Kapardicintāmaṇi)

The Liṅga is of great power and is destructive of all sins. To one who regularly adores Citreśvara there, there is no fear of hell.

His sin though committed to writing in Citragupta records, O my beloved, is wiped off by him. Hence one should always adore Citreśa with all efforts. Even he who is defiled by sins does not see the hell.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Greatness of Vicitreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Vicitreśvara situated within a distance of ten Dhanus to the east thereof (i. e. Citreśvara) or rather a little to the south-east. It is destructive of sins.

O great goddess, that great Liṅga was installed by vicitra, the scribe (clerk) of Yama after performing a very difficult penance.

One who adores after visiting the deity shall be rid of all sins. A man who worships in accordance with the injunctions shall never become miserable.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Greatness of Puṣkara-Kuṇḍa

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the third great Puṣkara to the east thereof (i. e. Vicitreśvara), slightly deviating to the north-east. This Kuṇḍa is remembered as the smallest one and named Puṣkara.

When Brahmā went there at midday for the installation, the

midday prayer, *Sandhyā*, the mother of the three worlds, was adored by him.

If the pilgrim takes his ablution there with concentration and mental purity on the Full-Moon day, it is as good as the ablution is perfectly taken by him in the Ādi-Puṣkara.

4. For the sake of the eradication of all sins, gold should be gifted there.

5. Thus the greatness pertaining to Puṣkara has been spoken to you. On being listened to, it removes the sins of men and fulfills all desires.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

Greatness of Gajakumbhodara

Īśvara said:

1-2. A pilgrim should visit the sin-destroying Vighneśa stationed there itself. He is named Gajakumbhodara and he is the bestower of all Siddhis. Being a great devotee he should remain pure in mind and take his holy bath in the Kundā (holy pit) there on the fourth lunar day and devoutly adore him. Vighneśa becomes pleased with him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Greatness of Yameśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the great Lord Yameśvara installed by Dharmarāja (the Lord of Death). It is situated to the north thereof (i. e. Gajakumbhodara).

O lady of excellent complexion, when Dharmarāja was cursed by Chāyā, his foot fell down and he became miserable.

Then the Lord (Dharma) of great penance performed great

penance in the holy place of Prābhāsika. There he installed the Liṅga of the Trident-bearing Lord.

Mahādeva was pleased with him and became manifest to him and said, “O Dharma, welfare unto you. Choose a boon desired by you.”

5-7. Then Dharmarāja said, “Thanks to your favour, O Lord of Devas, may the foot of mine that has fallen down, grow again. O most excellent one among Suras, this Liṅga of yours has been installed by me. If the creatures on the earth visit this with great devotion, let them have freedom from sins with your favour.”

8. “It will happen thus.” Saying this Hara vanished. Yama regained his foot and went back to heaven.

9. If that most excellent one among Suras is visited, even men who perpetrate evil actions need not be afraid of the danger arising from Yama’s world.

10. On the day of *Bhrātṛdvitiyā* (the second lunar day after Dipāvalī) a devotee should take his holy bath in the waters of Puṣkarinī, approach Yameśvara and view Yameśa.

11. With Yamadeva in view, the devotee should gift a vessel of gingelly seeds, a lamp, cows, gold, and the like. He is redeemed from all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Greatness of Brahmakuṇḍa

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent Brahmakuṇḍa, formerly created by Brahmā to the south-west thereof (i.e. Yameśvara)

When Somanātha was installed by Rksarāja (Lord of stars, the Moon-god), Brahmā and all other Devas had arrived there on being invited by Śaśāṅka (Moon-god) for the installation of the Lord.

Then Niśānātha (Lord of the night, Moon-god) humbly spoke to Brahmā, “O most excellent one among Suras, leave

a mark by which people will know that the installation was performed by you."

5. On hearing this, Brahmā meditated motionlessly and invoked (summoned) Puṣkara and all other Tīrthas from everywhere.

6. All the Tīrthas present in heaven as well as in the nether worlds were drawn to him by Brahmā as a result of the efficacy of his penance. Hence it is being sung about as Brahmakuṇḍa in his name.

7. It is being watched by fourteen thousand Ganas. Hence this excellent Tīrtha is inaccessible to those not endowed with devotion.

8. Then Brahmā, the grandfather of all the worlds, spoke to all the Devas:

9-10. "A man who takes his holy bath in the Kuṇḍa here and offers libation to the Pitṛs, shall attain all the benefit of Agniṣṭoma. With the favour thereof, he will roam about in the heavenly world by means of an aerial chariot.

For the eradication of all the sins, a pilgrim should make gifts of horses and golden water-pitchers to a learned Brāhmaṇa."

11. O great goddess, Sarasvatī (river) takes her bath on the Full-Moon day and the first lunar day there for eliminating all sins.

12. O my beloved, O goddess, the water there is the very Siddha Rasāyana (holy elixir and a panacea). By taking regular instruction (from a preceptor) it can be rendered full of various colours.

13. How can a man be assailed by poverty, misery, ailment and sorrows after approaching Brahmakuṇḍa which is another wish-yielding celestial tree!

The Devī said:

14. O Lord, O venerable one, do expound fully the greatness of Brahmakuṇḍa. For the welfare of all living beings, explain it in detail.

15. I have great eagerness to hear the greatness of Brahmakuṇḍa (as one leading) to the destruction of the misery of the worlds and to the elimination of poverty.

16. O venerable Sir, all human beings are afflicted with miseries and sorrow. They roam about throughout their life in their delusive search for *Rasāyanas*.

17. For their benefit tell me about the excellent Rasa that gives ultimate liberation (*Nirvāṇa*). At first it may make the body everlasting.

18. It shall be equipped with the eight Siddhis and all lores. It must possess the power to assume any desired form and do any intended work. It shall be free from all ailments.

19. Thereafter one shall attain the greatest *Nirvāṇa* (salvation) thereby. O Lord, the man shall eventually feel contented and blessed.

20. Do take pity on me, O Lord of the worlds. Narrate to me the means to such an accomplishment. Let the undertaking culminate in *Nirvāṇa* after avoiding all errors and delusions. O Maheśvara, expound such a divine means of achieving happiness.

Īśvara said:

21-22. Excellent! O great goddess, O benefactress of all the worlds! O great goddess, this splendid and excellent Tīrtha in the mortal world well-known as Prabhāsa extends to twelve Yojanas. Lord Someśvara there is well-known in all the three worlds.

23. To the east thereof is the well-known shrine of Śrīkrṣṇa, the slayer of Daityas. Cañḍikā, the Yoginī, there, is surrounded by female companions.

24. To the east thereof, is the divine and excellent Tīrtha created by the Four-faced Lord, splendid and full of all wonders.

25. It is always resorted to by all the Devas, Siddhas, Sādhyas, Grahas (planets), celestial damsels, divine sages, Yakṣas and serpents.

26. This is the splendid Kuṇḍa conducive to divine enjoyment. It serves all desires and is conducive to Siddhi. It is well-known as Brahmuṇḍa because it was created by Brahmā.

27-28. Lord Hiranyēśa is stationed in the north-western corner thereof. That great Lord, the excellent Hiranyēśvara is to be propitiated. A devotee should perform the *Japa* of the

great Mantra. A wise man should perform Homas one-tenth in number thereof. Through Homa the Mantra is stabilised and mastered. O lady of excellent countenance, this is the truth.(I repeat it is) the truth.

29. To the northern quarter thereof, slightly deviating to the north-east, O great goddess, is the Four-faced Lord Kṣetrapa (Protector of the holy spot) assuming the form of a Linga.

30. O goddess, Śaṅkara in the form of Linga guards that holy spot. After propitiating him with effort, a devotee should resort to the Kuṇḍa.

31. O goddess, to the north-eastern quarter of the Kuṇḍa is the excellent shrine Bhairaveśvara, full of all wonders. It is full of different colours.

32-33. O goddess, the foul-odoured Bhāsurā (channel) flows in the form of liquid. Liquids of different colours, get mingled with its *Rasa* (current of juice). The most divine one has the colour of cloud. Then it is silvery and splendid. Again it is tawny-coloured. Then the highly splendid one resembling camphor has the colour of milk.

34. Sometimes it shines like musk. Then it flows with a saffron lustre. Sometimes it has the sweet odour of sandal. Sometimes the water is bloody (red in colour).

35. These *Rasas* of different kinds are seen there always. If Mahādeva is pleased with one, he gets them instantly.

36. If silver is thrown there, it becomes like gold. There the excellent Rasāyana is visible.

37. O goddess, men see this fanciful thing at the same time. The *Rasa* present there is highly divine in Kali Yuga.

38. This divine *Rasa* arising from Brahmakuṇḍa is full of *Hemabija* (seeds of gold). It causes the eradication of all ailments of men. It is *Siddha* (perfect) *Rasa*.

39. Now I am narrating this to you for the benefit of human beings. O renowned one, poverty is instantly removed.

40. At the outset, people make an excellent pot with sheets of copper. Water from the Tirtha should be poured therein.

41. The pot should be put under the ground and burnt in fire. For six months the process of heating should be carried out slowly in an oven under ground.

42. Afterwards the pot is taken out and filled with water. This should be repeated for a month and once again for another month.

43. Then all the pieces should be gathered together with effort. Again it should be washed with water. This is repeated once more.

44. If Maheśvara is pleased, it becomes gold.

45-46. If an excellent man desires the Siddhi (perfection) of the body, he should at the outset take the holy bath regularly for three years. Regularly observing the vow of silence, he should repeat the *Mahāmantra*. Then he should worship Hiranyeśa, the Kṣetrapāla, assiduously.

47. Five *Upacāras* are included in the adoration. Then he should perform *Dhyāna* and *Dhāraṇā*. Cooking and boiling should be in the waters of the Tīrtha in *Udumbara* (i.e. Copper, according to the commentator) vessel.

48. In this manner, within three years he acquires a divine body. He shall be resplendent, strong, intelligent and bereft of all ailments.

49. He who bathes there for three years without a break, shall live for three hundred years free from misery.

50. The devotee should repeat *Vāgiśvarī Mantra* every day along with adoration and Homa. He will attain eloquence of speech. He will attain Sarasvatī Siddhi.

51. He will become a perfect master of Saṃskṛta, Prākṛta, Apabhraṃṣa and Paiśācī (the speech of Bhūtas). He will be able to utter words fluently like the current of Gaṅgā. O beautiful lady, he will be able to speak without being tired and without any break.

52-53. He will be capable of arguing with thousands of disputants. He will never become tired due to the power of this Tīrtha.

All scholars, proud and proficient in the science of logic come with their necks (heads) held up in pride. They may approach him simultaneously. But, O my beloved, they will not be able to speak anything; they dare not even look at his face.

54. Merely by looking at them, he will be able to break thousands of disputants.

55-56. He will make people understand all scriptural texts with clear expositions of their meanings. The pure Pañcarāṭra texts both Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva*, Itihāsas, Purāṇas, Bhūta Tantras,

* There are no Śaiva Pañcarāṭra Texts. The author most probably means 'Śaiva Āgamas'.

Gāruḍa Tantra, the great Bhairava Tantra and the twofold Kulamārga shall be expounded by him. O my beloved.

57. The flow of his speech will be with the speed of an excellent chariot and will not falter even a bit. Like serpents before Garuḍa, all disputants will be defeated and destroyed.

58. Due to the favour of Brahmā, he will be honoured by kings and one of great prestige. He will have no mental worries, neither poverty nor ailments.

59. With the favour of this holy Tīrtha, he will become one endowed with energy, enthusiasm and strength. He will be intelligent and will live like a Deva. He will be a donor, an enjoyer of pleasures and very eloquent.

60. Due to the efficacy of this Tīrtha, the moment a devotee takes his bath herein, he will get the same refulgence and splendour as a person regularly anointing his body with oil gets.

61. All sins that creatures (men) are prone to commit (such as) calumny, ingratitude and treachery to friends, the sin resulting from violation of the chastity of another man's wife, perish if one takes bath in the Kuṇḍa.

62. By the sight of Brahmakuṇḍa, sin resulting from crossing a Muśala(pestle), sin of a Brāhmaṇa who abandons cows are destroyed.

63. By the power of ablution in this Kuṇḍa, one gets the benefit of taking bath in all the Tīrthas on the earth and the benefit of worshipping all the deities.

64. By seeing it, the sins accrued in the course of seven births, perish.

65. By resorting to Brahmakunda, the sin of a slayer of preceptor or a cow and robbing other men's wealth perishes.

66. Listen to the benefit that one gets by fifteen circumambulations of the Kuṇḍa after taking bath therein.

67. It is as good as circumambulating the whole earth consisting of seven continents, together with the seven nether worlds and surrounded by crores of Tīrthas.

68. A pilgrim who feeds one well-versed in the Vedas with simple food at this holy spot, gets the benefit of feeding a hundred thousand persons (elsewhere) by the power of this holy spot.

69. After worshipping Brahmeśvara, the excellent Hiranyeśvara, the devotee should worship the four-faced Kṣetrapāla. He will get whatever is thought of by him.

70. No doubt need be entertained about the fact that such a person goes to the world of Brahmā along with twenty-one members of his family and is freed from all sins.

71. After taking the holy bath in Virañci (Brahma) kuṇḍa i.e., the pilgrim should repeat the Gāyatrī Mantra a hundred thousand times duly. He shall be rid of all sins.

72. O lady of excellent countenance, if a pilgrim undertakes the pilgrimage to Brahmakuṇḍa, he becomes a performer of meritorious deeds. He is the most excellent one among men.

73. Eighty-eight thousand sages of perfect control of their sense-organs resort to Brahmakuṇḍa and adore Lord Brahmā.

74. All the other Tīrthas in the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings, roar only as long as men do not view Brahmeśvara Tīrthas, O my beloved.

75. If men drink the holy water of Brahmakuṇḍa but once, they will incur no sin mental, physical or verbal.

76. By circumambulating Brahmakuṇḍa, one acquires the merit of all the Tīrthas in Brahmāṇḍa (Cosmic Egg) and beyond.

77. The noble-souled Yājñavalkya who has attained the form of the supreme Brahman, never leaves this Kuṇḍa. So also the Gaṇa Nikumbha.

78. Thus the greatness of Brahmakuṇḍa has been succinctly narrated due to my love for you, O goddess of Devas. What else do you wish to ask?

79. A man who is thoroughly equipped with faith and who listens to this, shall be rid of all sins. He shall go to the world of Brahmā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Greatness of Kunḍalakūpa

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the Kūpa (well) pertaining to Kunḍala. It is near Brahmakuṇḍa on the northern side thereof.

It was there, O great goddess, that a thief Rūpakuṇḍalahāraka ('who removed the beautiful earrings') became a Siddha.

O goddess, a man who takes his holy bath there becomes free from the sin incurred from stealing as a result of the power of bathing therein. O goddess of Devas, no one belonging to his family shall ever be a thief or a ruthless one, for seven generations.

For the redemption of sinners killed by weapons, the pilgrim should perform rites like offering balls of rice etc., particularly on the Śivarātri day.

The Devī said:

5. O Lord, O most excellent one among speakers, tell me in detail how (the *Kūpa*) associated with earrings became famous on the earth.

Īśvara said:

6. Listen, O goddess, to the sin-destroying, highly meritorious story, on hearing which a man becomes rid of sins acquired in the course of a hundred births.

7. There was a king named Sudarśana who was very intelligent and the sole emperor of the earth. That was because he had observed fast on Śivarātri day and also a result of the greatness of Prabhāsakṣetra.

8. He was very rich and blessed. He ruled over the subjects assiduously. His kingdom was very prosperous and rendered brilliant by (residing) Brāhmaṇas. It was flourishing and was devoid of lecherous persons and thieves.

9. In that beautiful region, his city was splendid and divinely blessed, adorned with ramparts and consisted of persons of all the four castes.

10. In that beautiful and excellent city, King Sudarśana ruled the kingdom free from all thorns (enemies and traitors) along with his kinsmen. This prosperous king was the son of Hiranyadatta born of a Gāndhāra princess.

11. His chaste and beloved queen was well-known by the name Sunandā. She was a splendid princess, daughter of the king of Kāśī. She was earnestly devoted to her husband and observed Vratas.

12. The eminent king enjoyed all pleasures along with her. A great deal of time passed thus while he enjoyed diverse pleasures.

13. He performed great Yajñas and made many religious gifts. O lady of excellent holy vows, (thus) he passed his days in the company of his wife.

14. Once, O lady of excellent countenance, during the Śivarātri (festival) in the month of Māgha, he happened to recollect his previous birth. He called his wife and said:

Sudarśana said:

15. O fair lady of excellent countenance, I have to observe the Śivarātri Vrata. Indeed it was due to the efficacy of this Vrata that this kingdom has been gained by me.

The queen said:

16. O great king, what you have told me amounts to this that the power (of this Vrata) is very great. My heart (mind) is surprised. Tell the reason hereof to me.

The king said:

17-19. Listen to the greatness of that Tīrtha, especially of fasting on Śivarātri day. O my queen, on the Śivarātri day, I had gone to that primordial Tīrtha named Prabhāsa. It is highly splendid. It is the veritable entrance to the heavenly world. It is a beautiful and charming city of Śiva. It is the most excellent Tīrtha causing the fulfilment of one's desires. It is a flourishing city, always resorted to by pious people. This *Tithi* (i.e. fourteenth lunar day) is the most excellent one of all *Tithis*.

20. Men of all cities and countries came there, O beautiful lady, in order to observe the holy fast on the Śivarātri day.

21. A merchant named Dhana used to stay there always. He was wealthy and a pious soul devoted to righteous practices.

22. He observed fast in the company of his wife. This wife was highly chaste and endowed with beauty and youth.

23-24. She was bedecked with all ornaments including oscillating necklaces and girdles. The merchant and his wife eschewed lust and anger. They headed towards the holy spot. He had his bath and wore white garments and remained pure. They performed every rite devoutly in accordance with the injunctions. They observed vigil at night too.

25. I was (then) born in a good Śūdra family. I was a regular worshipper of deities and Brāhmaṇas. But there I was present as a thief and sinner resorting to thievery.

26. There again it was still my Karma of the previous birth that made me engrossed in misdeeds always. Well, on that night I stayed amongst common people.

27. O lady of excellent countenance, I was lying hidden near the Kuṇḍa waiting for an opportunity to find a fault on the part of the wife of the merchant.

28-30. The whole of that night was spent by me keeping awake in the isolated place. But I also listened to the sounds of songs and auspicious chantings of the Vedic passages and witnessed the dances.

There were sounds of clapping of hands and holy books were being read. The night was about to come to a close and I was waiting there when the ever smiling wife of the rich merchant had some painful experience of suppressed evacuation of bowels. Distressed due to that, she came out of the temple.

31. I tore away her ears and leapt into the water where I stayed. A great hue and cry was raised by the residents of the city.

32. On hearing the tumult and the lament due to the slitting of the ears, the police and the servants of the royal administration ran here and there.

33. With torches and weapons in their hands, I was thoroughly searched by those people. But the gold was not found by them as it lay hidden in my mouth.

34. With a keen-edged sword they cut off my head and searched everywhere with torches in their hands. They did not see even a bit of gold.

35. Leaving me there all of them went to the king and reported to him, "The fellow has been killed by us instantly but nothing was found out."

36-38. Having told thus, they went to their respective places. My kinsmen who became very afraid, dug a pit on the northern side of Brahmatirtha, O my beloved, and put my head and body together. Thus I was kept covered in the excellent Tirtha named Prabhāsa. I became a *Jātismara* (one capable of remembering previous births) by the power of Śivarātri (rite and vow).

39. O lady of excellent complexion, this flourishing kingdom free from thorns (i.e. enemies and traitors) has been acquired by me. This is the efficacy of Prabhāsa due to the fasting on Śivarātri day. This is the benefit that has been received by me. Hence I shall once again go there and observe fast.

The queen said:

40. We shall go there where your skull had fallen. If, on breaking the skull gold is seen I shall become convinced of your story. There is no doubt.

The king said:

41. Bones last (unaffected) for a Kalpa till the earth is annihilated. Get up. Welfare unto you. Go to the excellent Kṣetra named Prabhāsa.

42. On hearing the words uttered by the king she also decided to go there for the observance of fast on Śivarātri day.

43. Along with his wife, he got into a chariot bedecked with gold and yoked with fast running horses and went to Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

44-45. O lady of excellent complexion, they observed the Vrata in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra and came to Brahma Tirtha. They then dug up everything, slit the corpse and took up the gold. (The king showed it to the queen.)

Īśvara said:

46-47. The king's wife was convinced. She went to the greatest spot where they had the excellent benefit. On seeing that miraculous event all the people were surprised.

48. O lady of excellent countenance, a river named Citrapathā sprang up there to the east of Citrāditya and to the north of Brahma Tīrtha.

49. That holy Kuṇḍalakūpa Tīrtha that destroys all sins is situated there.

50-51. In the month of Śrāvāna a devotee should take his holy ablution in the Kūpa in accordance with the injunctions. O goddess, he should perform a special Śrāddha too. Then he should adore Citrāditya. He is thereby honoured in the world of Śiva.

52. Thus everything regarding the benefit of Śivarātri has been mentioned to you. It grants worldly pleasures and salvation. It is destructive of all sins.

53. A man who reads this everyday or listens to this shall be rid of all sins. He is honoured in Rudra-Loka.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Greatness of Bhairaveśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Bhairaveśvara situated to the north-east of Brahmakuṇḍa. It is destructive of sins. The great Four-faced Lord is ready stationed there for guarding the Tīrtha.

2-3. If the pilgrim takes his holy bath in the great Kuṇḍa and worships the deity in accordance with the injunctions regarding the five Upacāras devoutly and with perfect control of the sense-organs, the man redeems all the earlier members of his family as well as all the future generations. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

4. He is not reborn here in this world. He will never meet with destruction. He will roam about always by means of aerial chariots shining like the sun.

5. Surrounded by thousands of women, he will sport about like Devas in heaven.

6. O great goddess, this Four-faced Deity is highly resplendent. By viewing this Liṅga, a man is rid of all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTY

Greatness of Brahmeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Brahmeśvara stationed towards the south thereof (i.e. Bhairaveśvara). It is near Brahmakuṇḍa and was installed by Brahmā formerly. It is being guarded by my Gaṇas and is well-known in all the three worlds.

2. The pilgrim should take his holy bath there on the fourteenth lunar day and more particularly on the New-Moon day. He should then perform the Śrāddha duly. Then he should worship Brahmaśa.

3. For propitiating Śaṅkara, he should give gold to the Brāhmaṇas.

4. O goddess, by doing thus the man attains the benefit of his birth. He gains extensive renown, O my beloved, and rejoices along with Brahmā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Greatness of Sāvitriśvara Bhairava

Īśvara said:

1. On the southern side thereof is stationed the third Bhairava. It was installed by Sāvitri near Brahmakuṇḍa.

2. After propitiating the Lord of Devas, the great-grandfather of Devas, there, she propitiated Śaṅkara by her penance

wherein she accepted no food except the intake of air.

3-6. On being pleased, O goddess, Lord Śaṅkara said to that lady of excellent countenance: "I will grant all the splendid boons mentally wished for to that man who, on a Full-Moon day, takes the holy bath in this Kuṇḍa and worships my Liṅga with sweet scents, flowers etc. duly and in accordance with the injunctions. Even one afflicted with great sins shall be rid of those sins. Richly endowed with everything desired, he will become the Bull-emblemed Lord himself."

7. After saying this, O goddess of Devas, he vanished. After installing Śaṅkara, Sāvitrī went to the world of Brahmā.

8. Thus the greatness of Sāvitriśa has been briefly described. An intelligent one who listens to this becomes rid of sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Greatness of Nāradeśvara Bhairava

Īśvara said:

1. The third Bhairava has been extolled. Now listen to the efficacy of the fourth Bhairava stationed within a distance of three *Dhanus* on the western side of Brahmaśa.

2. The deity subdues all sins. He bestows all desired things on men. He is named Nāradeśvara because the idol was installed by Nārada.

3-4. The great exalted sage Nārada was staying in the world of Brahmā. He saw the great divine *Vīṇā* (Lute) with ten thousand strings. It was left there by Sarasvatī. It was highly resplendent. On seeing it, Nārada became curious and played on it.

5. While the strings were being played seven Brāhmaṇas fell down from there. They were well-known as *Svaras* (notes), *Sadja* etc.

6-7. On seeing them Nārada was dismayed and he let off the lute. He then asked Brahmā : "O Lord, what is this miracle? While the strings were being played these Brāhmaṇas have

fallen on the ground. O Lord, who are these Brāhmaṇas? Why do they lie down as though they are dead?"

Brahmā said:

8. O highly esteemed one, these are the seven *Svaras* who have fallen down unconscious. Because of your ignorance of playing properly, you have committed a great sin.

9. You have committed the sin of the slaughter of seven Brāhmaṇas. Hence, O sage, hasten to the excellent holy spot of Prabhāsa.

10-12. For the riddance of all the sins, do propitiate the Lord of Devas.

On being told thus, Nārada expressed his regret frequently and grieved over this. He came to the holy spot of Prabhāsa. After reaching Brahmakūḍa, he assiduously adored Bhairava for a hundred years in accordance with the reckoning of Devas.

O my beloved, he became free from sins and became fully conversant with the art of singing.

13. Ever since then, O goddess, the Liṅga became well-known as Nāradeśvara Bhairava in the world. O great goddess, it is destructive of all sins.

14. One who, out of ignorance, wrongly plays on the Vīṇā and the notes, O Maheśvari, shall go there for redemption from the sin thereof.

15. He who observes fast in the month of Māgha and worships Nāradeśa Bhairava thrice a day, becomes charming unto beautiful damsels of heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Greatness of Hiranyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Hiranyeśvara situated within a distance of two *Dhanus* to the north-west of Brahmakūḍa.

It is destructive of all sins and dispels all sorts of impoverished states. It is on the west of Kṛtasmara and on the east of Agnitīrtha.

It is on the south-west of Yameśvara and on the north of the ocean. Brahmā performed a great penance on the eastern side of the Liṅga. Then he propitiated the Three-eyed Lord of Devas.

Then the great Lord who was pleased said: "O Brahmā, tell me what boon you want."

Brahmā said:

5. O Lord, if you are pleased with me, it is my intention that I should perform a Yajña. It behoves you to recommend to me a highly meritorious spot for the purpose.

Īśvara said:

6. Even a great sinner becomes relieved of sins if he be staying in the intervening space between Kṛtasmara and Brahmakūṇḍa and between Yameśa and the ocean.

7. O great Lord, You should do whatever is desired by you and delights your mind at the place where the river Viṣuvatī always flows for the benefit of the meritorious men.

8. On being told thus Brahmā started his excellent Yajña.

9. Thereupon, Indra and other Devas seeking their shares came there. All the sages who too desired their shares came there.

10. Thereupon, he (Brahmā) gave *Dakṣiṇā* to those who came to the Yajña. Then, O lady of renown, on being distributed thus, the *Dakṣiṇā* dwindled.

11. Then Brahmā became extremely distressed. He began to meditate mentally. With palms joined in reverence he spoke these words:

12-13a. "O Lord Virūpākṣa, the Yajña cannot be concluded. Due to shortage of *Dakṣiṇā* the Yajña will not be complete and perfect. Kindly do see to this that all go back receiving adequate *Dakṣiṇā*."

13b. On hearing the words of Pitāmaha, I began to meditate.

14. Goddess Sarasvatī was remembered with a desire for the welfare of Devas. That highly meritorious goddess came and the Devī was told by me then:

15. "The monetary position of the Lotus-born One is weak. The Kratu could not be concluded. Hence with my favour, be one flowing with gold."

16. Thereupon the flow of Sarasvatī deflected towards the west. Thousands of flowers of gold sprouted up.

17. By the flow of gold, the splendid waters of Sarasvatī, O my beloved, filled with millions of lotuses the area between the Daityasūdana shrine and Agnitīrtha.

18. Brahmā concluded the Yajña by gifting those golden lotuses to the Brāhmaṇas (as Dakṣinā). Brahmā was delighted along with the Brāhmaṇas.

19. With the remaining lotuses, he filled the ground and installed the Kanakeśvara Liṅga above it.

20. After installing the Liṅga of the Lord bowed to by all the Devas, he gave each of the sages ten thousand golden lotuses as monetary gift.

21. The remaining lotuses were placed under the ground in the middle of Brahmakuṇḍa. A man of no merits does not get them.

22. Even today the water of that Kuṇḍa appears of variegated colour. There, due to the contact of the lotuses beneath, the water turns into gold in a moment.

23. After keeping the golden lotuses and installing the Liṅga above, Prajāpati (Brahmā) himself worshipped it. Due to the golden lotuses the deity became Hiranyeśa.

24. The deity suppresses all sins and destroys poverty. By viewing Lord Hiranyeśa, one is relieved of all sins.

25. If a devotee worships that Liṅga on the fourteenth lunar day in the month of Māgha, it is as good as the entire Brahmāṇḍa including all mobile and immobile beings, has been worshipped by him.

26. A person by whom that Liṅga has been adored is considered as one who has gifted everything and as one who has propitiated all the Devas, as one who has gifted the whole Cosmos.

27. O lady of excellent complexion, this has been narrated to you out of love. This has never been narrated to anyone

else by me. O lady of excellent countenance, it is a great secret.

28. One who devoutly listens to this, who reads this with devotion, shall be rid of all sins and shall go to the world of Devas.

29. Thus, O beautiful lady, the highly famous five Sacred Bhairavas stationed in the vicinity of Brahmakuṇḍa have been narrated to you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

Greatness of Gāyatrīśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to a shrine to the north-west of Hiranyeśvara where the sin-relieving Liṅga is present within a distance of three *Dhanus*.

It dispels the sins of all creatures who view or touch it. It is the first Liṅga, O great goddess, installed by Gāyatrī.

A Brāhmaṇa who goes to that Liṅga and repeats the Gāyatrī Mantra after purifying himself adequately, becomes relieved from the sin of *Duṣpratigraha* (acceptance of gifts from a defiled person).

4. A man who feeds a couple of Brāhmaṇas after presenting them with garments in accordance with his capacity on the Full-Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha, becomes rid of misfortunes.

5. If a devotee adores with scents, flowers and other offerings on the Full-Moon day, O beautiful lady, he retains his Brāhmaṇahood in seven successive births.

6. Thus, O goddess, the sin-destroying greatness has been narrated. O my beloved, it is the most essential of all.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

Greatness of Ratneśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Ratneśvara. O my beloved goddess, after performing penance there, the powerful Viṣṇu installed that Liṅga that grants all desires.

A man who always takes his bath in Ratnakuṇḍa and devoutly worship with all formalities, shall attain the desired benefit.

It was by performing a very severe penance here that the Sudarśana discus that causes the destruction of all Daityas, was acquired by Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) of unmeasured radiance.

4. O great goddess, this spot is always very dear to me. O goddess of Devas, I stay there even during the time of *Pralaya*. I do not desert it.

5. O goddess, that holy spot pertaining to Viṣṇu is known by the name Sudarśana. The area all around extends to thirty-six *Dhanus*.

6. Any living being, even of the lowest category, that dies within this area when death becomes due, O goddess, shall attain the greatest region (liberation).

7. A pilgrim who makes the gift of gold replica of Garuḍa and yellow garments with Viṣṇu in view shall attain the benefit of the pilgrimage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYSIX

Greatness of Garuḍeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine installed by Garuḍa, the son of Vinatā. It is situated within a distance of three *Dhanus* to the north of Ratneśvara.

After realizing that the holy place is associated with Viṣṇu,

O goddess of Devas, Vainateya installed the Liṅga that destroys all sins.

If a pilgrim duly worships it on the fifth lunar day in accordance with the injunctions, no serpent poison becomes effective in his case for a period of seven births.

If a devotee bathes the Liṅga with Pañcāmṛta and worships it in accordance with the injunctions, he shall attain the entire merit, O goddess. He rejoices in heaven like Devas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYSEVEN

Greatness of Satyabhāmeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the splendid shrine of Satyabhāmeśvara situated within a distance of a *Dhanus* to the south of Ratneśvara.

It suppresses all sins. It was installed by Satyabhāmā, the beloved wife of Śrīkṛṣṇa, endowed with excellent beauty and munificence.

The holy spot associated with Viṣṇu is destructive of sins of men who, after going there, take holy ablution.

A man or a woman who devoutly worships the deity on the third lunar day in the month of Māgha shall surely be rid of sins.

One who is miserable through misfortunes, grief and distress as well as obstacles shall also be relieved. There is no doubt that he shall be endowed with *Satya* (Truth), *Bhā* (Refulgence), *Mā* (Lakṣmī, glory).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYEIGHT

Glory of Anaṅgeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Anaṅgeśvara stationed within a distance of a *Dhanus* in front of Ratneśvara.

After realizing that the place is a great holy spot dispelling sins in Kali Age, Kāmadeva, the son of Viṣṇu, installed that Liṅga.

One who views the deity and worships it, shall be equal to Kāmadeva, one who enchants the minds of heavenly damsels and Vidyādhariś.

4-6. No one in his family shall ever be ugly and unfortunate.

O lady of excellent complexion, if the holy vow is observed on the thirteenth lunar day associated with Anāṅga with special propitiation, it makes the birth fruitful. The devotee should make the gift of a bed to a Brāhmaṇa of good conduct, especially a devotee of Viṣṇu. He shall obtain the benefit of the pilgrimage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTYNINE

Greatness of Ratneśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, a pilgrim should go to the excellent Ratnakunḍa, O great goddess. It is situated within a distance of seven *Dhanus* to the south of Ratneśa. It is destructive of great sins and was created by Viṣṇu himself.

Eight crores of Tīrthas existing on the earth, heaven and intermediate space were brought by Kṛṣṇa and caused to flow there.

O my beloved, a crore of Gaṇas guard that Kunḍa (holy pit). After the advent of Kali Age, it becomes inaccessible to those who have no control over themselves.

4. By taking bath therein, O great goddess, and by performing rites laid down by injunctions, one will acquire the benefit of a horse-sacrifice more than a hundred times thereof.

5. O beautiful lady, the devotee should offer balls of rice especially on the Ekādaśi (eleventh lunar day) day. The Pitṛs will have unending satisfaction.

6. O goddess, the devotee should keep awake on the Ekādaśi day in accordance with the injunctions. If he be of steady, unwavering faith, he will get what is desired.

7. In order to get the full benefit of proper performance

of the pilgrimage, the devotee should make the gift of a milch cow and yellow garments with Viṣṇu in view.

8. It is called Hemakuṇḍa in Kṛta age. It is named Raupya (Kuṇḍa) in Tretā Age; Cakra-kuṇḍa in Dvāpara Age; and it is remembered as Ratna-kuṇḍa in Kali Age.

9. O beautiful lady, many of the currents of the Pātālavāhini Gaṅgā, flowing through Pātāla were brought there by Hari and they exist therein now.

10. A bath there is akin to the holy ablution in all the Tīrthas, O goddess of Devas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTY

Greatness of Raivantakarāja Bhaṭṭāraka

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the great shrine of the great son of the Sun-god, Rājabhaṭṭāraka Raivantaka. He is highly powerful and is represented as seated on a horse. (The icon is equestrian.)

O my beloved, he is stationed in the middle of the holy spot to the south-west of Sāvitri. By viewing him, O fair lady, a man is rid of all disasters.

If a man worships him on the seventh lunar day coinciding with a Sunday, O goddess, no one in his family becomes destitute.

Hence, one should endeavour to propitiate him in every respect for an obstacle-free residence in the holy spot (in the case of an ordinary man) or for the increase of cavalry forces in the case of a king.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYONE

Greatness of Anantesvāra

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine named Anantesvāra situated to the south of

(Rājabhaṭṭāraka) and within a distance of sixteen *Dhanus* to the north-east of Lakṣmaṇeśa. O my beloved, after realizing that the holy spot is very sacred, it was installed by Ananta(Śeṣa), the king of serpents. O goddess of Devas, a devotee should worship the deity on the fifth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna. He should control his diet and sense-organs and worship by means of the five *Upacāras* (Means of Service). For the next fifteen years, serpents will not bite him. (Even if they bite) the poison will not spread in the body.

5-6. Hence, one should assiduously worship the deity especially on the fifth lunar day. On that day the rite of Ananta Vrata should be performed along with the preparation of milk pudding with honey. Food consisting of milk pudding and honey should be given to Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYTWO

Greatness of Aṣṭakuleśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Aṣṭakuleśvara stationed to the south thereof (i.e. of Ananteśvara) and to the east of Lakṣmaṇeśa.

This Liṅga suppresses all sins and eliminates great poison. It is adored by Siddhas and Gandharvas and it grants desired objects.

A man who worships this deity on the eighth lunar day in a dark half in accordance with the injunctions, shall be rid of all terrible sins. He is honoured in the region of Nāgas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYTHREE

Greatness of Nāsatyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to

the shrine named Nāsatyeśvara stationed on the east of it. It is destructive of great sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYFOUR

Greatness of Aśvineśvara

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine named Aśvineśvara stationed within a distance of five *Dhanus* to the east thereof. It suppresses a series of great sins. On being adored, it fulfills all desires. On being viewed, it suppresses all ailments and facilitates the acquisition of all objects.

It is a great antidote to all who suffer from ailment in the world.

Viewing it on the second lunar day in the month of Māgha is very rare. Hence if welfare is desired, one should devoutly view it. On being adored, it suppresses all great sins and fulfills all desires.

Thus, O goddess, these are two Liṅgas installed by the sons of the Sun. An excellent man with full control over himself should view them on the same day.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYFIVE

Greatness of Sāvitrī

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Sāvitrī, the mother of the worlds, who suppresses great sins. She is installed on the north-eastern side of Someśa.

2. A man who has controlled himself and restrained his senses shall be able to view her.

3. On coming to know that Brahmā, desirous of performing

a sacrifice, has married perforce another woman as co-wife, Sāvitrī got angry with Gāyatrī.

4. Then that goddess (Sāvitrī) abandoned Brahmā born of the lotus and resorted to the holy place of Prabhāsa. She continued to be distressed on account of the anger of her co-wife.

5. The fair lady of pleasing appearance stays in that spot even today and performs an elaborate penance unbearable even to Devas.

Śrī Devī said:

6. Why was that Sāvitrī abandoned by Brahmā earlier? How was Gāyatrī obtained (by him)? By whom was she offered?

7. Of what sort was Gāyatrī whom the Lotus-born One obtained (and how was it) that he abandoned his (first) wife and became interested in her?

8. Whose daughter was she, O Lord ? For what purpose the marriage was celebrated? This is my curiosity. It behoves you to clarify it.

Īśvara said:

9. Listen, O goddess. I shall explain to you the great story of Sāvitrī as to how she was abandoned by Brahmā and how Gāyatrī was wedded.

10-13. Formerly, this idea occurred to Brahmā, born of the Unmanifest One. 'Undoubtedly these Vedas were enunciated by me thus, for the sake of the Yajñas. On being propitiated by means of Yajñas, Devas will shower rain on the earth. Thereupon, all herbs and vegetation will crop up on the earth. Therefrom Śukra (semen) will be generated and the process of creation will get initiated through Śukra. Therefore, I shall perform Yajña for the creation of all the worlds. On seeing me ardently interested in Yajñas, Brāhmaṇas who are on the earth shall perform hundreds and thousands of Yajñas.'

14. Thus, O beautiful lady among Suras, he resolved to perform Yajñas. For that purpose he established the holy place named Puṣkara.

15-16. O great goddess, a great sacrificial pandal was raised on behalf of that noble-souled one. All the celestial sages and Devas along with Indra as their leader arrived there for the Yajña of Pitāmaha. Holy and excellent Brāhmaṇas became the Ṛtviks (sacrificial priests).

17. Sāvitrī, the wife of that noble-souled one and the mother of the worlds, was engaged in domestic tasks. As the time for initiation elapsed, she was summoned by the *Adhvaryu*. Thereupon Sāvitrī spoke these words:

Sāvitrī said:

18. As yet I have not completed the make-up and embellishment in the house. Lakṣmī has not come till now, nor Bhavānī nor Gāngā.

19. Neither Svāhā, nor Svadhā, nor Arundhatī, nor Indrāṇī nor the other wives of Devas. How can I go (come) alone?

20-21a. Pulastya, the noble-souled sage, went and told Brahmā: "O Lord, Sāvitrī is engaged in domestic tasks. She has not come. This is your wife. What sort of rite is this? Can it bear any fruit?"

21b-22. God Brahmā, the initiated one, with a head with a tuft of hair behind and clad in the hide of a deer, became angry with his wife and spoke to Indra:

23. "O Śakra, this is my directive. Fetch another wife from somewhere and return quickly so that there will be no transgression of the (specific) time (for this Yajña)."

24-26. At the behest of Parameṣṭhin (i.e. Brahmā) the Slayer of Bala (i. e. Indra) hurried out but could not see any woman fit to be the wife of the Swan-vehicled One (i.e. Brahmā).

The intelligent Thousand-eyed One became afraid of being cursed by Brahmā. A beautiful and youthful cowherd lass was seen by him. She was carrying a full pitcher. Inferring that she was a virgin, he requested her. Taking her with him, Śakra came to the place where the Four-faced Lord of Devas was seated as the initiated one accompanied by Viṣṇu and Rudra.

27. The Slayer of Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) gave the virgin in marriage (to Brahmā).

28. Urged by Śaṅkara himself as well as by the celestial sages, Brahmā married her and performed the rites of initiation in her case as in his own case.

29. Thereupon the Yajña equipped with everything desirable was begun.

30. There Atri was made the *Hotṛ*, reciter of Ṛgvedic hymns, Pulastya became the *Adhvaryu*, Marīci the *Udgātṛ*, and I, the leading Sura, became the *Brahmā* (presiding priest).

31-33. Those with Sanatkumāra as the chief one, were made the *Sadasyas* (members of sacrificial assembly). They had put on befitting garments and ornaments. They were adorned with crowns and rings and other ornaments. Behind everyone of these, there were three other Ṛtviks (priests). Thus there were sixteen Ṛtviks altogether. They were asked (by Brahmā): "I should be blessed by you throughout this Yajña. Let my wife Gāyatrī too be blessed in this Yajña."

34-35. Gāyatrī was clad in fine fabrics. She had a covering veil of silken cloth. With a staff made' of *Uduṁbara*, Brahmā came out of the *Patnīśālā* (wife's chamber) accompanied by the Ṛtviks well-versed in the Vedas. He was covered with a deer skin. Brahmā thus entered the Yajña-pavilion along with her (i.e. Gāyatrī).

Īśvara said:

36. In the meantime, the celestial ladies who had been invited for the Yajña arrived at the place where Sāvitrī was present.

37. The renowned Lakṣmī who was born to Khyāti and Bhrgu and who was the wife of Viṣṇu and was invited there, arrived in a hurry.

38. There, the highly esteemed goddess was embellished by Yoganidrā and others. There was the fair lady Kānti and Śraddhā, Dyuti and Tuṣṭi too.

39. There was Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa and also Umā, the splendid daughter of Mountain. The goddess who bestows conjugal felicity on women was the most beautiful lady in the three worlds.

40. There were Jayā, Vijayā, Gaurī and Mahādhanā (one having enormous wealth). There was Manojavā, the wife of Wind-god and also Ṛddhi, the beloved of Kubera.

41. Daughters of Devas, Dānavis and those born of Danu's race had also come. There were the wives of the seven sages and of the other saints as well.

42. There were Plavā, Mitrā and the daughters (of other sages). There were the groups of Vidyādharaś. There were the Piṭṛś and the daughters of Rākṣasas. There were the other Lokamātṛś (Mothers of the world).

43-44. There were the Devis beginning with Aditi. The daughters of Dakṣa came. Accompanied by them Sāvitrī, the wife of Brahmā, residing in the lotus, desired to proceed ahead.

O lady of excellent countenance, some of them carried Modaka (sweetmeat) and some carried Apūpa (bread, pie).

45. Others carried fruits and proceeded towards Brahmā.

Still others carried Āḍhakī (pulse), Niṣpāva (legume) and Rājamāṣa (beans).

46-51. Others carried various kinds of Dāḍima (pomegranate) and Mātulīṅga (citron). O splendid lady, yet others carried Karīra and Karamardaka. A few carried Kausumbha, Jīraka and Kharjūra; others carried Utatī and coconuts. Others carried mangoes along with grapes for the purpose of embellishment as before. A few carried various kinds of excellent Jambūka, Akṣoda, Āmalaka and Jambīra. O lady of excellent countenance, some carried ripe Bilva fruits and Cirbhaṭa. Others carried many vessels of food and beverages of various kinds. Others carried lumps of sugar and Kausumbha garments (or in Kausumbha cloth).

Thus, O lady of excellent countenance, many auspicious ones carried these and other things and reached the place along with Sāvitrī.

52. On seeing that Sāvitrī had come Purandara (Indra) became afraid. Brahmā remained looking down wondering what she would say to him.

53. Viṣṇu and Rudra became bashful and shame-faced. So too were the Brāhmaṇas and the members of the assembly. The other Heaven-dwellers became frightened.

54-55. Sons and grandsons, nephews and uncles and brothers, the Devas named Ṛtus and the chiefs of Devas were abashed and disconcerted wondering what Sāvitrī would say. They enquired whether the Vedic passages were to be recited by the daughter of a cowherd.

56-58. When all of them were speaking some words the listeners kept quiet. 'She was summoned by the *Adhvaryu* but the lady of fair complexion (*Sāvitrī*) did not come. Another girl was brought by Śakra and was offered (in marriage) by Viṣṇu himself. It was approved by Rudra and she was offered by the father himself. What will she do now and how will the Yajña come to a conclusion?' Even as they were worriedly thinking thus, Kamalālāyā (*Sāvitrī*) entered.

59. Along with his wife Brahmā was invited by the Ṛtviks well-versed in the Vedas. *Homas* were performed in the fires there by the Brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas.

60. In the *Patniśālā* (wife's chamber) the cowherdess was seated meditating on the great Lord. She had a silver horn and girdle. She was clad in silky fabric.

61. She was loyal to her husband considering him to be her vital airs. She was seated there as an important person. She was wide-eyed and compassionate. By her splendour, she could be compared to the Sun.

62. Like the lustre of the Sun, she was illuminating the assembly there. The sacrificial fire blazed and Ṛtviks moved about.

63. Excellent Brāhmaṇas held parts of the beasts (sacrificial animals). Seeking their shares, Devas arrived. It was already late.

64. Nothing should be done after the prescribed time. If it is not performed thus it cannot yield fruit. The whole of this reference (topic) is to be seen in the Vedas by learned men.

65-66. As the *Pravargya* rite was being performed by the Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas, when *Kṣīradvaya* (two drops of milk) was being consigned to the fire by the *Adhvaryu* uttering the Mantra, when all the Brāhmaṇas had assembled after being summoned severally (one calling the other and the other calling some other successively) and the foodstuffs were being prepared, the fair lady saw all these and became furious. She spoke to Brahmā seated silently in the middle of the assembly:

67-74. "How did this idea occur to you, O Lord ? Why is this misdeed committed? You have committed a sin in abandoning me out of lust.

A (girl) who is not even equal to the dust of my foot, has been raised to your head by you!

All these who have assembled in the hall should explain this. It is surprising that those who exert authority do whatever they wish.

Out of your lust for a beautiful form, you have committed a despicable act.

O Lord, you did not feel ashamed in the presence of your sons and grandsons. I think this despicable deed was committed out of lust.

You are the grandfather of Devas and the great-grandfather of the sages. How was it that you were not ashamed to see your own body?

Something ridiculous has been committed in the presence of the people. Here itself you stand despised. If this is to be your idea, do remain so, O Lord. Obeisance to you!

How can I show my face to my companions ? How am I to say, another wife has been brought by my husband ?"

Brahmā said:

75. I was commanded by the Rtviks :"The time of initiation is slipping away. No *Homa* is possible here without a wife. Fetch (your) wife quickly."

76. This girl was brought by Śakra. She was offered to me by Viṣṇu and she was accepted by me. Do forgive me for this only misdeed of mine. O lady of excellent holy rites, I will not commit anything offensive any longer.

Īśvara said:

77-79. On being told thus, she became enraged and began to curse Brahmā. "If adequate penance has been performed by me, if the preceptors and the elders have been propitiated by me, Brāhmaṇas will never adore you (Brahmā) in any of the different kinds of holy spots, in any of the Brāhmaṇa assemblies.

Your sole annual worship will be the Kārttikī adoration which all the Brāhmaṇas will perform for you; nothing save this. I curse you with this truthful utterance. I solemnly aver

this. You need not be angry on knowing this: Undoubtedly what is killed does kill."

Sāvitrī said:

80. Oh! O Śakra, a cowherdess was brought to Brahmā by you. Since such a thing as this has been perpetrated by you, you will surely get the fruit thereof.

81. When you will get involved in a battle, O Śakra, you shall be bound by the enemies and brought to a miserable plight.

82. You shall be stripped of all your possessions leaving nothing for you. Your son will perish. You will be (confined) in the city of your enemies. After meeting with great discomfiture, you may get released ere long.

83. After cursing Śakra, the fair lady spoke these words to Viṣṇu:

84-86. "At the instance of a *Guru* (Preceptor) you will be born in the mortal world. Then you will experience the misery arising from separation from your wife. Without your knowledge your wife will be abducted and kept on the other shore of the great ocean. Your senses will be smitten by grief.

You will get maximum suffering along with your brother. You will become associated with beasts for a long time."

87-89. Similarly the angry lady spoke to Rudra: "O Hara, while you are in Dāruvana, the infuriated sages will curse you (as follows). 'Oh! O Kāpālika, O insignificant one, you desire to carry off our wives. Hence this accursed *Liṅga* (penis) of yours, O Rudra, will fall on the ground.'

Bereft of manliness, you shall be afflicted with the curse of the sages. Your wife stationed on the banks of Gaṅgā will console you."

90-91. "O Agni, formerly you were made by my son a *Sarvabhakṣa* 'one eating everything'. One who kills a foetus is unrighteous. Why should I burn one already burnt.

O *Jātavedasa* (Fire-god), Rudra will flood you with semen. You will be scorched by the flames on holy substances."

92. Then Sāvitrī cursed all the Brāhmaṇas and the Ṛtviks:

93-95. "You will always be going to holy spots and Tīrthas out of greed, taking *Pratigraha* (monetary gifts) for your *Agnihotra*

sacrifice; thereby your wives and householdership will become futile.

You will be always pleased and satisfied on the foodstuffs served by others. You will be dissatisfied with your own household. You will perform *Yajñas* on behalf of those who are not eligible and deserving. You will accept *Pratigraha* from despicable persons. Your earning of wealth will be futile. Your endeavour will be futile. Hence there is no doubt about it that on death you will become *Pretas* (spirits, ghosts)."

96. Thus she cursed all: Śakra, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Pāvaka, Brahmā and all the Brāhmaṇas.

97. After cursing she became calmed.

98. Lakṣmī then spoke to her friend (Sāvitrī). Indrāṇī the lady with excellent countenance spoke to her (Sāvitrī). So did the other Devīs. Then she (Sāvitrī) said:

"I will not stay here. I will go to that place where I will not hear this noise."

99. Then all those young ladies went to their respective abodes. The infuriated Sāvitrī attempted once again to curse them:

100-102. "Since these Deva-damsels have gone away leaving me alone, I am very angry. I shall curse them too."

"Lakṣmī will never stay permanently in one place. Even if restrained, she will be very fickle and abide in houses of fools.

O Lakṣmī, by my curse I have restricted your residence to these persons : barbarians, mountain-dwellers, despicable ones, lepers, the talkative, the arrogant, the accursed, the wicked and persons of similar features."

103. After cursing her she cursed Indrāṇī then.

104-106. "O haughty Indrāṇī of evil actions, when Indra, your husband of wicked actions, is held at the instance of Tvaṣṭṛ and when the realm passes over to Nahuṣa, he will requisition you saying 'I am Indra. Why does this idle damsel not serve me? If I do not get Śaci, I will kill all the Devas.' At that time you will get lost and suffer in a great forest. You will be miserable by my curse."

107. Then she cursed all the wives of the Devas.

108. "None of you all will ever get the delight of bearing a child. You will be burning day and night in your misery due to being called a barren woman."

109. She similarly cursed Gaurī too. Then Sāvitrī the excellent lady of exquisite complexion, stood outside the sacrificial hall of her husband and lamented loudly.

110-111. She was seen lamenting by Viṣṇu and was consoled: "O splendid lady of large eyes, do not cry; do come to the assembly hall.

O splendid Brahmāṇī, participate in the sacrifice. Enter the excellent sacrificial hall and take up the girdle and the pair of silken cloths. Become initiated, O splendid lady; I bow down to your feet."

112. On being told thus she said to him "I will not do as you say. I will go there where I will not hear this noise."

113. After saying this much, she stopped and stood on a higher place on the ground.

114. Viṣṇu stood in front of her with palms joined in reverence. Bowing down with great devotion he eulogized thus:

Viṣṇu said:

115. Obeisance to you, O great goddess, identical with Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ, Svah and the three Vedas. O Sāvitrī that enable one to cross the impassable (*Samśāra*). You are remembered as the seven-fold speech.

116. All the sacred texts of eulogy as well as features thereof shall pertain to you. O goddess, obeisance to you.

117. You are white (fair), white in form (complexion). Your countenance is similar to that of the moon. You shine on the bosom of a deer illuminated by the rays of the moon. You are embellished with the pair of ears fitted with divine earrings.

118. You are *Siddhi* (Achievement). So also you are *Rddhi* (Prosperity), *Kīrti* (Fame), *Śrī* (Glory), *Santati* (Continuation of Progeny), *Mati* (Intellect), *Sandhyā* (Twilight), *Rātri* (Night); you are the Dawn and *Kālarātri* (Nightmare) is your own self.

119. Just as the land furrowed with a plough is to cultivators, the earth is to living beings, so also you sustain all living beings.

Even as he eulogized thus Sāvitrī of excellent holy rites spoke to Viṣṇu:

120. "Dear Son, I have been perfectly eulogized by you. You will become invincible. In your incarnations always you will endear yourself to your father and mother.

121. He who eulogizes me with this excellent prayer shall always be rid of all defects. He shall attain the greatest region.

122. Do go, dear son, and get the Yajña concluded.

123. In the two future Yajñas at Kurukṣetra and Prayāga, I shall remain by the side of my husband and carry out your suggestion."

124. On being told thus, Viṣṇu went to the excellent chamber of Brahmā, O lady of excellent complexion. Sāvitrī came to Prabhāsa.

125. When Sāvitrī departed, Gāyatrī spoke these words:

126-133. "May the sages listen to my words which I utter in the presence of my husband. I am delighted and am ready to bestow boons.

If men adore Brahmā with devotion, they will get garments, wealth, grain, wives, happiness and sons. After enjoying happiness without any break, abode, sons and grandsons as well for a long time the devotee will attain salvation.

O Śakra, I proclaim this boon to you. In your fight with the enemies, Brahmā will go to the abode of the enemies and get you released. You will get the greatest happiness due to the death of the enemies along with their sons. You will rule over the three worlds without any thorn.

O Viṣṇu, when you incarnate in the mortal world and your wife will be abducted, you will have great misery along with your brother. You will then kill your enemy and regain your wife. After accepting her in the presence of Suras, you will rule over the flourishing kingdom. After reigning for eleven thousand years, you will go back to heaven. Your fame will be extensive all over the world and you will get the love and affection of the people."

134. Gāyatrī then spoke this to all those Brāhmaṇas:

135. "Gods will become satisfied by propitiating you all. You are Devas of the earth. All of you will become adorable.

136.137. The Devas will go after worshipping you and distributing many gifts.

Especially in Prabhāsa you will perform the *Japa* of Gāyatrī, the mother of the Vedas, and will cross everything (difficulties)

with a single Prāṇāyāma. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, you will never become defiled by the defects of *Pratigraha*. (acceptance of a Dāna).

138. If food is given at Puṣkara, all the Devas will be pleased. If one Brāhmaṇa is fed, it is as good as ten millions having been fed.

139. When cash gift (as Dāna) is placed in your hands all men will surmount the sins of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter and all other sins.

140. Due to the *Japa* and the three Prāṇāyāmas performed, you will become honoured. Every sin on a par with that of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter perishes at that very moment.

141. Gāyatrī repeated ten times destroys the sins committed in the whole birth (life time). If it is repeated a hundred times all the previous, accumulated sins are dissipated and if it is repeated a thousand times the sins of the three Yugas are dispelled.

142. After knowing this and performing the *Japa* you all will become worthy of adoration. There is no doubt about it. No hesitation need be entertained in this respect.

143. After performing my *Japa* along with the Śiras (head) (i.e. the final foot) and Omkāra of three and half Mātrās, all of you will become worthy of adoration. There is no doubt about it.

144. I am abiding in eight syllables. This universe is pervaded by me. I am the mother of all the Vedas. I am embellished by all the Vedas.

145. By means of the *Japa* of mine, all excellent Brāhmaṇas meet with perfect achievement. Due to my Jāpya all of you will attain domination over all.

146. A Brāhmaṇa may possess only the essence of Gāyatrī. Possessed of perfect control and restraint : he is superior to a master of four Vedas even if he be devoid of self-control indulging in eating anything and everything and selling everything indiscriminately.

147. Here in this assembly, O excellent Brāhmaṇas, Sāvitrī has cursed you all. Hence this boon has been granted to you all by me. If a devotee makes any gift here or performs the *Homa* rite, it shall be of everlasting benefit.

148. The Brāhmaṇas engaged in *Agnihotra* and performance of *Homa* thrice a day will go to heaven along with twenty-one generations of the family."

149. In this manner, Gāyatrī granted boons to Śakra, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Pāvaka, Brahmā and the Brāhmaṇas. After granting the boons, she remained by the side of Brahmā.

150. The fact that Lakṣmī as well as all the youthful ladies were severally cursed, was mentioned by Hari (Viṣṇu).

151. Then Gāyatrī, the beloved of Brahmā, granted a boon to Lakṣmī.

152. "O my splendid lady, O my daughter, due to your stay, men will be able to delight all. No one will despise them. There is no doubt about this.

153. O lady of excellent countenance, all those who are glanced at by you (favourably) shall be meritorious. Their caste, family, habit and virtue shall be of highest order.

154. Men who are abandoned by you shall be miserable. They will never shine in an assembly. They will not be favourably considered by kings.

155. Excellent Brāhmaṇas will shower blessings on them. Great-grandsons, brother, father and preceptor will give them gentleman-like treatment.

156-157. 'You are my kinsman. I cannot live without you. When you are seen my eyes become delighted and splendid. The mind is highly pleased. It is the truth. I speak the truth to you.' These and similar words good men will speak to that person glanced at by you. They will delight persons.

158-160. O Indrāṇī, after coming to Svarga, Nahuṣa will solicit. Unable to see you, the sinner will get struck by the curse of Agastya. He will be immediately turned into a serpent and will request the sage thus. 'O sage, I am doomed due to my arrogance. Be my refuge.' At these words of the king, the sage will become merciful and speak these words.

161. 'O scion of the family of Kuru, a king will be born in your family. On seeing your serpentine body he will put some questions to you and redeem you.'

162. Accordingly he (Nahuṣa) will abandon the state of python and will go back to heaven. When a horse-sacrifice is performed, you will once again go to heaven along with your husband. O lady of excellent eyes, you will attain everything through this boon of mine."

163. Thereafter, all the wives of Devas were addressed by the delighted one (i.e. Gāyatrī): "You may be devoid of children but will never be miserable."

164. After granting boons thus, Gāyatrī honoured by the world vanished even as all those were watching.

165. Then Sāvitrī, the divine lady, came to the holy spot of Prabhāsa on the peak of Kṛtasmara to the east of Śrīsomeśvara.

166. In the second splendid Dvāpara in the Cāksusa Manvantara, a Yajña was begun there by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds.

167. The noble-souled Devas and the excellent seven sages attended that Yajña. Those who had been earlier cursed in the Svāyambhuva Manvantara became esteemed then.

168. Ever since then, they resorted to the holy spot of Prabhāsa.

169. Sāvitrī is the mother of the worlds. She blesses the worlds. If anyone devoutly adores her in accordance with the injunctions of the worship of Brahmā, he will certainly have a son.

170-172. A man who takes his holy bath in Pāṇḍukūpa and views the five Liṅgas installed by Pāṇḍavas will attain the benefit of a Yajña.

One who recites Brahmasūktas in the vicinity of the *Sāvitrī Sthala* on the Full-Moon day of the month of Jyeṣṭha, shall be rid of all sins. Thus the famous story of Sāvitrī has been narrated to you. It is destructive of sins. One who devoutly listens to this shall attain the greatest region.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYSIX

The Details of Sāvitrī Pūjā

Devi said:

1-2. O Lord of Devas, O Lord of the universe, tell me the story of Sāvitrī, the beloved of Brahmā, who stayed at Prabhāsa.

It should include therein the whole traditional account and the greatness of Vratas. It will contribute to the establishment of fidelity in women (to their husbands). It is conducive to great rise and good luck.

Īśvara said:

3. O great goddess, I shall narrate to you the great story of Sāvitrī who stationed herself in the holy spot of Prabhāsa in the sacred region. I shall also recount the excellent Vrata performed by Princess Sāvitrī.

4. There was a righteous king named as Aśvapati* in the land of Madra. He was engaged in activities bringing about the welfare of all living beings. He was a favourite with the inhabitants of towns as well as those of rural area.

5. He was truthful in speech. He controlled his sense-organs. He was a man of patience and forbearance. Unfortunately he had no issue. That king undertook a pilgrimage to the holy place of Prabhāsa. In the course of his pilgrimage, he came to the sacred spot of Sāvitrī.

6. In the company of his wife, the king himself took up the holy Vrata well-known as *Sāvitrī Vrata*. It bestows all desired benefits.

7. Goddess Sāvitrī, the beloved of Brahmā, the personified form of the Mantras *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ* and *Svaḥ*, became pleased with him and appeared before him in person.

8. The Goddess holding Kamaṇḍalu (water-pot) vanished from the scene. After a long time she incarnated as his daughter with divine form and features.

9. Indeed, she had been given to him by Goddess Sāvitrī

* This legend is based on Mbh., *Vana*. Chs. 200-290.

who was pleased due to the worship of Sāvitrī. At the behest of Brāhmaṇas, the king named his daughter Sāvitrī.

10. That princess grew up like the goddess of fortune in an embodied form. Sāvitrī of tender limbs reached the stage of youth.

11. With excellent waist and large buttocks she resembled a golden statue. On seeing her, the people thought, 'Oh! Has a divine girl come over here?'

12. The girl with large eyes resembling lotus-petals and shining with her splendour performed Sāvitrī Vrata as expounded by Bhṛgu.

13. She duly observed fast, had head-bath and then she approached the deity. The girl of excellent complexion performed Homa in fire duly. She made the Brāhmaṇas utter sacred Mantras for the propitiation (of Sāvitrī).

14. The fair princess, beautiful in form like Goddess Śrī, received Śeṣa (remnants of floral offerings to the deity) from them.

15. After touching the feet of her father in paying respects to him, she proffered the Śeṣa to him and stood by the side of the king with palms joined in reverence.

16. Noticing that his daughter of divine form and features had reached the youthful stage, he consulted his ministers about a bridegroom for his daughter and said:

17-20. "My dear daughter, it is time that you are to be given away in marriage. But no youth has approached me with a request. Even after pondering over, I do not find any bridegroom befitting ourselves.

You are to behave in a manner that will give no cause to the Devas to despise me. My dear daughter, I have heard this cited in sacred scriptures.

'If without being consecrated (in marriage) a girl discharges her menses in her father's house the father earns the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaying and the girl is known as a Vṛṣalī (Śūdrā).'

Therefore, I am sending you off in the company of aged ministers. Hurry up. Choose your own husband and decide."

21. Saying "So be it", Sāvitrī set off from their abode and went to the beautiful penance groves of saintly kings.

22-23. There she paid obeisance to the feet of elderly and venerable persons. After visiting all holy spots and hermitages,

Sāvitrī returned home along with the ministers. There she saw the celestial sage Nārada, the pure one, in her front.

24. The Brāhmaṇa was seated on his seat. The smiling girl bowed down to him and told him why she had gone out into the forests.

Sāvitrī said:

25. "In the Śālva* territories there was a Kṣatriya king well-known as Dyumatsena. As ill luck would have it he had become blind.

26. Even as his son was yet a boy (due to his weak point) the noble Lord Dyumatsena's kingdom was seized by a vassal king Rukmin who was his previous enemy.

27. Along with his wife and the darling son yet a boy, he entered the forest.

28. The boy grew up in the forest as an extremely virtuous man. His name is Satyavān. I have mentally desired him as my befitting husband.

Nārada said:

29. Alas, it is a great pity, O king ! What has been committed by Sāvitrī is very pitiable. On account of her childishness, Satyavāg (Satyavān) though virtuous, has been selected.

30. "His father tells the truth. It is the truth that his mother speaks. You too do speak the truth." Saying thus the sages named him Satyavān.

31. He is always fond of horses. He makes horses out of clay. He draws the pictures of horses too. Hence he is called Citrāśva also.

32. Satyavān is a disciple of Rantideva and on a par with him in the qualities of liberal-mindedness. He is an adorer of Brāhmaṇas. He always speaks the truth like Śibi of Uśinara.

33. The powerful son of Dyumatsena is of exalted nature like Yayāti. Like the moon, he is pleasant to look at. In beauty he can be considered as one among the Aśvins.

* Region near Alwar and Jodhpur. Also known as Martikāvaṭa (De 127 & 175).

34. He has only one defect. Nothing else. From now onwards within a year Satyavān will give up his body. The span of his life is very short.

35. On hearing Nārada's words the daughter said to the king:

Sāvitrī said:

36. Kings utter only once. Brāhmaṇas speak only once. A virgin is given away only once. These three occur once only.

37. He may be long-lived or one with a short span of life. He may possess good qualities or be devoid of them. My husband has been chosen by me once, I will not woo another one.

38. One resolves mentally and then utters it verbally. Thereafter it is carried out in action. Therefore, it is the mind that is the authority.

Nārada said:

39. If Your Highness approves this, let it be carried out quickly. Let the marriage of your daughter Sāvitrī be celebrated without any hindrance.

40. After saying this Nārada flew up and went to heaven. The king celebrated the rites of the marriage of his daughter in an auspicious hour through Brāhmaṇas of the neighbourhood, who had mastered the Vedas.

41. On obtaining a husband mentally desired, the slender-limbed Sāvitrī rejoiced much like a man of meritorious actions on attaining heaven.

42. Thus, O Pārvatī, even as those persons residing in the hermitage were watching a few days elapsed.

43. The words uttered by Nārada persisted in the mind of Sāvitrī day in and day out.

44. Many days elapsed and finally that particular hour too arrived when Prince Satyavrata had to meet with death.

45-46. Even as Sāvitrī was pondering over the words of Nārada, at nightfall on the twelfth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha (the beautiful lady reflected this): 'He is to meet with death on the fourth day.' She observed Vrata lasting the next three days; she therefore continued to stay in the hermitage.

47. On those three days, she took regular baths and propitiated the deities. The beautifully smiling lady touched the feet of her mother-in-law and father-in-law and paid her respects.

48. Thereafter, taking up his axe Satyavān started towards the forest. Sāvitrī followed her husband as he went ahead.

49. Satyavān hurriedly gathered fruits, flowers, sacrificial twigs and Darbha grass; collecting together some dry branches (as fuel) he bundled them together.

50. As he was cutting wood, he suffered from severe headache. Instantly he left the bundle of fuel wood and stood leaning against the branch of a Vaṭa tree.

51. He told Sāvitrī "My charming beloved, a nasty headache torments me, I wish to sleep for a short while on your lap."

52. The grief-stricken Sāvitrī said : "O my darling of mighty arms, do take rest. We shall go to our hermitage later to dispel our fatigue fully."

53. Sāvitrī sat on the ground keeping his head on her lap, when she saw a dark, tawny-coloured being.

54. He was clad in yellow garments and had a crown on his head. He was brilliant like the rising sun. Sāvitrī bowed down to him and said sweetly:

55-56. "Who are you ? A Deva or a Daitya come to assail and assault me? But beware, I cannot be swayed from doing my duty, O lord. O most excellent being, know me to be a blazing flame of fire."

Yama said:

57. I am Yama, who controls and restrains, the terror of all the worlds.

58. This husband of yours has come to the end of the span of his life. Yet, O chaste lady, in your presence, he cannot be led away by my servants. Hence I have come personally.

59. After saying thus, Yama extracted forcibly the thumb-sized inner soul from the body of Satyavrata (Satyavān) by means of his noose.

60. Then he began to proceed along the path resorted to by Pitṛs. The beautiful lady Sāvitrī too closely followed him.

61-62. Yama spoke to her who was never tired, thanks to the power of her fidelity to her husband. "O Sāvitrī, go back you have traversed here for a Muhūrta. O lady of large eyes, this pathway cannot be traversed by anyone."

Sāvitrī said:

63. I have no fatigue, I am not tired. Following my husband is never tiresome especially in the presence of an exalted person (like you).

64. Good people are the only resort unto good people, none else. Husband is the permanent resort unto women. The Veda is the sole resort unto all the castes and stages of life and preceptor is the ultimate resort unto disciples.

65. There is a place of rest and refuge on the earth for all living beings. But excepting the husband alone, there is no place of resort unto women.

66. The son of the Sun-god (Yama) was pleased with these and such other equally sweet words couched in righteousness. He spoke to Sāvitrī:

Yama said:

67a. O beautiful woman, I am pleased with you. Welfare unto you. Choose your boon.

67b-70. With her head bent down out of modesty, she asked for her own kingdom. She prayed that her noble-souled father-in-law should get back his eyesight and the lost kingdom. She requested for a hundred sons to her father and another hundred for herself. (As a result thereof) She wanted the life of her husband as well as attainment of Dharma (righteousness) for ever. Dharmarāja granted her all the boons and sent her back.

Having got back her husband, Sāvitrī was highly delighted in her mind. Freed from all worries she went back to the hermitage along with her husband.

71. It was on the Full-Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha that she observed this Vrata. Due to its efficacy, the king regained his eyesight.

72. Then the king regained his dominion free from thorns. Her father begot a hundred sons. She too gave birth to a hundred sons.

73. Thus the importance and the efficacy of the Vrata in full has been narrated by me.

The Devī said:

74. Of what nature is that great Vrata, which was performed by Sāvitrī, O Lord? What is the procedure of that Vrata in the month of Jyeṣṭha ?

75. Who is the deity in that Vrata ? What are the Mantras? O Lord, what is the benefit? O Maheśa, do describe this eternal sacred rite in detail.

Īśvara said:

76. O goddess of the chiefs of Devas, may the Sāvitrī Vrata be listened to with great respect. O Maheśvarī, I shall describe the manner in which it was performed by that chaste lady.

77. Starting with the cleaning of the teeth on the thirteenth lunar day in the month of Jyeṣṭha, O fair lady, a devotee should observe the restraints and have fast for three nights.

78. If one is too weak one should take meal at night but must observe control of the sense-organs. On the fourteenth day, food received without request (*Ayācita*) may be taken but there shall be complete fast.

79. By taking the holy bath everyday in a lake, a great river, a stream or in Pāñḍukūpa, O lady of excellent buttocks, the devotee shall attain the benefit of all baths.

80. Especially on the Full-Moon day the bath should be with mustard, clay and water.

81. O renowned lady, the devotee should take sand in a vessel of the capacity of a *Prastha* or it may be any grain such as barley, paddy, gingelly seeds etc.

82. In a vessel made of bamboo covered with two cloths, the devotee should place an idol of Sāvitrī, lustrous, beautiful in every limb.

83. The devotee should make the idol of clay, wood or gold in accordance with his capacity. A pair of red cloths is to be offered to Sāvitrī and a single white cloth to Brahmā.

84-87. In this manner, the devotee should worship Sāvitrī along with Brahmā in accordance with his capacity by means of sweet scents, fragrant flowers, incense, food offerings, lamps,

full *Kośātakas*, ripe *Kuṣmāṇḍa* and *Karkatī* fruits, cucumber, coconuts, date fruits, *Kapitthas* (wood apple), splendid *Dādīmas* (pomegranates), *Jambūs*, *Jambīras*, *Nāraṅgas* (citrons), *Akṣoṭas* (walnuts), *Panasas* (jack-fruits), *Śrakas*, *Katukhandas*, jaggery, salt, germinating seven grains etc. These should be kept in vessels of bamboo. It should be coloured with Kumkuma and Kesara or beautified by means of silk threads.

88. Thus Sāvitrī, the beloved of Brahmā, will incarnate.

89. The devotee should worship her along with Brahmā by means of Sāvitrī Mantra. Among others, the Mantra mentioned in the Purāṇas is recommended:

90. “Obeisance to you, O goddess, having Omkāra in the beginning, O goddess holding a lute and a book. O mother of Devas, grant me exemption from widowhood.”

91. After worshipping duly thus, the devotee should arrange for *Jāgara* (a night vigil) when groups of men and women should sing and play on instruments, dance and laugh throughout the night in the company of experts in the science and art of dance.

92. Till the day dawns, the Brāhmaṇas should be requested to relate the story of Sāvitrī making it interesting with songs of good sentiments.

93-94. Thus the ceremony of the marriage of Sāvitrī with Brahmā should be performed. Seven couples should be offered white garments. Houses equipped with all requisite articles of furniture etc. should be gifted. The image of Sāvitrī should be given to a Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas.

95. Or the presents may be offered to one well-versed in *Sāvitrīkalpa* or one who narrates the story of Sāvitrī or to a *Daivajña* (astrologer) adhering to *Uñcchavṛtti* (maintenance by gleanings of rice-grains) or an *Agnihotrin* who is very poor.

96. After making the offerings thus duly, the devotee should invite fourteen couples to a place beneath a *Vāta* (a Bunyan tree) during the night of Full-Moon.

97. When the day dawns and the morning arrives, all articles of food should be brought to the Sāvitrī *Sthala* (the spot where the rite is performed).

98. After the cooking is concluded in strict hygienic conditions, and with due safeguards for purity, the wise devotees should invite Brāhmaṇas accompanied by their wives.

99. At the *Sāvitrī Sthala* itself the feet of the Brāhmaṇas should be washed. The devotee then makes the Brāhmaṇas and their wives who have taken their bath take their seats.

100. O goddess, food should be served to the couple sitting in front of Sāvitrī. Thereby it shall be deemed undoubtedly that I have been fed.

101. If the devotee feeds a second Brāhmaṇa couple, Keśava will be deemed to have been fed thereby. The consort of Lakṣmī, the bestower of boons will grant him boons.

102. If a third (Brāhmaṇa couple) is fed, it is as good as Brahmā accompanied by Sāvitrī has been fed. Each one of the meals there is remembered as akin to a crore of meals.

103. O great goddess, in the vicinity of the Sāvitrī Sthala, it is actually an offering to the deity of food in the form of eighteen different dishes having all the six tastes.

104. There shall never be a widow in that family, nor a barren woman nor an unlucky wretched one. There shall never be a woman giving birth solely to baby-girls nor one incurring the displeasure of her husband. The eight defects that usually torment women will never affect them.

105. Hence by all means, foodstuffs avoiding pungent and stale things, should be offered in front of Sāvitrī.

106. Food offered to women should never be sour or saltish. Five kinds of sweet dishes should be well-cooked, seasoned and served heartily.

107. There should be pies full of ghee. There should be plenty of milk. *Pūpakas* should be made in that manner. A second sweet dish is *Asókavartikā* (*Phenikā*).

108. The third *Pūpikā* should be with *Kharjūra* (datefruit). The fourth shall be *Samyāva* (*Halvā*) soaked in ghee and jaggery.

109. This sweet dish of *Pūpikā* delights men, and women are very fond of it. Through *Pūpikās* that family shall be full of wealth and food-grain and with hundreds of men and women.

110. If the *Aśokavarti* (*Phenikā*) is served, twenty-one generations of the family flourish. There shall never occur fever or distress nor misery due to separation.

111. If the devotee offers *Pūrikās* his family shall be filled with brides, sons, servants and servant-maids.

112. If young women offer *Sikharinī* (curds with sugar), there shall undoubtedly be sons and daughter-in-laws to the daughters in the family.

113. By offering *Modakas* (sweetmeat) as in charity the whole family shall rejoice filled with all perfect attainments—so says Pitāmaha.

114. This type of food served to *Gaurinīs* (women with husband and sons) is splendid.

115. O goddess, a woman who feeds a thousand shall be lucky, chaste, endowed with sons, wealth and prosperity in every birth.

116-117. There are important good beverages, hearty and sweet, such as Drākṣapāna (grape-juice), the juice of tamarind with jaggery. It is splendid with sugar candy and water added. Such drinks should be offered to Brāhmaṇa Suvāsinīs (*Gaurinīs*).

118. Fragrant beverages of other kinds should be befittingly offered to the women of other castes.

119. The women should be adored duly with gifts of garments and bodices. They should be smeared with unguents of saffron. They should be embellished with garlands. After honouring them with scents and incense, they should be offered coconuts.

120. Collyrium should be given for their eyes; *Sindūra* for the parting of hair on the head. Tasty arecanuts soft and sweet-smelling, should be given in their hands along with the vessels thereof. They should then be bowed down to and sent off.

121. The devotee then takes food along with the children and kinsmen.

122. Or if meal could not be had at the Tīrtha, the devotee should take his meal after going home so that the goddess may be pleased.

123. And, the devotee returns home and performs Śrāddha in accordance with the injunctions along with the offerings of rice-balls. His ancestors become contented for the period of a day of Brahmā (a thousand Yugas).

124. O splendid lady, the merit of one who offers Śrāddha in his own house is eight times more than that of one who offers it in the Tīrtha. Base people in that case will not cast their eyes on the Śrāddha offered by the twice-born.

125. Hence it is advised that the Śrāddha of the Pitṛs should be performed in the isolated place of one's own abode. (If done outside it on being seen by the base persons) the Śrāddha is spoiled (as it) does not reach the Pitṛs.

126. Hence with all effort, one should offer Śrāddha in secret. It is said by the Self-born Lord himself that it is pleasing to the Pitṛs.

127. The rite of feeding *Gaurī* etc., which is performed as a general rule is termed *Rājasī* (based on Rajas Guṇa). It bestows renown on people.

128. This *Dāna* should be offered always by one who wishes for his own welfare. This is especially true in the case of Śrāddha, if a *Sāttvika* benefit is desired.

129. This is the *Udyāpana* (valedictory rite) of the Sāvitrī Vrata, O fair lady. It should be performed by men always for the purpose of eliminating all sins. O goddess, whether it is performed with or without a desire for benefit, the sin perishes instantly.

130. By the people who perform the pilgrimage to the place the following (benefits) is obtained: Good fortune in this world, wealth, food-grains, excellent women etc.

131. If a man devoutly performs the pilgrimage or devoutly listens to the rules thereof he shall be rid of all sins.

132-134. On the Full-Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha the devotee should perform *Pradaksinā* (circumambulation) along with offerings of fruit at the splendid *Sāvitrī-Sthalaka*. They may be one hundred-eight, or its half (54) or its half (27). All his sins perish even if they may be very heinous such as *Agamyāgamana* (carnally approaching prohibited women) committed deliberately. There is no doubt about it.

135-136. A devotee should make his wife fetch the water from Pāndukūpa and perform Sandhyā rite of Sāvitrī. It may be fetched in a golden pitcher or earthen pot, O fair lady. If the Sandhyā is performed thus it is as good as it is performed for twelve years.

137. In the holy bath the benefit is that of a horse-sacrifice. In *Dāna* the benefit is ten times more. The benefit is unlimited in fast and so in listening to the story.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYSEVEN

Greatness of Bhūtamātṛkā

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great Goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Bhūtamātṛkā stationed there within a distance of a hundred *Dhanus* to the west of Sāvitrī.

She is accompanied by nine crores of Gaṇas and is crowded with the company of *Pretas* and *Bhūtas* (spirits). She is worshipped in many ways by Siddhas, Gandharvas and other Devas.

The Devī said:

3. People in a group run about all round singing, dancing and laughing rapturously in every village and town in the name of Bhūta-Matā.

4. Like an intoxicated person they prattle and babble and fall on the ground like an inebriated one. They run as though very furious and drag others as though they are corpses.

5. People are made unhappy as though suffering from delirium. Like a goblin, they wade through wine and muddy slough of ashes.

6. Is this way shown by the scriptures or merely customary? O Lord, my mind is confused. Hence it behoves you to clarify.

7. How is she to be adored by men residing in Prabhāsa-kṣetra? Why did the Goddess go there? When did she come? On which day and in which month should her great festival be celebrated?"

Īśvara said:

8. Listen, O Goddess, I shall tell what you have in your mind. It is my opinion that the devout will have faith.

9. After the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara had elapsed and Vaivasvata Manvantara had arrived, the Goddess was born as the daughter of the Mountain as a result of the insult inflicted at her by Dakṣa.

10. In the second Dvāpara, you were given in marriage to me by the Mountain. The marriage was celebrated delighting all the Devas.

11. O my beloved, I joyously sported about in your company in the Mandara mountain having many beautiful caves with divine materials of sport. You appeared lustrous with your plump, protruding breasts and big buttocks.

12. You appeared highly delighted and lustrous with a radiant countenance resembling a white lotus. You appeared like a new shoot issuing forth from the tree of the burnt Kandarpa (Kāmadeva). You (of plump protruding breasts and big buttocks) were lying on a rich bed of great value and beauty. So I made love to you.

13-14. In the intercourse with you that followed a hundred years according to the reckoning of gods elapsed. Then, O Goddess, there came out due to constriction, from your watery secretion a woman with deep cave-like belly. She was black in colour with a hideous face, tawny eyes and dishevelled hairs.

15. She was Śivā with a garland of skulls as her ornament, wearing headless trunks and broken skulls on her head. She held Khaṭvāṅga weapon and skeletons (in her hands). Torsos and skulls were held up in her hands.

16. She was clad in the hide of a tiger. Small bells in her girdle jingled. *Damarukas* (small drums) were played upon. She filled the sky with her hissing *Phetkāra*.

17. There were other women too at her sides. Listen to their names from me. Their female companions, the Brāhmaṇarākṣasīs, were beautiful to look at.

18. They pervaded the entire earth. They had ten crores of varieties among them and were well-established. Four among them were the chief ones. They possessed great strength and valour.

19. They are: (1) Raktavarṇā, (2) Mahājihvā, (3) Akṣayā, and (4) Pāpakāriṇī. All the Brahma-Rākṣasas over the earth are born in the families of these.

20. Generally these have their comfortable residence on Śleṣmātaka trees. They are fickle like moving, lofty palm trees. They dance and laugh.

21. They should be known as the original leaders of she spirits in this world. They are extremely dark-complexioned. These spirits move about in the space.

22. They undoubtedly hover around the sky on the tops of trees.

23. Similarly from my semen virile was born a male being having my form and embellishments. He too held skulls and Khaṭvāṅga. He was covered with a hide.

24. He was followed by many spirits with the faces of lions and tigers reaching up to the sky. They were terrible and hideous.

25. O Goddess, being born thus he was overwhelmed with hunger and spoke to me so. On seeing him hungry I granted him this boon.

26. "Whatever is touched by the hands of both of you shall be night itself. You will be powerful during nights. Both of you will not be so powerful during the day. Protect the worlds as though they were sons. May piety and righteousness be preserved."

27. Thus, O beloved, the groups of Bhūtas and Mātṛs were told by me. Within a moment, those two born of Bhavānī and Bhava became united.

28. O lady of pure smiles, I became delighted in mind on seeing them and spoke to you:

29. "See, O fair lady, see these two born of a part of mine. They possess hideous, miraculous and loveable features. They cause humour too."

30. Three names of these are remembered in the world, viz. Bhrātṛbhāṇḍā, Bhūtamātā and Udkasevitā. Their virility and courage is very well-known.

31. With palms joined in reverence, they looked at me and asked: "O Lord, in which place can we have our residence?"

32. When both of them spoke thus, I granted them boons and said: "There is an excellent holy spot in Bhārata in the Saurāṣṭra region."

33. It is called Prabhāsa. There is welfare. It is liked by me. It is stationed in the southern extremity to the south-west of the shrine of Kūrma.

34. In that place are remembered the three constellations, Svātī, Viśākhā and Anurādhā. You must stay in that spot till the end of the Manvantara.

35. I shall narrate other means of sustenance of which the Bhūtas are always fond.

36. These are your permanent residences: the places where there are thorny trees, the creeper of Niṣpāva(?), where

someone's wife (widowed ?) marries again and where there is *Valmīka* (an ant-hill).

37. Your residence is that house where there are five men, three women, three cows, darkness and fire from fuel.

38. Your residence is that house the plot whereof is occupied by Bhūtas and Pretas and where there are eight asses, one sheep, three cows, five buffaloes, six horses and seven elephants.

39. Your base is that place where these things are placed haphazardly: *Uddālaka* plants, food-baskets, Sthāli and other cooking vessels etc.

40. O lady, your stay is in that place where these things are carelessly scattered: mortar and pounding rod, where women sit on the lower part of the frame of a door (*Umbarā* in Marathi) etc. and where people speak harsh words.

41. You will wander along with your Bhūtas over those places where ripe and unripe grains are eaten in the house and also the branches likewise. (If the reading is *Śakāḥ*—vegetables?)

42. In a house where handicapped men with defective limbs place fire on the lids of *Sthālis*, is the place of resort of all undesirable beings.

43. In a house where human bones are kept day and night, this group of Bhūtas will wander as they please.

44. Do enter that place along with the Bhūtas where people call the *Pināka*-bearing Lord (*Śiva*) as an ordinary being and do not assert that he is superior to everything else.

45-46. That place is an abode befitting the Bhūtas where these plants grow : creeper *Kanyā* (called *Koraphaḍ* in Marathi), Indian fig tree called *Rohī*, *Agastya*, *Bandhuji*va flower (dog rose) *Karavīra* in particular, *Nandyāvarta* and *Mallikā* (jasmine).

47-48. The places where these trees are found are the favourite haunts of all Bhūtas: *Tāla*, *Tamāla*, *Bhallāta*, *Tintinīkhanḍa* (tamarind), *Bakula*, *Kadalīkhanḍa* (plantains), *Kadamba*, *Khadira*, *Nyagrodha*, *Aśvattha*, *Cūta* (mango), *Uduṁbara* and *Panasa* (jackfruit).

49-50. If there is a crow's nest in a garden or in a house or if there is *Bhikṣubimba* on the southern side of a house or if a *Bimba* tree grows above, Bhūtas shall have their residence there.

51. One should agree that the following houses are the abodes of Bhūtas : where there is no worship of the Liṅga, where *Japa* etc. are not performed and where people are devoid of devout feelings.

52. Do enter the houses of those men whose faces are dirty, who habitually wear dirty clothes and who are house-holders with unclean teeth.

53. Do enter the houses of those people who habitually cohabit with prohibited women, who commit adultery and who indulge in sexual intercourse during dusks.

54. Why expatriate much? Do enter the houses of those who are excluded from (avoid) their daily rituals and who are devoid of devotion to Rudra.

55. Resort immediately to those persons who take food without giving food and water to kinsmen and those who have the *Sapinda* kinship, offering-of-water relationship. (These are the degrees of *kinship*).

56. Do enter fearlessly a house where husband and wife are antagonistic to each other. Do enter it along with the Bhūtas.

57-60. That house of men is your abode where people have no love and affection for Vāsudeva, where (an idol of) Hari is not kept, where *Japa*, *Homa*, etc. are not performed, where there is no sacred ash in the house, where no adoration is performed even during *parvan* days and especially on the fourteenth lunar day, where people do not apply sacred ashes during dawn and dusks on the eighth lunar days in the dark halves, where people do not worship Mahādeva during *Pañcadaśī* (fifteenth day) and where people do not celebrate great festivals traditionally celebrated by town dwellers as well as residents of rural areas.

61. Where there is no chanting sound of the Vedas, where there is no adoration of preceptor etc., and which is devoid of the rites unto the Pitṛs—that place is remembered as the abode of Bhūtas.

62. In a house where mutual quarrel takes place every night and in a place where aged ones take food while children sit watching delightedly—do enter that place along with Bhūtas.

63. O my beloved goddess, I was asked thus by her: "In which month and on which date will I be honoured by the people?" and I told her:

64. "Your eternal festival shall be celebrated on the fourteenth lunar day and the New-Moon day in the month of Mādhava (Vaiśākha).

65. If on those days during the celebration of the great festival women worship her (You) by means of oblations, flowers and incense, do not enter their house.

66-68. Do not on any account enter cowpens, parks, houses etc. of those who joyously repeat the (sacred) names like. "O Nārāyaṇa, O Hṛṣikeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, O Mādhava, O Acyuta, O Ananta, O Vāsudeva, O Janārdana, O Nṛsīṁha, O Vāmana, O Acintya, O Keśava etc., and also O Rudra, O Rudra, O Rudra, obeisance, obeisance to Śiva." Do not spoil their wealth and property.

69. Do not possess those men who are afraid of adverse rumour and those people who perform purity rites and sacrifices of deities, *Japa*, *Homa*, auspicious rites etc., those who abide by the customs and conventions of the land and the traditions obtaining in the community.

The Devī said:

70. O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, it behoves you to tell me when the worship of the Bhūta Mother should be performed by persons seeking happiness?.

Īśvara said:

71. Everywhere this goddess who is the cause of welfare of children is worshipped under different names, at different times and by means of different rites.

72. Pūjā should be performed from the *Pratipad* (i.e. first lunar day) to the fourteenth lunar day in the month of Vaiśākha through *Preranī* (*yakas*) and *Preksanīyakas* (*motivating* and dramatic performances (?)).

73-74. This goddess may be under an old or broken trees. The devotees should sprinkle water thereon by means of pitchers filled with water. They should worship by means of *Grīvā-sūtrakas* (chains and sacred threads) (a sort of *Mangala-sūtra*), Sindūra, flowers, incense etc. *Siddhavaṭa* (holy fig tree) should be worshipped and its branch should be planted.

75. The devotee should watch even as she is worshipped

with efforts by men desirous of welfare and feed them with *Kṣipra*, *Samyāva*, *Kṛṣara*, *Apūpa* and milk puddings.

76. A man who performs worship thus duly shall obtain increase in the number of sons and cattle and become healthy.

77. Neither Śākinīs nor Piśācas nor Rākṣasas affect his house. The children grow up without ailment.

78. Now, O goddess, I shall explain how the festival should be celebrated by men in due order beginning with *Pratipad* by means of *Preraṇiyakas* and *Prekṣanīyakas*.

79. There shall be allusions and indications of the adverse results of misdeemeanour. There shall be satiric parodies and mockery of heretics. Men shall demonstrate everything by means of wonderful feats and jocular remarks.

80. Particularly on the fifth lunar day, there should be tumultuous shouts and sounds at night. After worshipping the goddess there should be *Jāgara* (vigil or keeping awake at night) assiduously.

81. (The various *Preraṇiyakas* and *Prekṣanīyakas* follow:) A husband who regularly studies the Veda has been killed due to the greed of wealth through breach of faith. O people, the culprit is being impaled on the stake, See!

82. Was this wicked man who ravished other men's wives seen by you all? His hands have been chopped off. He is being paraded seated on a donkey!

83. Torn by means of swords, adorned by means of jewels (in the form of swords?) he is seated in a pleasant seat. The meritorious person thus goes on happily!

84. O people, why don't you see this wretch who has been disloyal to his master? He is being cut with a saw. Blood is being splashed out from within.

85. Here comes a thief contemptible to everyone. He is being beaten with sticks. He is being taken away by hangman.

86. O people, his face is kept looking down. He is ashamed. He is bound and taken away to be executed. The onlookers show various gestures against him. He is lamenting in various kinds of notes.

87. His hair has turned grey. His moustache and beard are grey. He is clad in white. There is a white banner above. Don't see him beaten by the maids with *Vitāṅkas*(?).

88. "I am a widow. He made me come out of my house.

He took me to his house and indulged in sex with me. Why then does this foolish fellow not maintain me and feed me?"

89. "He is always a leader with eyes rolling. He has the ornaments of the terrible god Bhairava. He has begun to experience lethargy. The foolish fellow is taken here and there and is to be executed."

90. "There is only one depressed feeling of disgust in his heart. That pertains to money, fields etc. Although he is only a child he has performed a great Vrata to-day. Don't you see him in a hurry? He is red-eyed with limbs black like those of a crow."

91. "He has committed sins like this. He has tied up birds within the hollows of trees and others with iron fetters. He has cut them into pieces with arrows and many pieces of wood."

92. "Look at the hittings and blows producing hissing sounds!"

93-94. "You will catch hold of this evil-minded woman with a face half-black. Her hairs are in a dishevelled condition. She is dancing. See, she is like a Yognī. The sound of the anklets, is grave and majestic as she begins her devil dance. Her eyes and feet are like those of an inebriated woman. She goes ahead surrounded by children."

95. "She has kept a basket on her hips. Her blanket is lustrous round her. She wanders from house to house. She goes round the earth dancing all the way."

96. A devotee surrounded by his sons, brothers and friends should celebrate these festivals by means of *Preranīyakas* and *Prekṣanīyakas* of this sort and similar ones.

97-99. On the ninth or eleventh lunar day, lamps should be lit around the piṭ. Various kinds of faces and masks should be made of wood or paste, depicting hideous as well as calm features. These faces are those of the Mātṛs, Caṇḍikā etc., as well as the Rākṣasas. The devotee shall cause the faces of the Bhūtas, Pretas, Piśācas and Sākinīs depicting different emotions and features.

100. O great goddess, the whole place should be well guarded by many guards and watchmen. The man should spend the New-Moon day by means of various items of worship,

even as beasts and animals and birds carry on their natural cries.

101. Then at nightfall, the devotee should go to the place where the goddess is surrounded by people. There should be loud shouts and cries with *Phetkāras* and songs in chorus.

102. *Viracaryā* is the name given to the celebration in the form of taking a procession of lamps around the various parts of the city at night. This procession of lamps facilitates the achievement of all things.

103. This procession of lamps should be performed every day till the fifteenth *Tithi*. The great festival of *Bhūtamātr* should be celebrated on the fifteenth. As long as the master of the house is alive, there will not be any obstacle in the house.

104. On another occasion, after the lapse of a great deal of time, five crores of Piśācas were born from the drops of perspiration from the body of Bhūtamātr.

105. All of them are great, cruel-faced with flames emitted from the tongues. Their bellies are thin. These Piśācas have their palms as vessels (for food). Their food consists of the oblation offered.

106. They are dry and lean with the veins prominently visible in the body. They are clad in skins and hides. They grow long hairs and beards. Mortars constitute their ornaments. Winnowing baskets constitute their umbrellas, seats and garments.

107. These are the Piśācas of a variety called *Āngārakas*. They follow the path of the Mātṛs. At night their hairs shine lustrously and they emit sparks of fire out of their mouths.

108. These powerful Piśācas reside in lying-in-chamber of confinement. Their mouths appear split as far as their ears. Their eyebrows appear to be hanging down. Their noses are stout.

109. There are other Piśācas called *Viśādanas* (poison-eaters). Their hands and feet are turned backwards. They move as fast as the wind. They eat flesh at the time of battles.

110. Out of pity for these petty-minded ones, I looked at these Piśācas with compassion and said thus:

111. "I granted them the power of vanishing within the bodies of the subjects, and the power to assume any form as

they please. They can roam about during the two *Sandhyās* (dusk and dawn). They were given habitat and means of sustenance.

112-114. O my beloved, I granted these Piśācas the following places as residence: vacant houses, empty shrines, those in ruins, those with faulty constructions, the main highway and the side streets, quadrangles, places where three roads meet, doorways, attics, terraces, exits and entrances (outlets and inlets), paths, rivers, Tirthas, Caitya-trees and long winding roads.

115-119. Unrighteous people were made their means of sustenance formerly : People who do not follow the rules of castes and stages of life, artisans and craftsmen, those who torment good people, thieves, those who are ungrateful and commit breach of trust. If these people continue their activities with ill-gotten wealth, Piśācas will be the presiding deities. *Naivedyas* for these Piśācas shall be liquor, meat, powdered gingelly seeds mixed with curds or wine, *Āpūpas*, *Kṛśaras* made of turmeric, cooked rice mixed with gingelly seeds etc.

Their garments shall be black and the flowers offered to them shall be grey and smoke-coloured. Such is the *Bhūta-Mātā*, the goddess of all Bhūtas and Piśācas. She is splendid and surrounded by the groups of all Bhūtas.

120-121. This goddess got established in Prabhāsa to the north of the sea. He who understands the nativity of the goddess that is destructive of sins, shall never beget a defective, despicable child. He is never assailed by the defects of Bhūtas, Pretas and Piśācas.

122. He shall be rid of all sins. He shall be endowed with conjugal felicities. He will obtain all that he desires. He will delight the hearts of women.

123. The devotees should accept and believe in the Bhava-Bhūta-Mātṛ, the bestower of freedom from fear. Even through her laughs, graces and service, she grants fearlessness. Those devotees become happy in the company of brothers, servants, sons and kinsmen. They will be free from all kinds of disasters and tortures.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYEIGHT

Greatness of Śālakaṭaṅkaṭā

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the goddess Śālakaṭaṅkaṭā stationed to the south of Sāvitrī and east of Raivata.

She is destructive of great sins and all miseries. She is terrible with her lustrous curved teeth. She is adored by all the Gandharvas.

She destroyed many fierce Daityas such as Mahiṣa. She has a huge body. She has been installed in Prabhāsakṣetra by Paulastya (i.e. Rāvaṇa).

4-5. One who propitiates her on the fourteenth day in the month of Māgha shall become a possessor of cattle, intellect, good fortune and sons. He shall be intelligent.

He who devoutly propitiates her by offering an animal, through the offerings of oblations and adorations shall be devoid of enemies.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTYNINE

Greatness of Vaivasvateśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the shrine of Vaivasvateśvara Liṅga situated within a distance of thirty *Dhanus* to the south of the goddess. It was installed by Vaivasvata Manu and it fulfills all desires. Very near thereof exists a miraculous *Devakhāta* (divine pit).

O beautiful lady, a man who takes his holy bath therein and worships the Liṅga duly with five *Upacāras*, who controls all senses and is humble in devotion and who performs the *Japa* of the eulogy according to the injunction called Aghora, shall attain Siddhi.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY

Greatness of Māṭṛgaṇabala Devī

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a wise devotee should go to the shrine of Māṭṛgaṇas. It is stationed not far from *Baladevī*. A man who worships her on the Full-Moon day in the month of Śrāvaṇa through milk pudding or honey and with divine floral offerings, shall pass off that year in happiness, O great goddess.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYONE

Greatness of Daśarathēśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the great goddess Ekallavīrikā. To the south of Ekallavīrā, not very far off, there is another well-established shrine. Formerly Daśaratha, the ornament of the Solar dynasty, came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and performed a very difficult penance.

He installed a Liṅga there and propitiated Śaṅkara. He requested the Lord for a son of unmeasured virility. The Lord worshipped by all the three worlds granted him a son. His fame spread in all the three worlds and his name was Rāma.

5-6. Even today, the residents of the worlds *Bhūḥ*, *Bhuvaḥ*, and *Svāḥ*, all the Devas, Daityas and Asuras and great sages beginning with Vālmīki sing his glory.

By the power of that Liṅga great fame was attained by the king. A devotee should worship the deity on the Full-Moon day in the month of Kārttika duly by the offerings of lamps and adorations. He becomes renowned.'

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYTWO

Glory of Bharateśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the shrine of Bharateśvara Liṅga which is situated not far from it (i.e. Daśarathēśvara) on the northern corner.

There was a great king named Bharata on the earth. He was the son of Agnīdhra. This Bhāratavarṣa is named after him.

O my beloved Pārvatī, after installing Maheśvara in this Kṣetra he performed a terrible penance for a period of a thousand years according to the divine reckoning.

4. The most excellent among men worshipped Śaṅkara with a desire for (getting) a son. The Lord who was pleased became eager to grant sons.

5. He granted him eight sons and a renowned daughter. The king became contented and blessed after attaining his desire.

6. He divided Bhārata into nine parts and gave a part to each of them. The continents were named after them.

7-8. They are Indra Dvīpa, Kaseru, Tāmravarṇa, Gabhastimān, Nāga Dvīpa, Saumya, Gāndharva and Aruṇa. O my beloved, this is the ninth one named by the Kumārī. The earlier eight Dvīpas were flooded by the ocean.

9. Along with the villages, regions etc., they remained within the ocean. Now only one among them named Kumārī, remains steady.

10. It extends to a thousand Yojanas to the south of Bindusaras* and north of the ocean.

11. The length is glorified as extending to nine thousand Yojanas. This, O goddess, indicates the expansion of that noble-souled Bharata.

12. He performed fifty-six Aśvamedhas on the bank of Gaṅgā and thirty near Yamunā. Thus he became honoured by the people of the world.

13. With the favour of the Lord, he rejoices in heaven like Devas.

* Bindusaras : A sacred pool situated on Rudra Himalayas. (De 387)

14. He who worships the Bharata Liṅga installed by him, will certainly attain the benefits of all Yajñas and Dānas.

15. One who visits the shrine on the Kārttikī Full-Moon day in conjunction with the constellation Kṛttikā will never see even in his dream the extremely terrible Naraka.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYTHREE

Greatness of Four Liṅgas (Kuśakeśvara etc.)

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of (the group of) four Liṅgas installed at one single site to the west of Sāvitrī. Two Liṅgas are in the east and two face the west. The Liṅga named Kuśakeśvara is remembered as the first Liṅga. Gargeśvara is the second and Puṣkareśvara is the third. The Liṅga named Maitreyeśvara is cited as the fourth one.

4. One who has conquered his sense-organs and devoutly visits these Liṅgas, becomes rid of all sins and goes to the great City of Śiva.

5. Especially on the fourteenth lunar day in the bright half of a month, a pilgrim, should assiduously take his holy bath there and feed Brāhmaṇas.

6. He should give them gold and garments within his capacity. If this is done, O goddess of Suras, the pilgrimage becomes complete.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYFOUR

Greatness of Kuntīśvara

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Kuntīśvara. It is situated to the east of Sāvitrī exactly in the middle of Devakhāta.

O my beloved goddess, it was installed by Kuntī when formerly Pāṇḍavas had come to the Prabhāsa Kṣetra in the course of their pilgrimage along with Kuntī. At that time, O great goddess, Kuntī understood that the Kṣetra was extremely excellent and so she installed the Liṅga that dispels all fears.

A man who worships the deity especially on the Kārttikī Full-Moon day, shall become contented on realizing all his desires. He will be honoured in Rudraloka.

By visiting that Liṅga, O goddess, every sin whether it is verbally, mentally or physically committed, gets eliminated.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYFIVE

Greatness of Arkasthala

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the splendid sacred shrine of Arkasthala which is destructive of all sins. It is situated on the south-east corner thereof (i.e. of Kuntīśvara).

By visiting the deity, O goddess, a man will never meet with poverty during seven successive births. He can never be reduced to piteous plight.

O my beloved, visiting the deity dispels ten types of Kuṣṭha (leprosy). By viewing the Sun-god of Arkasthala, one gets the same benefit as is obtained by gifting a hundred cows in Kurukṣetra.

The pilgrim should take holy bath in the Tīrtha called *Trisāngama* (three confluences) on seven Sundays, feed Brāhmaṇas and make the gift of a buffalo. He is honoured in Svargaloka for a thousand years according to the reckoning of Devas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYSIX

Greatness of Siddheśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine remembered as Siddheśvara. It is situated not far from Arkasthala in the south-eastern direction.

Eighteen thousand sages of sublimated sexual energy have achieved Siddhi in that Liṅga. Therefore, it is remembered as Siddheśvara.

One should take the holy bath and devoutly adore the deity. He should observe fast and control his senses. After duly adoring the Lord he should distribute monetary gifts among Brāhmaṇas duly. Richly endowed with everything desired he shall attain the greatest region.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYSEVEN

Greatness of Lakuliśa*

Īśvara said:

1-3. To the east thereof stands the personified Lakuliśa, O goddess of Devas. He stands there himself after performing a severe penance. He stays there permanently for the purpose of suppressing sins at that spot above the sacred Sthala.

A man who worships the Lord on the Full-Moon day in the month of Kārttika coinciding with Kṛttikā constellation, O great goddess, is honoured by all the Suras and Asuras.

* He is regarded as the twentyeighth incarnation of Śiva. He is a historical person mentioned in Allahabad inscription. His birth place, Karwan, in Baroda district of Gujarat, has become a sacred place.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYEIGHT

Greatness of Bhārgaveśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the sin-destroying deity named Bhārgaveśvara situated to the south thereof.

O goddess, one who worships him by means of divine floral offerings shall become contented and flourishing with every desire fulfilled.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTYNINE

Greatness of Māṇḍavyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the sin-destroying Liṅga named Māṇḍavyeśvara. It is stationed within a distance of three *Dhanus* to the southern corner of Siddheśa. Even great sins are destroyed thereby.

A man who controls fully all senses and performs *Jāgaranā* and *Pūjā* on the fourteenth lunar day in the month of Māgha shall never be born again in the mortal world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY

Greatness of Puṣpadanteśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. A devotee should visit the splendid shrine of Puṣpadanteśvara situated there itself. There was a Gaṇa of Śaṅkara named Puṣpadanteśvara. A severe penance was performed by him and the Liṅga was installed there. On visiting the deity, one becomes relieved from the bondage of worldly

existence and birth. He shall attain all desired objects in this world and hereafter also.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYONE

Greatness of Kṣetrapāleśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine Kṣetrapāleśvara situated in the vicinity of Siddheśvara, not very far in the eastern direction.

By visiting the deity on the fifth lunar day in the bright half one is not bitten by snakes and serpents.

One should worship the deity in accordance with the injunctions by means of scents, flowers etc., in due order. One should feed Brāhmaṇas according to one's capacity through foodstuffs and edibles of many kinds.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYTWO

Greatness of Māṭṛ Deities

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, a pilgrim should visit the Māṭṛgaṇas named Vasunandā etc. They are situated to the south in the vicinity of Arkasthala not very far from it. On the ninth day in the bright half of Aśvayuk, a devotee should control himself. With a purified soul, he should worship the Māṭṛs in accordance with the injunctions. He will obtain prosperity, very difficult for people having no control over themselves.

Further a devotee should visit Śrīmukha fond of his Vivara (crevasse). On the same day itself, the deity should be worshipped always by men desirous of Siddhi. O my beloved, I have narrated this in detail to you already. In the course of the pilgrimage, the deity should be worshipped on that day itself.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYTHREE

Greatness of Trisaṅgama

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent Miśra Tīrtha famous as the excellent Solar Tīrtha Trisaṅgama.

O fair lady, the confluence of these three, Sarasvatī, Hiranya and the ocean, is very difficult to be obtained even by deities.

This excellent Tīrtha which is the most important of all the Tīrthas thereof, surpasses even Kurukṣetra during the solar *Parva* i.e. solar eclipse.

Holy bath, *Dāna* and *Japa*, everything performed there shall be a crore times more efficacious.

5. O great goddess, there are ten crores of Tīrthas in the intervening space from Maṇkiśvara upto Kṛtasmara Liṅga.

6. Worms, insects and locusts or even Cāṇḍālas and other base men there attain heaven. What then in the case of a person of purified soul ?

7. Yellow garments, gold and an excellent cow should be given as gifts to a Brāhmaṇa by those who desire to obtain the benefit of a perfect pilgrimage.

8. The pilgrim should take his holy bath on the fourteenth day in the dark half and offer libations to the Pitṛs. Thereby the Pitṛs will be propitiated as long as the moon, the sun and the stars exist.

9. This confluence of the three, O goddess, is destructive of all great sins. It is very rarely accessible in all the three worlds especially on the Full-Moon day in the month of Vaiśākha.

10. O my beloved, *Vṛṣotsarga* (release of a bull) should be particularly performed by excellent men for the destruction of all sins and for the delight of the Pitṛs.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYFOUR

Greatness of Maṅkīśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Maṅkīśvara which is in the vicinity of Trisaṅgama. It is destructive of all sins.

Formerly, there was a sage named Maṅkī. He was the most excellent among those who performed penance. Realizing that this was a great Kṣetra, favourite with Śaṅkara, he installed a Liṅga of Maheśvara and performed a very terrible penance for more than ten thousand years in which he subsisted only on bulbous roots, roots and fruits.

4-5. Then the delighted Lord Mahādeva granted him a boon. He chose, "If you are satisfied, do stay on in this holy spot. Reside in this Liṅga marked by (associated with) my name for ten thousands of Kalpas." The Lord said, "Let it be so" and vanished there itself.

6-7. Ever since then, that Liṅga is famous as Maṅkīśvara. On the thirteenth or fourteenth lunar day in the month of Māgha, the deity should be worshipped with the five *Upacāras*. A devotee shall obtain the desired benefit. The gift of a cow should be made there by those who desire to get the benefit of a perfect pilgrimage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYFIVE

Greatness of Devamāṭṛgaurī

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the shrine of the immutable Devamāṭṛ (Mother of gods) who has assumed the form of Gaurī. It is on the south-western side of Maṅkīśa. This Devamāṭṛ is sung about (by) the name of Sarasvatī.

There, Goddess Sarasvatī is stationed on the *Pādukāsana* (foot rest). In the form of Gaurī, she has the physical form resting on Vaḍavā (submarine fire).

Devas were protected by her like a mother from the fear of this submarine fire. Therefore, the Devas made her famous by the name *Devamātr̄*.

4. On the third lunar day in the month of Māgha a devotee, whether man or woman, should worship her. The woman should be a chaste lady with self-control. The devotee shall obtain all desired objects.

5. He who feeds a couple with milk pudding, sugar etc. shall obtain the benefit of a feast given to a thousand Gaurīs.

6. There, a golden sandal should be gifted to a Brāhmaṇa of good habits.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYSIX

Greatness of Nāgasthāna

Īśvara said:

1-6. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Nāgasthāna. It has gone up to the three Saṅgamas (confluence) to the west of Maṅkiśa. It is a great crevasse leading to Pātāla. It is destructive of sins of all creatures.

Formerly, O goddess, after hearing about the passing away of Kṛṣṇa through an arrow piece at the Bhalla Tīrtha, Balabhadra came to Prabhāsa*.

After realizing that the holy spot was highly powerful and capable of bestowing all the achievements of all the objects and having brought about the destruction of all Yādavas, he became disgusted with the world.

In the form of Śeṣanāgeśa, he issued forth from his body and proceeded towards the great Traisaṅgama Tīrtha.

Then he saw the passage unto Pātāla in the form of a crevasse. Entering it he quickly went to the place where Ananta was present himself.

7. Since he entered this place in the form of a serpent,

* Now called Bhālakā Kuṇḍa, the spot of Kṛṣṇa's death. It is at a short distance behind Somanātha Temple. But the episode given here is not found in Mbh.

O goddess of Devas, this spot became famous as Nāgasthāna from that time onwards.

8. Where he cast off his body to the east of Nāgarāditya that spot is famous even now as Śeṣasthāna.

9-10. O great goddess, the devotee should take his bath in the Trisaṅgama Tīrtha. On the fifth lunar day he should observe fast and worship Nāgasthāna. Then he should perform Śrāddha and give monetary gift within his capacity to the Brāhmaṇas. He shall be relieved of all miseries. He shall go to Rudraloka.

11. With Śeṣanāga in view, the devotee should feed a Brāhmaṇa with milk and honey along with various kinds of foodstuffs. This in effect shall be on a par with the feeding of a crore Brāhmaṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYSEVEN

Greatness of Prabhāsa Pañcaka

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the holy spot of *Prabhāsa Pañcaka* that bestows the benefit of all desired objects. The first meritorious holy spot is that which already exists there. The region to the west of it is also called *Prabhāsa*. To the south thereof and not far off is *Vṛddhaprabhāsa*. O lady of excellent countenance, to the south thereof is *Jalaprabhāsa*. Then there are *Kṛtasmara-prabhāsa*. and that *Prabhāsa* where there is the *Śmaśāna* (cremation ground) of Bhairava.

One who devoutly visits these five *Prabhāsas* goes to the great spot devoid of old age and death.

5. The first *Prabhāsa* is well-known in all the three worlds. It is difficult for Devas too to obtain it. One does not return (to *Saṁsāra*) after reaching it.

6-8. It is inaccessible even to Devas. It is destructive of great sins. If one stays in *Prabhāsa* for a single night on the New-Moon day and takes his bath, he is rid of all sins. He goes to *Śivaloka*.

The sin committed in the course of seven births becomes destroyed if one bathes at the confluence of *Gangā* and the ocean.

The sin that a man commits in the course of a thousand births perishes through the holy bath alone in the Salty ocean.

9-10. The devotee should observe fast during the day and night on the fourteenth and fifteenth lunar days, especially on the Amāvāsyā day, and feed Brāhmaṇas within his capacity. He should then gift a cow or gold to them saying, "May Śiva be pleased". By doing thus, O goddess, a man redeems a hundred generations of his family.

The Devī said:

11. You have just now mentioned five Prabhāśas. How did they originate here? This is my great curiosity.

12. Only one Prabhāśa has been heard of by us from the residents of the holy spot. But, O Lord of Devas, now five Prabhāśas have been enumerated by you.

13. It behoves you to clarify this doubt of mine.

Īśvara said:

14. Listen, O goddess, I shall narrate the sin-destroying story. By listening to this with devotion, a man attains the greatest goal.

15. Formerly Lord Maheśvara roamed over this earth. He was very attractive in his divine form. He was nude and he roamed as he pleased.

16. Sporting about thus, he went to the great hermitage of sages in Dāruka forest. Urged on by curiosity, he entered the same for the sake of alms.

17. On observing his excellent handsome form as he roamed about, those women became distressed with love. All their sense-organs became agitated.

18. They continuously followed him with infatuation. Some of them began to embrace him and some lovingly gazed at him.

19. Others left off their homes and longed for him.

20. Seeing them engaged thus, all the great sages became extremely infuriated. They cursed the Bull-emblemed One.

21. "Since you came to this hermitage in utter nudity fascinating our women and since you do not feel ashamed at all, O Bull-emblemed One, may your *Linga* (penis) fall down."

22. Thereupon the Liṅga of Śaṅkara fell down instantly. When it fell down on the earth, the entire world quaked.

23. All the oceans became agitated. They transgressed their boundaries. The peaks of the mountains crumbled. All the Heaven-dwellers became frightened.

24-26a. Then Devas, Gandharvas, great serpents and Kinnaras went to Pitāmaha and said: "O Lord, why and what is this ? The seas are agitated and they flood the entire earth. The peaks of the mountains crumble down and the earth trembles. Terrible omens are seen foreboding the destruction of the worlds."

26b-29. On hearing their words Pitāmaha, in the world of Brahmā, meditated for a long time and spoke these words: "O excellent Suras, Śiva's *Liṅga* has fallen on the ground due to the curse of the leading sages of the noble-souled Bhārgava clan. When it fell down, all the three worlds including the mobile and immobile beings have come to this plight. Hence we shall go there itself. O Devas, go there along with Viṣṇu and follow his guidance (for the remedy)."

30. Then the Heaven-dwellers beginning with Brahmā went to the Milk Ocean where the Four-armed Lord lies down in unison with Yoganidrā (Yogic slumber).

31. They narrated everything to him and accompanied by him they went to that place where Lord Mahādeva was present short of his Liṅga.

32. All the Heaven-dwellers collectively told him after bowing down:

33. "O Lord, may the Liṅga that has fallen on the ground be lifted up. See these great oceans are flooding the earth."

The Lord said:

34. O Sureśvaras, it was by the sages that my Liṅga has been made to fall down. It is not possible for me to cause an impediment to those noble-souls.

35. It is the curse of the leading scions of the family of Bhṛgu. Hence let my words be listened to. O ye Suras with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as leaders, worship it.

36. O good ones, all of you will get every desire. All the oceans as well as the mountains will come to normalcy.

37. All of you with concentration take this to the most sacred holy spot.

Thereupon all the Suras lifted it and came to the holy spot of Prabhāsa.

38-42. They placed it there itself and performed its worship. The Liṅga was worshipped by Brahmā, by the powerful Viṣṇu, by Śakra, by Kubera, by Yama and by Varuṇa. After devoutly worshipping the Liṅga, the Devas said: "From to-day we shall devoutly worship Rudra's Liṅga and become (perfect). There is no doubt about this. So also will the groups of the Pitṛs be. If devoutly men worship this those excellent men will go to the abode of Suras along with their physical bodies. Since this is the first Liṅga that has been installed by us, its name will be Prabhāsa and the holy spot too shall be (called) Prabhāsa."

43. After saying thus, the excellent Suras went to heaven.

Many of the living beings on the earth went to heaven on viewing the deity.

44. Thereupon, O my beloved, heaven became occupied by many living beings. On seeing the heaven thus crowded the Thousand-eyed One (Indra) became very miserable.

45. Realizing the power of the Liṅga, Indra came to the surface of the earth and covered it all round by means of his thunderbolt, O lady of excellent countenance.

46. Ever since then, O goddess, human beings do not go to heaven.

Thus the greatness of Prabhāsa has been spoken succinctly. It suppresses all the sins and bestows the benefit of everything desired.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYEIGHT

Greatness of Rudreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine named Rudreśvara, that has come up itself from the surface of the earth.

It is stationed in that spot within a distance of three *Dhanus* to the east of Ādiprabhāsa. After meditating, his splendour was deposited there (in the Liṅga) by Rudra.

Hence, it is named Rudreśvara. The very name is destructive of all sins. By visiting the deity and worshipping it, one shall attain all desired things.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHTYNINE

Greatness of Karmamoṭī

Īśvara said:

1-2. To the west thereof, there are the three *Piṭhas* not very far. They are the shrines of Caṇḍikā, Karmamoṭī and Yoginī with a crore of attendants. O great goddess, the first *Piṭha* is honoured and adored by all the three worlds.

On the ninth lunar day, a devotee should adore the *Devīpiṭha* and the Yoginī. He shall attain all desires. He shall be a darling unto the heavenly damsels as well.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETY

Greatness of Mokṣasvāmī

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Hari, the bestower of salvation. It is situated not very far from there on the south-eastern side of Prabhāsa.

O goddess, one who adores it on the eleventh lunar day with full control over the diet, particularly in the month of Māgha, shall obtain the benefit of Agniṣṭoma.

He who observes *Anaśana* (fast) and performs Cāndrāyaṇa and other Vratas shall obtain desired benefits crore times more than in other Tīrthas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYONE

Greatness of Ajīgarteśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Hara, named Ajīgarteśvara stationed near Karmakotī and Candravāpī tank.

After a holy dip therein, O great goddess, the devotee should worship that Liṅga. He shall be rid of terrible sins. He will then go to the great region of Śiva.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTWO

Greatness of Viśvakarmeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Liṅga of great powers installed by Viśvakarman, to the north of Mokṣasvāmin.

O goddess, this sin-destroying Liṅga is situated within a distance of five Dhanus therefrom.

By visiting the deity, the man shall attain the benefit of complete pilgrimage. Once it is viewed verbal and mental sins perish.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYTHREE

Greatness of Yameśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Yameśvara stationed not very far therefrom on the south-western side.

By viewing it, sins are suppressed and all desired objects are obtained.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFOUR

Greatness of Amareśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Liṅga installed by the Immortals. Realizing the power of the holy spot, they had installed the Liṅga. It is destructive of all sins.

It was after performing severe penance that the Liṅga was installed by them. By viewing the deity, O goddess, a man becomes contented and blessed.

The gift of a cow should be made there to a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, O goddess. He (the donor) then attains the excellent fruit of perfect pilgrimage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYFIVE

Greatness of Vṛddhaprabhāsa

Īśvara said:

1-2. Then, a pilgrim with a restrained soul should go to the shrine of Vṛddhaprabhāsa. It is situated not far from Ādiprabhāsa to the south. It is a great Liṅga with four faces. On being visited it destroys sins.

Śrī Devī said:

3. O Lord, how did it get the name Vṛddhaprabhāsa? What shall be the benefit when it is visited? When eulogized and when adored?

4. Do mention this, O Lord, to me neither briefly nor very elaborately.

Ívara said:

5-9. At the outset in the Svāyambhuva Manvantara in the fourth Tretāyuga (in the previous Manvantara in the fourth Tretāyuga) the sages proceeding towards the Uttarāpatha (Northern Track)* gathered together. O great goddess, when they saw the deity covered and assailed by *Vajra*, they felt sorry and spoke these words: "We will not go home without seeing the Liṅga of Śaṅkara. We are seekers of heaven and have traversed a long way for that purpose. Hence we will stay here alone till we get to see the Liṅga."

10-11. After resolving thus, they engaged themselves in a great penance. During rainy season they exposed themselves to the open sky and during early winter they resorted to water. They resorted to the five fires during summer. They observed celibacy always. Thus the Brāhmaṇas passed many many years and became pretty old.

12-13. O lady of excellent complexion, when they attained old age, the noble-souled Śaṅkara lured them with offering boons. Excepting the vision of the Liṅga, they did not accept any other boon.

14. Realizing their determination, the Bull-emblemed Lord became sympathetic and revealed his own Liṅga.

15. O lady of excellent complexion, at that very time, the Liṅga suddenly rose up, piercing through the ground.

16. All those sages viewed it and went to heaven. When they thus proceeded (to heaven) Śakra was distressed in mind.

17. He concealed that too by means of his *Vajra* of hundred knots.

18. Since the Liṅga appeared before them (the sages), in their old age, it is glorified as Vṛddhaprabhāsa on the earth.

19. O beautiful lady, when it is viewed the benefit is obtained even to-day. A man equipped with devout feelings, gets the benefit of Rājasūyas and Aśvamedhas.

20. It was thus that the sacred shrine Vṛddhaprabhāsa originated there. A bull is to be offered there to a Brāhmaṇa by those who wish to get the benefit of a perfect pilgrimage.

* There is repetition of this line in the text.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSIX

Glory of Jalaprabhāsa

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Prabhāsa stationed in water. It is situated not far from Vṛddhaprabhās to the south.

O goddess, listen to the excellent greatness of that deity. When the genocide of Kṣatriyas was carried out by Rāma, the son of Jamadagni, O fair lady, he was overcome with a great deal of contemptuous disgust in his mind.

4. Thereupon, O my beloved, he performed a very fierce penance for many years and propitiated Mahādeva, the Lord of Suras.

5. Then Mahādeva became pleased and appeared before him directly and said, "O sage of excellent Vratas, I wish to grant you boons; choose the boons that you wish to have."

Rāma said:

6. O Lord, if you are pleased with me, if a boon is to be granted to me, do reveal your Liṅga that has been concealed by Vajra.

7-8. After having massacred many Kṣatriyas, I felt a great revulsion and contemptuous disgust. By viewing your Liṅga, perhaps, this feeling may perish. With your favour, O Śaṅkara, may my sin be destroyed entirely."

Śaṅkara said:

9-10. The thousand-eyed Indra conceals by means of Vajra again and again my Liṅga that rises up frequently because he gets frightened much. I shall never come within your view in the form of a Liṅga.

11. That is because you say that you have been overwhelmed by revulsion, disgust and sin. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, by means of physical touch, I shall eradicate it!

12-13a. O highly intelligent one, a great Liṅga will come up in the middle of this meritorious expanse of water. Do view it. The entire revulsive feelings will vanish and you will be free from sins.

13b. After this was spoken (the Liṅga) came up from the centre of the watery expanse, O lady of excellent countenance.

14. Therefore, its name Jalaprabhāsa spread over the earth. O goddess, by touching it, a man will be able to go to Śivaloka.

15. If the devotee feeds a Brāhmaṇa of praiseworthy holy vows here, I shall undoubtedly be considered to have been fed in the company of my wife.

16. This origin of Jalaprabhāsa has been narrated to you by me. When listened to, it suppresses sins and bestows all desired benefits.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYSEVEN

Greatness of Jamadagnīśvara

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Siva called Jamadagnīśvara. It is situated not far but very near Vṛddhaprabhāsa.

It is destructive of all sins. It was installed by Jamadagni. On viewing it, O goddess, a man becomes released from the three types of indebtedness.

By taking the holy bath in the tank Nidhāna Vāpī and worshipping the deity, the devotee will acquire wealth.

O my beloved, a treasure-trove was acquired by the Pāṇḍavas earlier at that spot.

It is through the treasure-trove that the tank became adorable to all the three worlds and well-known.

By taking the holy bath there, O great goddess, the unlucky one (lady) will become blessed with conjugal felicity and will attain all desired objects. Thus everything has been told by me to you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYEIGHT

Greatness of Pañcamaprabhāsa Kṣetra

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the excellent shrine of Mahāprabhāsa. It is situated to the south of Jalaprabhāsa. It causes obstacle in the path of Yama. Listen to its greatness and how it originated on the surface of the earth.

O goddess, formerly in the Tretā Yuga it was remembered as *Sparśa-Liṅga*. It was divine and radiant, capable of bestowing salvation on men merely on being touched. O my beloved and beautiful lady, once Indra who was overcome by fear came to the earth and covered it with his thunderbolt.

5-7. The heat issuing therefrom, O goddess, was restrained. A mass of flames extending to ten crores assumed the form of a Liṅga. It pierced through the ground at Prabhāsa Kṣetra and manifested itself. O goddess, when it was restrained by the thunderbolt it broke through the earth and extended all over the universe along with masses of smoke. Thereupon, all the three worlds became confounded with the flames.

8. Thereupon, all the groups of Suras and sages who had mastered the Vedas eulogized the Moon-crested Lord by means of different types of Vedic hymns.

9. “O most excellent one among Suras, withdraw your own burning refulgence. All the three worlds as well as the mobile and immobile beings are confused and disturbed. Oh! Restraine it before the utter annihilation (of the worlds).”

Īśvara said:

10-11. O goddess of Suras, when the Devas were speaking thus, that splendour split into five and pervaded the three worlds. It broke through the earth in the form of Pañcaprabhāsa. The path through which the great splendour issued forth there was a great light.

12. O my beloved, rocks were placed at the entrance in a proper place. When the hole was thus closed the smoke vanished.

13. All the worlds became normal. The splendour settled there. On being urged by me thus, they placed the Liṅga in a proper set-up.

14. That splendour settled down there, O goddess of Devas. Therefore, it is being glorified as Mahāprabhāsa by Devas and Dānavas.

15. He who devoutly worships the Liṅga with different kinds of flowers, attains the great region devoid of death and old age.

16. O goddess of Devas, if it is viewed, the man becomes rid of all sins. He attains desired benefits. O my beloved, whatever is mentally desired is acquired.

17. Gold is to be offered as gift to a Brāhmaṇa of praiseworthy holy vows. A gift of cows is to be duly offered there to twice-borns.

18. By doing like this, O great goddess, a man obtains cherished objectives of his birth. He shall get the powerful benefit of Rājasūyas and Aśvamedhas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINETYNINE

Destruction of Dakṣa's Sacrifice

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Lord Kṛtasmara situated to the south thereof on the charming banks of Sarasvatī.

O great goddess, it has manifested itself and is destructive of all sins. I shall narrate how it originated on the earth.

Formerly when Kāma was burnt by me there, O lady of excellent countenance, Rati came there in great misery and lamented much.

4. On seeing her extremely grief-stricken I was moved with pity and so I told her : "O splendid lady, do not weep. Your husband will come to life again with my favour. There is no doubt about it."

Devī said:

5. O lord, why was he burnt earlier by you? How will Lord Kāma regain his life. Do tell me this in detail.

Īśvara said:

6. O my beloved, formerly your father was Dakṣa. He begot a hundred young, fair-complexioned daughters of longish eyes.

7-8. At the outset he gave you who was well-known by the name Satī to me. Then he gave ten daughters to Dharma, viz. Śraddhā, Medhā, Dhṛti, Kṣamā, Anasūyā, Śuci, Lajjā, Smṛti, Śakti and Śruti. Then he gave two daughters as wives unto Kāmadeva. Their names were Rati and Prīti.

9-10. One daughter he gave to Vahni. She was Svāhā. Then he gave Svadhā to the Pitrīṣ. He gave twenty-seven daughters to the Moon-god. They are well-known as those beginning with Aśvinī. The last of them was Revatī and all of them are known to you and even to the people. O goddess, he gave thirteen daughters to Kaśyapa.

11-12. Formerly, Dakṣa, the highly intelligent one, gave these (to Kaśyapa): Aditi, Diti, Vinatā, Kadru, Siṁhikā, Suprabhā, Ulūki, Anuviddhā, Sītā, Īrṣyā, Hiṁsā, Māyā and Niṣkrti, O lady of excellent countenance.

13. O daughter of the Mountain, then he gave five daughters to Varuṇa: Gaurī, Suprabhā, Vārttā, Sādhvī and Sumālikā.

14. O daughter of the Mountain, he gave five daughters to Kubera as wives viz. Bhadrā, Madirā, Vidyā, Dhanyā, and the splendid Dhanā.

15-18. Dakṣa, conversant with Dharma, gave ten daughters to ten Rudras : Jayā, Vijayā, Madhuśpandā, Irāvatī, Supriyā, Janakā, Kāntā, Subhadrā, Dharmikā and Śubhā. O my beloved wife, Dakṣa gave twelve daughters to Ādityas. They are: Prabhāvatī, Subhadrā, Vimalā, Nirmalā, Añṭā, Tivrā, Dakṣā, Aruṇā, Vidyā, Dhārapālā, Varcasā and (probably) Yoganidrā (mentioned in verse 18 in a curious phrase).

He gave to Viśvedevas the following daughters: Saṁsarpā, Saramā, Guhā, Mälā, Caṁpā and Jyotsnā.

19. He gave two daughters to Aśvins : Suveṣā and the splendid Bhūṣaṇā. One daughter was given to Vayū. All these are well enumerated.

20-21. He gave Sāvitrī to Brahmā and Lakṣmī to the noble-souled Viṣṇu. After some time, O daughter of the Mountain, he performed a Yajña including monetary gifts on the great mountain Himavān. His sacrificial hall was richly equipped with all desirable items.

22-26. O lady of excellent countenance, all these assembled on that Yajña: the Ādityas, Vasus, Viśvedevas, Maruts, all the Lokapālas, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, the thousand-eyed Indra, Varuṇa, Yama, Dhanada, Kumāra, the Nadīs (rivers personified) along with the oceans, tanks, wells, lakes, puddles, Suparṇa, all the Nāgas, (serpents) in personified forms, Dānavas, Apsarās, Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Guhyakas. All these came with their wives and attendants and followers. The highly esteemed great sages and celestial sages who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas were present there with their wives.

27. Śambhu who had a garland of skulls as his ornament, who applied ash from cremation ground (all over his body) and who was not considered pure on that account was not invited.

28. Aśvinī and other sisters of yours who had arrived from here and there at Kailāsa, the most excellent one among mountains, spoke to you these words:

29-30. “O fair lady of excellent waistline, why do you stay back here complacently? All of us have set off for the Yajña of our father, along with our husbands. O lady of renown, all of us, the daughters, have been invited by him, but Dakṣa has not invited you because he is ashamed of Śaṅkara.”

31-32a. On hearing the words of those ladies, the infuriated Satī said: Fie upon you! O Dakṣa of evil conduct, what will I say to Maheśvara? How can I show my face?”

32b. After saying this, she gave up her own soul by herself by means of her power of penance and Yoga. She did not remember anything else.

33-34. Mahādeva observed that Satī became lifeless because she had to abandon him in view of the fact that he was a *Kapālin*(One having skulls round the neck). It was due to her sense of shame that she had forsaken him. In order to destroy the Yajña, he despatched his Gaṇas. Hundreds and thousands of those terrible Gaṇas proceeded there.

35-39. They were deformed and had ugly features. Those

mighty ones were innumerable. On observing that these Gaṇas with Vīrabhadra as their leader had been urged by Rudra, all the groups of the Devas along with Bhāskaras (i.e. Ādityas), Viśvedevas and Sādhyas set out for the battle. They were highly powerful with bows in their hands. They began to discharge sharp arrows. They met with one another. Pramathas clashed with Devas. Like the clouds pouring showers of water, they discharged volleys of arrows. Their elephant was pierced through the chest with their lance by the Gaṇas. Losing consciousness due to that attack, the elephant sat down. Then the elephant Airāvāṇa was hit on its forehead with fist.

40. Attacked forcefully thus, the elephant trumpeted terrible sounds and hurried to the Yajñavāṭa with great speed.

41-42. Viśvedevas were rendered breathless by him (Vīrabhadra) through huge, terrible arrows. The powerful Vasumān was dragged along with his bow. Ādityas were deprived of their brilliance by him in the battlefield. In the meantime, the Devas were thus routed by him.

43-47. Thereupon they sought refuge in Viṣṇu who was present there. On seeing all the Devas along with Vāsava routed, Viṣṇu became furious. He hurriedly discharged his Sudarśana. On seeing Viṣṇu's discus Sudarśana rushing hurriedly, Vīrabhadra opened his mouth wide and gulped the discus into his belly.

O daughter of the Mountain, when the never failing discus was thus swallowed, Lord Viṣṇu became angry. He rushed at him seizing Śārṅga bow with his hand. He hit Nandin with ten sharp arrows and Bhrṅgī with a hundred, Mahākāla with a thousand and Gaṇādhīpa with ten thousand arrows. He pierced Vīrabhadra with ten thousand arrows and rushed at him.

48. The infuriated Viṣṇu hit him with his *Gadā* (i.e. mace). When he became distressed and covered with blood, he seized him by the feet and dashed him against the ground with great ferocity.

49. When he was struck on the ground, the discus came out with a lot of blood vomited but did not hit him.

50. O goddess, Vīrabhadra, the Lord of Gaṇas, had received a boon from Rudra. That was why he did not die even when afflicted, struck with the mace.

51. On seeing him fallen, all the Gaṇas got tormented by Viṣṇu's valour and might, fled in every direction and proceeded to the place where Lord Maheśvara was present.

52. They recounted to him all the discomfiture they met with and also the exploit of Vīrabhadra. Thereupon, Maheśvara became infuriated.

53-55. Seizing his trident, he set off with his Gaṇas to Yajñavāta, the cause of all defeat. Viṣṇu was standing fighting with Vīrabhadra.

On seeing the angry Maheśvara coming, Viṣṇu considered that he (Śiva) was invincible or he would not be victorious. Hence he vanished. Śiva stood there furious. Along with Maruts, Vasus and Kinnaras, Indra too vanished from the scene.

56-57. O fair lady, only those Brāhmaṇas remained there in the sacrificial hall. On observing that Śaṅkara had arrived there furiously rolling his red eyes the terrified Brāhmaṇas performed Homa by means of Rudra Mantras. All those who remained around fled in all ten directions.

58-59. Mahādeva arrived there but could not see the Devas. He saw only the Brāhmaṇas. So he destroyed the Yajña there. Frightened of Śiva the Yajña assumed the form of a deer and fled with the bow in his hand, Lord Śiva closely pursued him. O great goddess, even today he is seen in the sky in the form of a constellation. (i.e. Mṛgaśīrṣa).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED

Greatness of Kāmakuṇḍa

Īśvara said:

1-4. When the Yajña was thus destroyed, those Brāhmaṇas and others who had gone there went home with their desires frustrated. Hara too ceased to be angry and returned to the Kailāsa Mountain.

At this very time a mighty Dānava named Tāraka was born. He was destined to be one who would destroy the power and arrogance of Devas.

He conquered Indra and all other Suras in a great battle. O goddess, the whole of heaven was filled by him with his own people. The miserable Suras went to Brahmaloka, O daughter of the Mountain, and appealed to Brahmā:

5-6. “O most excellent one among Suras, we have been driven out of Svarga by Tāraka. He has become Indra himself. Viṣṇu and others, Rudras, Sādhyas, the Viśvedevas, Aśvins, Maruts and Ādityas too have been similarly (substituted). O Pitāmaha, do suggest a means to kill him.”

Brahmā said:

7-8. It is my considered opinion that he cannot be slain by any of Devas. He cannot be brought down by anyone except the radiance of Śaṅkara. Hence, welfare unto you all, do go to Maheśvara, the Lord of Devas. His earlier wife passed away and is reborn in the abode of Himavān. A son will be born to her. He will kill Tāraka. Hence for that purpose propitiate the Trident-bearing Lord.

9-10. Then, O lady of excellent countenance, Kāmadeva was directed by Devas to go to the widower Hara, to assail him with his arrows so that due to the distress of love he (Hara) might endeavour to get a wife for himself. They said, “Let this charming Vasanta, your brother, also go.”

11. Promising “That shall be done”, he proceeded towards Kailāsa mountain. Mahādeva saw Kāmadeva fully armed.

12. O goddess, Rudra, the slayer of Andhaka, realized that Kāma was accompanied by Vasanta. He proceeded to Gaṅgādvāra and saw (found) Kāma before him.

13-15. On seeing Kāmadeva equipped with his weapon Rudra fled out of fear. He fled to Vārāṇasī, Naimiṣa, Puṣkara, Śrikaṇṭha, Rudrakoṭi, Kurukṣetra, Gayā, Jvālāmārga, Prayāga, Viśālā, and the splendid Arbuda (Mt. Abu). Thus, O goddess, Maheśvara, the Lord of Devas, wandered over the earth for many years due to the fear of Kāmadeva.

16. Thereupon, O goddess of the chiefs of Devas, the Three-eyed Lord of Devas widely opened the third eye and stared at Kāma.

17. Even as he looked at (that Kāma) sparks of fire rose up and he was reduced to ash along with his bow.

18. After burning him, Lord Śambhu's fury got pacified. He took up his residence in the auspicious Prābhāsika Kṣetra.

19. After the burning of Kāma, Rati became grief-stricken. Very loyal to her husband, the miserable woman lamented loudly.

Rati lamented:

20. O Lord, O Lord, O my master, why do you leave off your chaste wife. O Lord, why do you abandon me, a chaste wife to whom the husband is the very vital breath?

21-22. Even as she was lamenting thus, an unembodied aerial voice spoke to her : "O lady of large eyes, do not cry. With the favour of Śiva, the Lord of the Devas, your husband will breathe once again." On hearing these words, Rati became composed and normal.

23-24. Thereafter, Devas bowed down to Śiva, O goddess of Suras, and prayed to him : "O Lord, in our interest do take up a wife unto you. In your limitless fury, this Kāma has been burnt down by you. O Lord, bereft of him the entire created beings of the surface of the world are no better than dead."

The Lord said:

25. O excellent Suras, this Kāma has been burnt down by me out of anger. Hence he will move about among the subjects in his incorporeal state itself. He will have the same power and vigour even without a physical body.

The Devas said:

26. O Lord, do this at the outset. Remember the Lord of Rati for the sake of the welfare of the worlds, so that we can have assurance.

27. Thereupon, Lord Maheśvara himself remembered Kāma. Then the eternal Liṅga rose up from the surface of the earth.

28. Though unembodied, Kāma who was recollected (*Kṛtasmara*) became powerful yet. Thanks to (the power of) Kāma, the Daughter of the Mountain was married by the noble-souled Śāṅkara.

29. Skanda, the foremost one among Suras, was born.

Tāraka was slain by him even though the Liṅga (Kāma) was fallen because it was Kṛtasmara (was recollected).

30. He is therefore glorified as Kṛtasmara in the world. A man who views the deity will never become dull, blind, devoid of happiness and unfortunate. The man will never be poor or sickly.

31. Thus everything has been narrated to you, whatever you have asked viz. how Smara was burnt at the outset and how he became inspired with power, virility once again.

Īśvara said:

32. There itself to the south of Kṛtasmara is situated a sacred Kuṇḍa. Its name is Kāmakuṇḍa where Smara was born again.

33. O goddess, Smara was born there again but without a body. A devotee who takes his holy bath here shall become handsome. Sugarcane should be gifted there to a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas. Similarly gold, cows and garments also should be given.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ONE

Greatness of Kālabhairava Śmaśāna

Īśvara said:

1-3. At that spot, O great goddess, is the cremation ground (of) Kālabhairava. From Brahmakuṇḍa, O beautiful lady, up to Lord Kṛtasmara (is the extent).

Living beings who die due to the lapse of time and get cremated there, attain salvation even if they are great sinners.

O great goddess, the spot extends from Kṛtasmara up to the deity Maṇikīśvara. That portion (of) the great cremation ground bestows stopping of recurrent birth.

4-5. At that place (Cremation ground) where there is the flow of Viṣuva* (Suṣumṇā Nādī) of all living beings, is the holy

* Viṣuva means 'equinox' when day and night are of equal duration. But here the term is used for a state when the breath flows simultaneously through both nostrils known as Sūrya and Candra Nādī.

spot of *Uṣara* (Arid land - no rebirth-growing). It is a favourite of mine always. I do not leave it even at the end of a Kalpa. I like it more than Avimukta" (i.e. Banaras).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWO

Greatness of Rāmeśvara Kṣetra

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Rāmeśvara. It was installed by Balabhadra to the south of Maṇkiśa, south-east of Kṛtasmara and east of Sarasvatī.

It is the place where, it is said, Rāma (i.e. Balarāma) was rid of the killing of *Brahmā* (a *Sūta* who sat in the place of *Brahmā* in a sacrifice: *vide* verse 33), and dived into Sarasvatī flowing backwards.

The Devī said:

3. Then how did he get rid of the sin? How was that Liṅga installed? What is its efficacy? Do tell me how at the outset he incurred the sin.

Īśvara said:

4. Listen, O goddess, I shall narrate the sin-destroying story, listening to which, O goddess, a man becomes released from the ocean of worldly existence. He shall obtain all the desired items lovingly cherished always in the mind.

5-8. Rāma, armed with the plough, delighted Kṛṣṇa very much and thought thus: 'What should I do which will be a meritorious act'. Without Kṛṣṇa, I will not go to (the side of) Duryodhana. How can I resort to the Pāṇḍavas and kill Duryodhana, the king, my disciple and son-in-law? Therefore, I will not go to the son of Kuntī (i.e. Yudhiṣṭhira) nor to King Duryodhana. I shall immerse myself in holy Tīrthas till this war ends with the end of dispute among Kurus and Pāṇḍavas.

9. Having told this to Hṛṣīkeśa, Pārtha and Duryodhana, Śauri (i.e. Rāma) went to Dvārakā surrounded by his armies.

10. Rāma with the plough as his weapon, went to the city of Dvāravatī teeming with delighted and contented people. There he indulged in a drunken bout with the persons (ladies) of his Antāhpura.

11. After imbibing wine, he seized a mace with his hand and went to the splendid garden of Raivatodyāna accompanied by Revatī and others.

12. Moving in the midst of groups of women, he went along with faltering steps like an inebriated person. The valorous Rāma surveyed an excellent and fascinating park.

13. Everywhere there were flowering trees abounding in monkeys. There were extensive forests with puddles and lakes full of clusters of lotuses.

14. He listened to the delightful notes of music issuing forth from the beaks of birds charming to the ears. The diverse sounds indicated that the forest birds were inebriated too.

15. He saw many trees all round laden with gem-like fruits, and glittering with flowers. The chirping birds appeared to be cheering them.

16-21. There were Āmras (mango trees), excellent Āmrātakas, Nālikeras (coconuts), Tindukas, Balvalas, yellow Dādīmas (pomegranates), Bijapūrakas, Panasas (Jackfruit trees), Lakucas, Mocas, charming Tāpas, Pālevatas, Kusāmkullas, Nalinas, Vetasas (canes), Bhallātakas, Āmalakīs, Tindukas with big fruits, Ingudas, Karamardas, Harītakas and Bibhitakas. The scion of the family of Yadus saw these and other trees. So also he saw Aśokas, Punnāgas, Ketakīs, Bakulas, Campakas, Saptaśarṇas, Karṇikāras, excellent Mālatīs, Pārijatas, Kovidāras, Mandāras, Indīvaras, Pāṭalas in full bloom, Raṁbhās (bananas), Devadāru trees, Śālas, Tālas, Tamālas, Niculas and Vañjulas.

22-23. These trees abounded in birds perching on them, such as Cakoras, Śatapatras(?), lotuses full of Bhṛṅgarājas (bees), Kokilas (cuckoos), Kalavinkas, Hāritas, Jīvajīvakas, Cātakas fond of their young ones, parrots and other birds. They were perched on the trees and chirping very sweetly.

24-26. There were lakes with fascinating waters and lotuses in full bloom. There were lilies, Pundarīkas (white lotuses), glistening Utpalas, Kalhāras, Kamalas spread everywhere.

The place was full of aquatic birds such as *Kadambakas*, *Cakravākas*, *Jalakukkuṭas*, *Kāraṇḍavas*, floating (swimming) *Hamsas* (swans), and tortoisés and *Maṇḍus* (frogs). These and other aquatic animals filled the lakes.

27. Proceeding ahead slowly and followed by the women, Rāma surveyed the charming scene and reached a grotto of excellent features.

28-29. He saw Brāhmaṇas who had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas hailing from different families such as Kauśikas, Bhārgavas, Bhāradvājas and Gautamas. These excellent Brāhmaṇas of noble souls were seated there and were eager to listen to the stories (from Sūta).

30. They were seated on Darbha grass covered with antelope-skins as well as *Bṛṣīs* (special mats) Sūta was seated in their midst narrating excellent tales and legends.

31-32. The Brāhmaṇas assembled there, were well-versed in the Purāṇas and were glad to listen to the stories and conducts of the primordial celestial sages. On seeing Rāma with eyes reddened due to drinking wine they thought, 'He is thoroughly drunk', and hurriedly got up and began to honour and adore Halāyudha excepting Sūta who continued to sit.

33-34. The powerful Halin became angry. With eyes staring wide open, the mighty Rāma who could make all Dānavas agitated, killed Sūta. When Sūta who had occupied the seat of Brahmā was slain all those Brāhmaṇas clad in black-antelope skins dispersed.

35. Considering himself insulted, Halāyudha thought thus: 'A great sin has been committed by me.'

36. This person, Sūta who was seated in the Brahmāsana has been slain. That is why all these Brāhmaṇas went away on seeing me.

37. The odour from my body is displeasing and despicable like that of iron that causes unhappiness. I know that I am a despicable *Brahmaghna* (Brāhmaṇa-slayer).

38. Fie upon my wealth, greatness and this ignominous wine overwhelmed by which this great sin has been committed by me!

39. I shall perform the expiatory rites mentioned in the Smṛtis. Indeed expiatory and other rites have been duly laid down by Manu.

40. In the case of *Pracchannapāpas* (those who unknowingly or unwittingly commit a sin), Japa and repentance of the mind are the expiatory rites. *Tapas* (Kṛcchra, Cāndrāyaṇa etc.) and *Vid्या* (repetition of Mantras) are the expiatory rites for the physical form. The expiatory rite for the intellect is perfect knowledge.

41. The cleansing of the *Kṣetreśvara* (individual soul) through *Vijñāna* (perfect spiritual knowledge) is considered great. The purification of the body is by means of the different kinds of expiatory rites.

42. Therefore, from today, I shall perform an excellent *Vrata* lasting for twelve years. This expiatory rite I shall perform is proclaiming my misdemeanour.

43. This purificatory rite is for the murder of a Brāhmaṇa unwittingly done or committed without any ulterior selfish motive. If a Brāhmaṇa is slain intentionally for self-interest, there is no expiatory rite.

44. If a man commits a great sin with self-interest or personal grudge, there is no expiatory rite for him except leaping down to death from a precipice or entering into a blazing fire.

45. Learned men know that expiatory rites are recommended when the sin is committed without self-interest. Some say that even when it is committed with personal motive there is expiatory rite as indicated in the Śruti.

46. This rule is applicable when the sin is committed for the first time. If it is repeated a second time, the expiatory rite is to be doubled; for a third time it is trebled. If it is repeated further for the fourth time there is no expiatory rite at all.

47. If a medicinal oil or ghee or food is given to a Brāhmaṇa or others and if there is a disaster (death) in the course thereof, he is not defiled by the sin.

48. If for no apparent reason, a Brāhmaṇa forsakes life, the fault is that of his alone and not of the man who gives it (medicine etc.).

49-50. If a consecrated Brāhmaṇa who is one without any good quality, gets furious over domestic matters or those of agricultural lands etc., and suddenly kills himself and dies (the witness thereof) shall perform *Vrata* for three years and visit

Sarasvatī river flowing backwards for wiping off that sin. This is the fixed rule.

51. When someone gets furious and strikes but is pacified and made to stay there, but if he dies, there is no crime if the same is proclaimed loudly twice (or in the presence of two).

52-54. After killing an impotent Brāhmaṇa, one should perform the expiatory rite as in the case of the murder of a Śūdra.

When many are engaged in a single task and all of them bear weapons and if one of them murders someone, all the others too are considered murderers.

When expiatory rite is undertaken and the performer meets with danger, sin will affect him in this world as well as in the other.

Therefore, now that I have committed an evil deed, what shall I do? Where shall I go?

55. Fie upon me of sinful conduct, the perpetrator of a great evil deed!"

Īśvara said:

56. While he was lamenting thus with the mind extremely agitated, an aerial unembodied voice spoke thus:

57. "O Rāma, you need not at all feel distressed. Go to the Prābhāsika Kṣetra where the divine Sarasvatī flows.

58. The most excellent of rivers, Sarasvatī, identical with Brahman, quells the five sins through her fivefold currents.

59. Let there be all the Tīrthas in the whole of the Cosmic Egg, beginning with Gaṅgā, O most excellent one among men, on one side. The meritorious Sarasvatī far excels them.

60. All the sins beginning with that of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter roar only as long as the divine Sarasvatī situated in Prabhāsa is not seen.

61. Hence go there itself where the divine Sarasvatī is present. You cannot be rid of the sins by other Tīrthas.

62. Hence do not delay. Go to the shore of the ocean. In the holy Kṣetra of Prābhāsika, dive into the divine Sarasvatī which flows backwards.

63. There itself install the Lord Īśvara in the form of a Liṅga and propitiate him. You will be rid of the great physical sin."

64. On hearing these words, Rāma was filled with excess of delight. The noble-minded one resolved to go to Prabhāsa-Kṣetra.

65. Then accompanied by his army and equipped with all requisite articles, he came to the great Kṣetra well-known as Prabhāsa.

66. On seeing the charming Tīrtha at the confluence of Sarasvatī and the ocean, he resolved to take bath where the river flows backwards (*pratilomāvagāhana*).

67. The Lord summoned the Brāhmaṇas residing in Prabhāsa Kṣetra. He performed the pilgrimage in accordance with the regulations regarding perfect pilgrimage.

68. He performed the pilgrimage to all the different kinds of Tīrthas situated within the area of twelve Yojanas thereof.

69-70. To each one of them he gave different kinds of gifts. At the confluence of Sarasvatī and the sea, lower down to the east, he installed the great Liṅga after performing a Yajña. When this was performed, O great goddess, he became rid of sins.

71. Then, O goddess, he stayed there for ten days in the state of pure limbs (body). After taking the holy bath he gradually went in the opposite direction from the ocean upto the Himālaya named *Plakṣāvaharāṇa*.

72. Thus, O my beloved, thanks to the greatness of that Liṅga and the favour of Sarasvatī, he became rid of the series of sins.

73. O goddess, he who worships that Liṅga called Rāmeśvara that quells the fear of sins, shall be rid of sins.

74. O goddess, on the eighth lunar day, he who performs the rite in accordance with the regulations governing Brahma Kūrca there, shall get the benefit of an Aśvamedha.

75. O beautiful lady, after taking the holy bath at the confluence of Sarasvatī and the ocean and after worshipping the deity Śaṅkara named Rāmeśvara, the gift of cows should be made by those who wish to get the benefit of perfect pilgrimage.

76. Thus, O goddess, the greatness of Rāmeśvara has been narrated to you. On listening to it, a man with faith shall attain heaven.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THREE

Greatness of Maṇkiśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the great shrine of Maṇkiśvara to the north of Rāmeśa and in the vicinity of Devamāṭr.

It is to the south of Arkasthala and to the east of Krtasmara. This Liṅga of great efficacy was formerly installed by Maṇki. By viewing it properly a man will get the benefit of a perfect horse sacrifice.

The Devī said:

4. O great god, who is this Maṇki? How was the Liṅga installed? Of what efficacy is that Liṅga? Do mention this to me in detail.

Īśvara said:

5. Once there was an excellent Brāhmaṇa with a hunch-backed body named Maṇki. He came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and performed a very great penance.

6. Engrossed in devotion to Śiva, he installed a Liṅga of Mahādeva. But Hara was not pleased with him though he was adored by him for many many years.

7. Even as he was performing the penance many attained Siddhi. After propitiating Mahādeva they went to the heavenly world from here.

8. Thereupon, O lady of excellent countenance, Maṇki felt deep sorrow. 'Why is not Lord Maheśvara pleased with me?'

9. Then he became intensely interested in his penance vowing not to desist (from penance) unless the Lord becomes pleased. Engaged in Japa and meditation, he grew very old.

10. Mahādeva became pleased with him towards the closing period of his years and granted him a boon: "O Maṇki, I am pleased with you. Tell me what shall I do for you?"

Maṇki said:

11. O most excellent one among Suras, what interest have I got in a boon now that I have grown too old having stayed here too long, I have a great grievance, O Lord.

Śiva said:

12. Listen to the reason thereof. (There is a Siddhi) in the case of those sages (and not) in your case. Indeed those Brāhmaṇas worship more than you in getting the daily rites accomplished.

13. Don't they collect flowers of different colours and of superior fragrance from trees everywhere? That is the cause of their delight.

14. As for you, you are hunch-backed. Though you are engaged in Yajña and Pūjā and though you exert yourself much, you do not reach the tops of trees.

15. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, if even a single flower is offered with devotion on the top of the Liṅga, the benefit of a Yajña is obtained.

16. To the right of the Liṅga, Brahmā has established himself. To the left is Lord Viṣṇu and I have been installed in the centre.

17. If the Liṅga is worshipped, all the three deities become worshipped by him.

18. Leaves of Bilva and Śamī trees, Karavīra, Mālatī, Unmattaka and Caṃpaka are those that please (the Lord) immediately.

19. O tiger among the twice-born, Caṃpaka, Kalhāra and Karavīra and other flowers of great fragrance, are desirable for worship. I like it. Worshipped by these everyday, I become pleased immediately.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

20-21. O Lord, if you are pleased with me, if a boon is to be granted to me, then let this be granted: If a man comes here, takes his holy bath and sprinkles this Liṅga even with water, let him obtain the benefit of all the worships. O Śaṅkara, with your favour, let there be the presence of all types of trees, divine and worldly here.

The Lord said:

22-26. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, if anyone worships this Liṅga even with water, he will get the benefit of all worships. All types of trees will be present here. From today, this spot will be named Nāgasthāna since all Nāgas (serpents) are present here. O tiger among the twice-borns, you will come to my presence.

After saying this the Lord vanished there itself. Maṇki gave up his body and went to the world of Śiva.

Thus, O goddess, the excellent origin of Maṇkīsa has been narrated. If it is listened to by persons of perfect faith it dispels all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOUR

Greatness of Sarasvatī-Saṅgama

The Devī said:

1-4. O Lord of the Chiefs of Devas, O redeemer of people from the ocean of worldly existence, do tell me in detail the greatness of Sarasvatī. O Lord Śaṅkara, O Lord of Devas, what is the merit gained by the pilgrims, the persons of controlled selves, through holy baths and gifts at her month?

Does one get the merit, if one plunges into her elsewhere? What is the procedure in the case of Śrāddha? What are the Mantras and who are the Brāhmaṇas? What should be accepted and what should be eaten by the Brāhmaṇas at the rites of Śrāddha? What gifts should be made by the men who wish to get the benefit of the pilgrimage.

Īśvara said:

5. Listen, O goddess. I shall explain the procedure in the case of *Dāna* and *Śrāddha*. Know from me the greatness of Sarasvatī as it is being glorified by me.

6. The waters of Sarasvatī are sacred and meritorious wherever one takes the holy plunge, but that at conjunction with the ocean, is rare even unto Devas.

7. Sarasvatī is the most meritorious of all rivers. Sarasvatī gives happiness unto all who take plunge therein. Men cease to be miserable after reaching Sarasvatī. They never bewail here or hereafter.

8. Only a meritorious man gets the meritorious waters of Sarasvatī. It is rare in the three worlds on the Vaiśakhī day and in the Parva day coinciding with Monday.

9. If the New Moon coinciding with a Monday is obtained there, O goddess, what can one do with hundreds and crores of Parvas.

10. The expiations like Cāndrāyaṇa, Kṛcchra, and Mahāsāntapana are prescribed where there is no Sarasvatī.

11-13. A man shall reside in Viṣṇuloka as many thousand years as the bones of the body lie in the waters of Sarasvatī.

If despite being hale and hearty people do not see Sarasvatī present in Prabhāsa, they should be known as on a par with congenitally blind, dead and lame.

Those are the real Deśas (countries), Tīrthas, Āśramas and Parvatas (Mountains), if the divine excellent river flows through them.

Those who resort to the sacred, meritorious Sarasvatī that sanctifies all the three worlds, will never smell the nasty odour of the slough of worldly existence.

14. The charming Sarasvatī is as extensive as the science of Words (i.e. Grammar), as favourite unto the whole world as one's mother and as clear and pure as the intellect of the good.

15. That man is utterly base and mean who does not pay respects to Sarasvatī, the divine river that renders all the three worlds splendid and that has divine and clear waters.

16. The great river Sarasvatī in Prabhāsa has become a staircase unto heaven. It cannot be attained by non-meritorious men.

17. Candrabhāgā (modern Chinab), Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī are the holiest of rivers. They are not ordinary men who drink the waters of these three rivers. They are veritable Devas.

18. It is but true, O goddess, that Jāhnavī was held by me on the head but Sarasvatī is the most meritorious of all the rivers in the world.

19. Rājasūya sacrifice pales into insignificance against the

vision of Sarasvatī. A mouthful of her waters is the most excellent of all *Kratus* (holy sacrifices).

20-21. If the ashes, bones, skins, nails, hairs etc. of a man are carried off by the wind, which float in the waters of Sarasvatī in due course, that person is not under the control of Kāla (God of death).

O goddess, why should I say much? Why should I describe repeatedly? There never was a Tīrtha greater than Sarasvatī nor will there ever be.

22. In that spot where the ocean joins her holy bath is very rare. By taking the holy bath there and offering gifts there one gets the benefit of a crore of Yajñas.

23. Men who have their holy bath in the waters of Sarasvatī mingled and agitated by the billows of the ocean, are the most fortunate men in every Yuga.

24. Those men whose bodies are sprinkled with the waters of Sarasvatī are blessed ones. They deserve to be bowed to. Their fame is wide.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIVE

Brāhmaṇas Unfit for Śrāddha

The Devī said:

1-3. O holy Lord, O Lord of the Chiefs of Devas, O redeamer from the ocean of worldly existence, O Lord of the worlds, do tell me the highly meritorious procedure of Śrāddha in detail.

At which part of the day should a performer of Śrāddha perform the rite in this Sarasvatī Tīrtha in the excellent Prabhāsa Kṣetra?

At which Tīrtha should a Śrāddha be performed so that it may yield abundant merit? O Mahādeva, it behoves you to expound all this truthfully.

Īśvara said:

4. Three Muhūrtas in the morning constitute *Prātahkāla*,

the second unit of three Muhūrtas constitutes *Saṅgava*. The unit of next three Muhūrtas constitutes *Madhyāhna* (midday). Then (next) three Muhūrtas constitute *Aparāhna*.

5. The last three Muhūrtas of a day constitute *Sāyāhna*. Śrāddha should not be performed at this time. This period is called *Rākṣasī Velā*. It is despised in the case of all holy rites.

6. There are fifteen well-known Muhūrtas in a day. The eighth Muhūrta is remembered as *Kutapa* period.

7. Since in *Madhyāhna* (midday) the sun becomes *Manda* (mild, less fierce), Śrāddha should be begun then. The benefit thereof is immense.

8*. The following are the eight meanings of the Muhūrta called *Kutapa*: *Madhyāhna* (midday), *Khadga-pātra* (vessel of the horn of rhinoceros), *Kālakambala* (black blanket for a seat-*Smṛticandrikā*), *Rūpya* (silver), *Darbha* grass, *Tilas* (gingelly seeds), *Gaus* (cows) and the eighth is remembered as *Dauhitra* (white sesamum).

9. The derivation of the term *Kutapa*: *Ku* means 'a sin'; *Tapa* means that 'which burns'. The above eight *Kutapas* are regarded as 'burners'. Hence these are called *Kutapas*.

10. Together with the four Muhūrtas after *Kutapa* (i.e. to the end of *Rauhineya Muhūrta*) there are five Muhūrtas. These are recommended as *Svadhā-bhavana* (the abode of *Svadhā* i.e. good for Śrāddha).

11. Kuśa grass and black gingelly seeds took their origin from the physical body of Viṣṇu for the purpose of safeguarding Śrāddha. Heaven-dwellers said so.

12. Libation with gingelly seeds should be offered by the residents of the Tīrtha while standing in water. Resorting to Śrāddha is recommended with Darbha grass held in one hand.

13. Three things are pure in regard to a Śrāddha: *Dauhitra* (white sesamum), *Kutapa* period and *Tilas* (black gingelly seeds). Three qualities are praised here: Purity, abstinence from anger and want of haste.

* *Prajāpati Smṛti* (vv. 158-159) states: There are fifteen Muhūrtas (divisions) of a day. *Kutapa* is the eighth Muhūrta. Śrāddha should be started on *Kutapa* and the time-limit of beginning a Śrāddha is upto *Rauhineya Muhūrta*.

For this list of synonyms, *Kutapa* and other details, vide *Smṛticandrikā* 433. The blanket should be from wool from Nepal. This Purāṇa explains the use of articles mentioned.

14. The meaning of *Dauhitra* is rhinoceros which has a horn on the forehead; the vessel made of that horn is remembered as *Dauhitra*.

15. Another meaning of *Dauhitra* is the ghee taken out of a milch cow of variegated colour. It is called *Dauhitra* in regard to the rites pertaining to gods and Pitṛs.

16. The tip of Darbha is called *Daiva* (pertaining to gods); that with the root and tip is *Paitṛka* (pertaining to Pitṛs). The *Kuśas* hanging therefrom are remembered as *Kutapas*.

17. Purity, particularly at the time of Śrāddha should be ascertained in these seven things : *Sarīra* (body), *Dravya* (article, money), *Dārā* (wife), *Bhū* (ground), *Manas* (mind), *Mantra* and the Brāhmaṇas invited.

18. The seven types of purity in *Dravya* (money) can be further divided as *Uttama* (excellent), *Madhyama* (mediocre) and *Adhama* (low).

19. *Dhana* is of seven types: *Śruta* (learning), *Śaurya* (heroism), *Tapas* (penance), *Kanyā* (daughter), *Śiṣya* etc. (disciple), *Anvayāgata* (inheritance in the family), *Śukla* (white). The means thereof is also similar.

20. Money from agriculture and trade is *Kutsita* (despicable). *Śukla* (white) is that got through arts, crafts, and hereditarily acquired. That which is received from one who has previously been helped is *Śambala* (viaticum or provision for journey).

21. What is acquired as bribe, what is acquired through force (coercion), what is earned by deception: all these are called *Kṛṣṇa* (black).

22. The Śrāddha that is performed by a man through the money earned by illegal means can only satisfy Cāṇḍālas and persons born of *Pulkasa* and other (low) castes.

23. Those who have attained the state of Piśācas (spirits, ghosts) get satisfied through the scattered pieces of cooked rice that men drop on the ground.

24. Satisfaction to those who have attained the state of trees, is brought about, O son, through the drops of water dripping on the ground from the clothes worn at the time of bath.

25. The propitiation of those who have attained the state of Devas is through the drops of scented water that drop down on the ground.

26. When the rice-balls are raised up some pieces of the cooked rice may be left on the ground. Those of the members of the family who have attained the state of *Tiryaks* (lower creatures, animals etc.) are rendered strong and robust and propitiated through them.

27. Those members of the family who have not been cremated and those children and women who have not been consecrated after calamitous death are eager to sweep up (eat) the scattered grains of cooked rice.

28-29. Those who have attained the state of Piśācas or the state of worms and insects attain satisfaction through the food served to Brāhmaṇas and also because they (Brāhmaṇas) may be circumambulating after meal and drink water in the course of the day.

Now I shall mention the times (for Śrāddha). Know it from me as I narrate it.

30-34. A Śrāddha should be performed on the New-Moon day, every month when the Moon wanes, during Aṣṭakas when a good Brāhmaṇa is available, during solar and lunar eclipses, during the Ayanas (Transit of the Sun to the North or South) the two Viṣuvas (equinoxes), ordinary transit of the Sun from one Zodiac to another, particularly on the Amāvāsyā and Aṣṭakas* in dark half, during the constellations of Ārdrā, Maghā and Rohiṇī when money and deserving Brāhmaṇa are available, and during Gajacchāyā**, Vyatīpāta, Viṣṭi and Vaidhṛti days and Yugādi days.

The Yugādis are remembered as follows: third lunar day in Vaiśākha, ninth lunar day in Kārttika, fifteenth in Māgha and thirteenth in Nabhasya (i.e. Bhādrapada). These Yugādi days render what is offered one of everlasting benefit.

35. *Ratha Saptamī* falls on the seventh lunar day of Māgha when, for the first time in the beginning of the Manvantara, the Sun got into his chariot.

36-37. The following days are the beginning of the

* The 8th day in the dark half of Mārgaśīrṣa, Pauṣa, Māgha and Phālguna: Āśvalāyana Gr. Sūtra II.4.1.

** *Gajacchāyā*—The conjunction when the Moon is in Maghā (constellation) and the Sun is in Hasta Nakṣatra; the lunar day is 13th in rainy season. (HD IV, 371)

The conjunction 12th bright half when the Moon is in Hasta, the Sun in Meṣa and Guru and Mars are in Leo. It is Vyatīpāta (op. cit.).

Manvantaras: Whatever is offered thereon shall be rendered as of everlasting benefit: The first days of the Manvantaras are as follows: The third lunar day in the month of Vaiśākha in the dark half, the fifth lunar day in Phālguna, the fifth day in the month of Caitra, the last day of the same month, the thirteenth day in the bright half of Māgha, the seventh of Kārttika, the Kārttikī (Full-Moon in Kārttika), Phālgunī (Full-Moon day of Phālguna), Full-Moon of Caitra and Jyeṣṭha;

38-39. the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Śrāvaṇa, the Full-Moon day in the month of Āṣāḍha, the full-Moon days of Kārttika, Phālguna, Caitra and Jyeṣṭha, so also the ninth of Mārgaśīrṣa. I remember very well.

40. O goddess, these are the days (of the beginning) of the Kalpas. Whatever is offered on these becomes everlasting in benefit. O lady of excellent countenance, there are twelve Śrāddhas in the beginning of the Manvantaras.

41-42. (Classification of some twelve kinds of Śrāddha) They are: *Nitya*, *Naimittika*, *Kāmya*, *Vṛddhi Śrāddha*, *Sapiṇḍaka Śrāddha*, *Pārvana Śrāddha*, *Ativijñāna*, *Goṣṭha* the excellent one for the sake of purity. *Karmāṅga* is the ninth Śrāddha; *Daivaka* is remembered as the tenth. *Kṣayaha* is the eleventh and the twelfth one is remembered as one for nourishment (*Puṣṭi-Śrāddha*).

43. The Saṁvatsara (Annual or Anniversary) Śrāddha is remembered as the most excellent one of all Śrāddhas. The Śrāddha performed everyday is glorified as *Nitya*.

44. The Śrāddha with one in view is called *Naimittika*. It is devoid of *Vaiśvadeva* and in the case of inability (i.e. when one is unable to spend money), is offered through water.

45. That which is performed on being urged by some desire is called *Kāmya*. It is for the fulfilment of an objective intended. That Śrāddha which is performed at the time of *Vṛddhi* (some joyous occasion of prosperity) is called *Vṛddhi Śrāddha*.

46. The *Sapiṇḍaka Śrāddha* is performed uttering the two Rks beginning with ‘*ye samānā*’. The Śrāddha performed on the New-Moon day is cited as *Pārvana Śrāddha*.

47. The Śrāddha that is performed in a *Goṣṭhī** (with the cooperation of many) is called *Goṣṭhī Śrāddha*. The Śrāddha

* Śrāddha on a cooperative basis (HD IV 381-82)

that is performed for atonement of sins is called *Suddhi Śrāddha*.

48. The *Śrāddha* performed at the time of *Niṣeka* (impregnation), *Soma* extraction, *Śimantonnayana* and *Puṁsavana* as a part of these rites is called *Karmāṅga Śrāddha*.

49-51. The *Śrāddha* that is performed with the deity in view is called *Daivaka*. This is performed by one who is about to go to another *Deśa* (country) and it is done by means of ghee. That the purpose of this is nourishment should be noted. The twelfth *Śrāddha* (see verse 42 above) is remembered as *Kṣayāha*. If anyone does not respectfully perform *Śrāddha* on the day of the death of his father or that of his mother at the close of a year after the date of death, O great goddess of excellent beauty, I will not accept his *Pūjā* nor will Hari do it.

52. If a man does not know the day of death he must perform the *Śrāddha* on the New-Moon day in the month of *Māgha* or *Mārgasīrsha*.

53-57. Henceforth, I shall enumerate the Brāhmaṇas competent to perform *Śrāddha* ceremony* (and hence inevitable). He should be a well-qualified Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas, a Yogin, one endowed with Vedic learning. He must know the sacrifices etc., such as *Trīṇāciketas***, *Trisuparṇa****, *Trimadhu* etc. and also one well versed in the six Āṅgas or ancillary subjects.

The following persons should not be overlooked, O lady of excellent countenance, even if they are fools. They are : daughter's son, son-in-law, sister's, sons, father-in-law, one maintaining five sacred fires and the rites therein, *Taponiṣṭha* (one doing penance), maternal uncle, one devoted to father and mother, disciple, kinsmen, relative, one who knows the meanings of the Veda, one who expounds it, a celibate student, one who gifts thousands (of coins), a good man, a daughter's son, daughter's husband, sister's son, and kinsmen.

58. There is no need to test Brāhmaṇas and their qualification in regard to the rites pertaining to gods, but in regard

* Vide *Āpastamba Dharma-Sūtra* II.7.17-22.

** *Trīṇāciketas*: three Naciketa fires.

*** *Trisuparṇa*: three *Anuvākas* of Tait. Ar. beginning with *Brahmametu māṇ*. (Tait. Ar. X.48-50).

to Pitṛ-rites they should be tested scrupulously.

59. Manu said that these people do not deserve to be invited as Brāhmaṇas in the rites of *Havya* and *Kavya*: fallen ones, thieves, eunuchs and those of atheistic proclivities.

60. One should not honour in Śrāddha one who wears matted hairs, who has not learned the Vedas, who is weak, who is a cheat and those who preside over the worship on behalf of a Śūdra.

61. Physicians, idol-attendants, meat-sellers and those who maintain themselves by trade are prohibited in ceremonies connected with *Havya* and *Kavya*.

62-72. The following should be excluded from Śrāddha*: a rustic, a messenger, a royal messenger, one having bad nails, one with black teeth, one who obstructs the preceptor, one who does not maintain sacred fires, a usurer, one suffering from Yakṣman (Phthisis), one who breeds cattle, a younger brother who marries before the elder, hater of Brāhmaṇas, an elder brother who allows a younger brother to marry before him, a *Ganābhyanṭara* (a leader of a religious association), one of very bad habits, one-eyed, the husband of a Vṛṣalī, one born to a widow, virgin's son, gambler, liquor addict, one having fell disease, accursed one, arrogant, one who sells spirituous juice or liquors, one who makes bows and arrows, husband of a widow, one who hates friends, one whose avocation is carrying messages, one who learns from one's son, one suffering from vertigo, one who regularly drinks gruel, one of variegated limbs, tale-bearer, mad one, blind, deaf, censurer of the Vedas, one who trains horses, cows, dogs and camels, one whose maintenance is through stars (Astrology), one who nurses birds, a preceptor of military science, one who breaks the currents of water, one engaged in encouraging prostitutes (brothel-manager), *Gṛhasamveśaka* (coloniser, builder), a messenger, one engaged in cultivation, a hunter, one who lives upon falcons, a defiler of a virgin, one indulging in injury, a Śūdra's son, a *Jana-Yājaka* (one who presides over mass worship), one devoid of good conduct, an impotent one, one who presides over other's worship everyday, an agriculturist by profession, a club-footed one, one censured by good people,

* Cf. The list of unworthies in *Manu* III. 150-166, Manu gives a list of 94 unfits.

one who rears sheep, one who breeds buffaloes, one who marries a woman already married and professional hearse bearers. These are to be scrupulously avoided. These are persons of despised conduct and base Brāhmaṇas. They are not fit to be in the same row as good Brāhmaṇas. They should be excluded if other Brāhmaṇas are available and even if they are not available.

73. One who is blind or single-eyed, leper, husband of a Śūdra woman, one infested by fell disease: all destroy the merit of even one who donates thousands (of gifts).

74. If a Śrāddha is offered on behalf of a Śūdra Yājaka, then after death the performer will not get the benefit of the *Paitṛka* in those limbs where the Yājaka has touched him.

75. The Pitṛs become disappointed and get away after seeing a buffalo-breeder in the beginning, a husband of a Śūdra woman in the middle and a usurer in the end.

76. (The word Māhiṣika is otherwise explained here:) Wife is called Mahiṣī. In widowhood if she indulges in adultery and one spends a night with her that person is remembered as Māhiṣika.

77. A Śūdra woman is called Vṛṣalī. Someone becomes her husband. Having contact with the saliva of her lips the fellow becomes fallen. Hence Vṛṣalīpati is excluded.

78. The Vṛṣalī referred to here is not merely a Śūdra woman. Any woman who forsakes her duty and indulges in carnal unions with another man is called Vṛṣalī.

79. A Cāṇḍāla woman, an unchaste woman, a prostitute, a virgin, a girl in the monthly course, a crooked girl, and one of the same Gotra—these seven are proclaimed as Vṛṣalīs.

80. If a girl, before being consecrated by marriage rites, has her menses in the house of her father, her Pitṛs become fallen and that girl is called Vṛṣalī.

81. If a Brāhmaṇa knowingly marries that girl, they say, he is not fit for a Śrāddha. He cannot be in the same row as others. He is a Vṛṣalīpati.

82. *Gaurī* virgin is the best and most important. *Rohinī* is considered as *Madhyama* (middling). *Rajasvalā* should be known as the basest though equal to her (*Rohinī*) image.

83. When there is no menstrual flow, she is *Gaurī*. When there is the flow she is *Rohinī*. If the girlhood has not fully

developed she is *Kanyā*. One without breasts is *Nagnikā*.

84. A seven-year old girl is *Gaurī*; nine year old is *Nagnikā*. Ten year old shall be *Kanyā*; above that she is *Rajasvalā*.

85. Through *Vyañjana* (manifestation) the girl kills her father's sons. Through breasts she spoils the family of her father and through menstrual flow, she spoils the desirable goal (salvation) and pleasures of the other worlds of her father.

86. He who marries one with menstrual flow should be known as *Vṛṣalīpati*.

87. If a Brāhmaṇa spends a single night resorting to a *Vṛṣalī*, the sin thereof can be wiped off if he eats what is got by alms and performs *Japa* everyday for three years.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIX

Procedure for Performing Śrāddha

Īśvara said:

1. Henceforth, I shall explain the procedure of Śrāddha called *Pārvanya* in due order. Listen, O great goddess, with concentrated mind.

2. After wearing the sacred thread in *Apasavya* form (from right shoulder to left) a householder should invite the *Pitṛs* at the outset: "Your good selves should be pleased. May our rites for the *Pitṛs* (i.e. Śrāddha) be fulfilled."

3. In order to invite Brāhmaṇas, he should send trustworthy persons (his own kinsmen) of the same (own) caste.

4. Brāhmaṇa's food should not be eaten by those who were invited through Kṣatriyas and others. Similarly Brāhmaṇa's food (should not be eaten) by those not invited through a Brāhmaṇa.

5. If a Śūdra offers food (on behalf) of a Brāhmaṇa or a Brāhmaṇa offers food (on behalf) of a Śūdra—these two are ones whose food should not be eaten. If eaten, one should perform the Cāndrāyaṇa rite as expiation.

6. If a Brāhmaṇa cooks food on behalf of a Śūdra in the manner of *Upanikṣepa** that food shall also be *Abhojya* (unfit for consumption) and the Brāhmaṇa falls down.

7. The food of a Śūdra, the association of a Śūdra, occupying the same seat as the Śūdra, and learning a lore from a Śūdra—these will cause the fall of even the resplendent one.

8. Brāhmaṇas affected and vitiated by the food of a Śūdra, become agitated and they hanker after sexual intercourse. Even if they (such Brāhmaṇas) are angry, what can they do? They are like serpents devoid of poison. (They have lost their spiritual power.)

9. One with a dirty garment shall be (considered) nude. One who wears only a loin cloth is nude. So also one with two hemis of under-garments tucked in but no upper garment, one with no *Kaccha* (tucking in of the hem of under-garment) and one with no garments.

10-12. One in Kāṣāya (red-dyed) garments shall be remembered as nude. One with half a cloth is also nude.

A cloth the tip of which is not cut, that which is washed with clay(?), that which is not beaten (while washing), that which is dyed with minerals—these are holy ones. This is the situation.

A fool may be sitting in front but a person with good qualities may be sitting away from him. Offers should be made to a man of qualities. There is no question of upsetting the order in the case of a fool. If a person of foolish activity transgresses (i.e. neglects) a Brāhmaṇa of good qualities, who is not a fallen one, and worships (honours) a Brāhmaṇa sitting away even if he be one with good qualities(?), he will go to hell.

13. If a Brāhmaṇa who has taken the valedictory bath after the *Vratas* in the acquisition of Vedic knowledge, comes to the house, all the herbal plants play joyously (saying): 'We shall attain the greatest goal.'

14-15. One should observe silence in the following circumstances: when *Japa* is performed during dusk or dawn, while washing the teeth, while taking food, when the Pitṛ's rites

* The editor of the text explain:If a Brāhmaṇa cooks food in the house of a Śūdra, the material should be supplied through a Brāhmaṇa.

are performed or adoration of gods is going on, while passing urine, or defecating, in the presence of elders, while making a gift and during the practice of Yoga in particular. The man shall go to heaven.

16. If there is a slip while observing restraint of speech during Japa and other occasions, one should utter Vaiṣṇava Mantra or remember the immutable Viṣṇu.

17. During the rites of *Dāna*, *Snāna*, *Japa*, *Homa*, *Bhojana* (taking food) and adoration of deities the Darbhās of the deities shall be straight. In the case of the Pitṛs twice the number of the Darbhās should be used.

18. In the case of eities, they (Darbhās) should point to the north and in the case of Pitṛs, to the south. There shall be no *Pāṅkti Doṣa* (defect due to violating the rule of row), if there is fire, ash, *Yava* (Barley) or water in between or the door is turned.

19. In the course of *Iṣṭa Śrāddha*, *Kratu* and *Dakṣa* are the Vṛddhas (Elders); in *Vṛddhi Śrāddha*, Satya and Vasu are the presiding persons. In the *Naimittika* rite Kāla and Kāma and in *Kāmya Śrāddha* rite Adhva and Virocana.

20. Purūravas and Ārdrava are cited in the case of *Pārvanya* rite. If *Nyagrodha* (vessel) is used there shall be *Puṣṭi* (nourishment), *Prajā* (progeny), *Buddhi* (intellect), *Prajñā* (pre-science), *Dhṛti* (fortitude) and *Smṛti* (memory).

21. Kāśmirya (Birch) vessel is said to be destructive of Rākṣasas and conducive to renown. In *Madhūka* vessel excellent conjugal felicity in the world is cited.

22. One who performs the rite in *Phālguna* (a cup of the leaves of Arjuna tree) vessel shall attain all desires. In *Arka* vessel is the greatest splendour and illumination in particular.

23-24. If the rites are performed in *Bilva* vessel the devotee obtains glory, fortune, power of penance, intellect and permanent longevity. If the rites are performed in holy spots, parks and lakes all vessels are allowed. When there is continuous downpour, a devotee shall perform the rites in a bamboo vessel. If gold and silver vessels are used for the rites one obtains the benefit of all these.

25-26. These trees are recommended in particular for using as *Samits* (sacrificial twigs) : *Palāśa Phala*, *Nyagrodha*, *Plakṣa*, *Aśvattha*, *Vikaṅkata*, *Udumbara*, *Bilva*, *Candana*, all

Yajñīya(pertaining to *Yajña*) trees, *Sarala*, *Devadāru*, *Śāla* and *Khadira*.

27. These trees are despised (censured) in the Śrāddha rite: *Śleśmātaka*, *Naktamālya*, *Kapittha*, *Śalmalī*, *Nimba* and *Bibhitaka*.

28. One should censure (eschew) for the purpose of Śrāddha the following types of land: where there is unpleasant noise, that which is crowded and impure, rough and rugged, full of worms and insects and one that has obnoxious odour.

29-30. *Traiśāṅkava* land to the extent of twelve Yojanas should be avoided. A land to the north of a great river, to the south of an ordinary river is called *Traiśāṅkava* land(?) It is avoided in the rite of Śrāddha. The lands of *Kāraskara* (Karkal, S. Kanara), *Kaliṅga* (Orissa) and those on the north of Sindhu should be assiduously (scrupulously) avoided because they have discarded the duties of the different stages in life.

31. Kṛta Yuga is called Brāhmaṇa, Tretā is remembered as Kṣatriya. They say that Dvāpara is Vaiśya and Kali Yuga is remembered as Sūdra.

32. In Kṛta Pitṛs should be adored; in Tretā Suras; in Dvāpara sages are to be adored and Pākhaṇḍas (heretics) are to be adored in Kali Yuga.

33. A wise devotee should perform Śrāddha in the forenoon of bright half and one should not transgress Rauhiṇa (Muhūrta) in the afternoon of dark half.

34-36. The consecrated Pitṛtirtha is of the extent of a *Ratni* (a cubit, the distance between elbow and closed fist). Near the root well-cut excellent Kuṣa grass is kept for spreading. Śyāmāka, Nīvāra and Dūrvā too are kept similarly.

Formerly Prajāpati, the most excellent one among the renowned, had plenty of hairs. When his hairs fell on the ground, they became Kāśa (grass). Hence Kāśa grass is always considered sacred and honoured in the rite of Śrāddha.

37. Balls of rice should be placed thereon and offered by the devotee who wishes for prosperity. In the case of the twice-born ones, cooked rice which is hot should be placed.

38-39. Except in the case of fruits and flowers and *Pānaka* (special consecrated drink) a wise devotee should not offer anything on the hand. If oil, salt and pickles are offered on the hand or in an iron vessel, only Rākṣasas will partake of

them. After offering the cooked food in the vessels (plates) of the Brāhmaṇa, the devotee should perform the rite of Saṁkalpa silently.

40. Since their association with *Darvī* (holy ladle) is not seen, if the Brāhmaṇas were to eat out of palm like a boar, the Pitṛs will not partake of them. The same (is true) if the Brāhmaṇas were to take food while speaking.

41. It has been stated by Vyāsa that the size of the *Piṇḍas* (balls of rice) should be so made as they can enter the mouth of a cow-calf of two years without difficulty.

42. No woman shall remove them (i.e. the plates where the Brāhmaṇas take food). Neither one devoid of knowledge nor one refraining from Vrata should do so. So it is to be done by the son himself or one whose great prosperity is desired by him.

43. If the Brāhmaṇas utter the *Svasti Vacana* even as the plates remain there, the food served will be eaten by Asuras and the Pitṛs will go away disappointed.

44. One *Piṇḍa* is to be put into water, one to be given to the wife and one is to be put into the sacred fire. These are the three ways of disposal.

45. In a Śrāddha, one should feed a *Chandoga*, i.e. Sāma-vedin. In the Vaiśvadeva, one should feed *Bahvṛca* (Rgvedin). In the rite for Puṣṭi (nourishment), one should feed an *Adhvaryu* (Yajurvedin) and in a Śānti rite one should feed an Atharvaṇa.

46. One should seat two Atharvaṇa Brāhmaṇas facing the east in a rite for deities. In a rite for Pitṛs the devotee should seat the *Bahvṛca* (Rgvedin), *Adhvaryu* (Yajurvedin) and *Sāmaga* facing the north.

47-48. All these are to be gifted: All kinds of Jāti flowers, Mallikā, white Yūthikā, all flowers grown in water, Caṁpaka, Madhūka, Rāmaṭha, Karpūra, pepper, jaggery, salt and tin. They are recommended in a Śrāddha rite.

49. A Brāhmaṇa, blanket, cows, the Sun, Fire, guest, gingelly seeds, Darbas, and time—these nine are remembered as *Kutapas*.

50. Śrāddha should not be performed during adversity, without fire, during solar and lunar eclipse, on a holy spot, in *Saṅgraha* (in a group) and when the Sun has set.

51. A woman after monthly course shall be deemed pure after her bath on the fourth day in the case of a rite for deities, and on the fifth day in the case of a rite for Pitṛs.

52. One should perform Āmaśrāddha if there is no Brāhmaṇa available, if one does not possess the requisite materials and wherewithal, when one is away from the house and when a son is born. A man whose wife is in her monthly period shall also do so.

53. Śrāddha is not to be performed for those killed by serpents and Brāhmaṇas, those bitten by fanged animals, horned animals and reptiles and those who have committed suicide.

54. Only sinners meet with death in water, by shock of lightning and attacks by Cāṇḍālas, serpents, Brāhmaṇas and fanged animals.

55. If the rite is performed by the eldest brother alone with the assent of others and when the materials (or expenses) are shared (by all) it is considered to have been performed by all.

56. If the churning is done on a New-Moon day, or on a Pitṛśrāddha day, the butter milk thereof is on a par with liquor and the ghee is remembered as one on a par with cow's meat (beef).

57. The sin is incurred by those in order and by those who partake of a portion of the *Pinda*. A Brāhmaṇa invited for a Śrāddha shall not go to bed with a woman.

58. One who is to partake of food during Śrāddha should get up at dawn and clean his teeth, but a sensible man who is to perform a Śrāddha should not clean his teeth.

59. The annual Śrāddha that is performed every year on the days of the death of mother and father, should not be performed in *Malamāsa* (intercalary month) as stated by Vyāsa.

60. The rule regarding *Adhimāsa* (intercalary month) does not apply to the rites connected with conception, taking and repaying debts, death, servant, monthly rites and the annual Śrāddha.

61. In the case of marriage etc., the Solar calendar is followed, in Yajña etc. *Sāvana* calendar; in annual Śrāddha rite of Pitṛs, the lunar month is recommended.

62. On the anniversary of the day of death, the rite for the Pitṛs is to be performed during the same *Rāśi* (sign of Zodiac, the period thereof) on which the Sun was when the death or danger occurred in the case of a Brāhmaṇa.

63. Vaṣṭkāra, Homa, Parvan and Āgrāyaṇa should be performed even in *Malamāsa*(intercalary month) but one should avoid *Kāmya Iṣṭis*(sacrificial rites for things desired).

64-65. The following should be avoided during *Malamāsa*: Agnyādhyeya, Pratiṣṭhā(Installation), Yajña, Dāna, Vrata, Vedavrata, Vṛṣotsarga (letting lose a bull in honour of the deceased), Cūḍākarana (tonsure rite), Mekhalā rites and auspicious Abhiṣeka rites. During *Malamāsa* the devotee with purity should perform Nitya and Naimittika rites, holy bath in a Tīrtha, Gajacchāyā and Preta Śrāddha.

66. This is the characteristic feature of a *Rākṣasa Śrāddha*: If *Rasas* (spirituous juice) are recommended, if the partakers are kinsmen and persons of the same Gotra and if there is tumult due to Royal (Governmental) tidings.

67. After performing one Śrāddha, if a person eagerly partakes of the food in another Śrāddha his Pitṛs fall down losing (becoming devoid of) all rites connected with *Piṇḍas* and libations.

68. Oil bath, application of unguents, cleaning of the teeth, cutting of the hairs and nails etc., should be postponed to the next day.

69. If the excellent Brāhmaṇas duly invited in *Havya* and *Kavya* rites transgress even slightly, the sinner attains the status of a pig.

70. When pollution (*Āśauca*) due to birth or death occurs in the course of a rite for deities or Pitṛs, the Śrāddha is offered at the end of the *Āśauca*.

Concluding Part of a Śrāddha:

71-75. At the conclusion of a Śrāddha the benedictions are to be offered.

Serpents are long. So also rivers and the three steps of Viṣṇu. Thus, in accordance with the dimensions (magnitude) of these, may I attain longevity.

The Devas are stationed in waters. Everything is established in waters. May the waters placed in the hand of the Brāhmaṇa be auspicious unto us.

Lakṣmī stays in flowers. Lakṣmī stays in *Puṣkara* (Lotus). May Lakṣmī stay in my abode. May she bestow on me *Saumanasya* (mental delight and satisfaction).

May my merit be unimpaired. So also let there be (my) peace, nourishment and fortitude. Let me have forever whatever there is in the world contributory to welfare and prosperity.

As for the monetary gifts everywhere, let us have plenty to offer.

They should say "Let it be so". He must accept the same by means of (lowered) head.

Disposal of Piṇḍa Śrāddha:

76-78. A man who seeks enjoyment of pleasures always consigns the *Piṇḍa* to the fire. If he seeks progeny he should give the middle (*Piṇḍa*) to his wife along with the utterance of the Mantras.

One who seeks excellent radiance and brilliance shall always offer the third *Piṇḍa* to cows. If he wishes for best knowledge, fame and renown, he should cast the *Piṇḍa* into waters. If he wishes for a long life, he should offer the *Piṇḍa* to crows. Desiring the world of Kumāra (Kārttikeya), he should offer the *Piṇḍa* to cocks.

79. Or the devotee stands facing south and throws it up into the sky. The abode of Pitṛs is the sky and the southern quarter.

80. One should avoid performing a Śrāddha at night except when Rāhu is seen (*Gajachchāyā*). On seeing Rāhu the Śrāddha should be performed immediately even if it involves spending everything one has.

81. He who does not perform Śrāddha at the time of eclipse, sinks down dejected like a cow in quagmire. One who performs it (Śrāddha) surmounts sin. She (the cow) is like a boat in the ocean.

82. Black *Māṣa* (pulse), *gingelly seeds*, *Yava* (barley) and *Śāli* (Paddy), *Mahāyavas*, *Vṛihiyavas* and *Masūrikās* (pulse) are excellent.

83-88. In the Śrāddha rite, both black and white varieties are always employed. Many of these fruits are recommended in the rites of Śrāddha: *Bilva*, *Āmalaka*, *Mṛdvīka*, *Panasa*,

Āmrāta and Dādīma. Pārāpata (pigeon ?), Kharjūra and Karamardaka are good. Badarīs should be inclusive of the buds. So also Tālakanda and Bisa. Tamāla, Asanakanda, Mavella, Śatakandalī, Kāleya, Kālaśāka, Mudgānna and Suvarcala are also recommended. Some meat is recommended. So also milk, curds, greens, Vyoṣa and Vetrāṅkura (shoot of the cane variety). Kaṭphala, Vajraka, Drākṣa (grapes), Lakuca, Moca (banana), Priyāmalaka, Durgīva, Tinduka, Madhusāhvaya, Vaikaṅkata, Nālikera, Śringāṭaka, Paruṣaka, Pippalī, Marica, Paṭolī, Bṛhatīphala are all good. In fact, everything grown within a garden-limit can be used in Śraddha.

89-90. These and other types of flowers are recommended in the Śraddha rite: Maśūra, the flower of Śatapuṣpi can be called the abode of Śrī(?). Svātiyavas are always excellent. So also Vṛsayavas and Asaka, Vaṁśa, Karīrā, Surasā, Mārjitā and Bhūtr̥ṇa.

91. I shall mention things which are fit for being avoided in Śraddha rite always: Laśuna (garlic), Grñjana (carrots), Palāṇḍu (onion), Piṇḍamūlaka (radish). Mogara (variety of radish) and the long radish of Videha.

92. The Śraddha performed in the eighth part of the day when the Sun has become dim shall be Āsura (demoniac). It does not reach Pitṛs.

93. When in the fourth Praharā (watch) a man performs Śraddha, that Śraddha is futile and one who offers it shall go to Naraka.

94-96. First three Muhūrtas beginning with Lekhā constitute Prātah (Morning). Learned men say that its later part is Bhaga. Saṅgava consists of three Muhūrtas. This is midday. Three Muhūrtas thereafter are called Aparāhṇa (afternoon). The fifth part of day is remembered as Sāyāhṇa (evening). In this connection there is a Śruti passage:

97. When Āditya (Sun) rises it is Vasanta (spring). When there is Saṅgava it is Grīṣma (summer). When there is midday it is Varṣā (rainy season). Aparāhṇa is Śarat (autumn). When it sets, it is Hemanta (winter).

98. A wise man should perform Śraddha starting it at Kutapa (eighth Muhūrta) and continuing till Rauhāna (Muhūrta). The devotee conversant with the injunctions should abide by the injunctions. He should not transgress (the Muhūrta) Rauhīṇa.

99. The eighth *Muhūrta* is called *Kutapa* and the ninth one is *Rauhiṇa*. Those who know Śrāddha are conversant with this.

100-109. The *Ekoddiṣṭa* rite is to be performed at midday and for *Jātakarman* (postnatal rites) morning (is recommended).

Cooking should be separately done for Pitṛs and Vaiśvadeva. Pitṛ preparation should not get mixed with Vaiśvadeva preparation, nor *vice versa*.

O great goddess of excellent countenance, it is after concluding the Śrāddha and bidding farewell to the Brāhmaṇas that the devotee should perform Vaiśvadeva and other rites.

It shall be particularly performed in a well-kindled fire with plenty of Havyas and fuel. The rite should be performed in fire without smoke. It should have leaping flames. Such rite is conducive to fame and perfection.

If a *Yajamāna* (householder) performs Homa in unkindled fire emitting smoke, he certainly shall become blind and his son may become wicked.

If there is foul smell (from the fire) and if the fire is black or blue in colour and if the flame appears to penetrate the ground, one shall know for certain that adversity awaits one.

A fire of the following features shall be conducive to the fulfilment of the task: It should be pleasing to the sight. It shall move specially clockwise.

One shall apply collyrium and inhale sweet scents and chant Mantras.

If the rite is performed with *Kāśa* flowers one shall attain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. There are flowers of eight types. Collyrium should always be there.

Gingelly oil should be carefully extracted from black gingelly seeds and well preserved. Sandalpaste and agallochum should be used. *Tamāla*, *Uṣīra* and *Padma* (lotus) are to be used. The incense produced from *Guggula*, and that from *Turuṣka* land is excellent, while flowers are excellent, so also lotuses and lilies.

110-113. Flowers with fragrance are suitable and proper. Others too are on the whole suitable. *Niśigandhā*, *Japā*, *Bhīṇdirūpaka* and *Kurāṇṭaka* are the flowers to be avoided in a Śrāddha rite always.

Golden, silver and copper vessels are considered vessels proper to the Pitṛs. A slight glance of silver bestows merit. The presence, vision and gift of *Kṛṣṇājina* (hide of a black antelope) is destructive of Rākṣasas. It gives brilliance and radiance. It redeems cattle and sons.

Now I shall mention the Mantra composed by Brahmā, (which is) on a par with *Amṛta* (nectar).

The Mantra:

114. “Obeyisance to the deities, to the Pitṛs, to the great Yogins. Obeisance, obeisance forever to Svadhā and Svāhā.”

115. This has to be chanted three times at the beginning and conclusion of Śrāddha. It yields the fruit of a horse-sacrifice. It is honoured by the Brāhmaṇas after full understanding.

116. During the offering of Pindas also the devotee should utter this Mantra with great concentration and mental purity. The Pitṛs come quickly and Rākṣasas flee away.

117. I shall now mention Saptarcisa (a septet of verses) that yields auspicious fulfilment of desires:

118. “I shall pay obeisance to all the Pitṛs of brilliant splendour whether embodied or unembodied. I shall always make obeisance to those Pitṛs of divine vision who are always engaged in meditation.

119. Dakṣa, Marīci and others are the leaders of Indra and others. I shall pay respects to all of them and also to Pitṛs and *Oṣadhis* (medicinal herbs).

120. With palms joined in reverence I shall always make obeisance to the Constellations and Planets, to the Wind-god and Fire-god, to the Pitṛs and to *Dyāvāpṛthivī* (Heaven and Earth)

121. Obeisance to the seven Pitṛs. Obeisance to those who are in seven worlds. We shall pay respects to the Self-born Lord, to Brahmā of yogic vision.”

122. This (hymn) uttered by you is resorted to by the Seven Sages and the groups of Brāhmaṇa-sages. It is extremely true. It is glorious. It is destructive of Rākṣasas.

123. The man should repeat these three times in accordance with the injunctions. He should be endowed with great devotion. He should have faith and he should control the sense-organs.

124. He who remains pure and always performs the Japa of this *Saptārcisa Mantra* shall be the sole monarch of the earth containing seven oceans.

125-127. He who reads *Śrāddhakalpa* shall be the sanctifier of the row (of Brāhmaṇas). He is remembered as the master of all the eighteen lores. The delighted Pitāmahas bestow on men honour, nourishment, memory, intellect, kingdom and freedom from illness always. In this manner a devotee shall perform Śrāddha in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra of great refulgence at the confluence of Sarasvatī and the ocean, O fair lady.*

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVEN

Eligibility (of Brāhmaṇas) for Śrāddha

Īśvara said:

1-3. Henceforth, I shall explain (enumerate) the different kinds of *Dāna* associated with Śrāddha in due order. Given at the confluence of Sarasvatī and ocean, they are conducive to the redemption of all living beings.

Whatever is the most excellent of all things in the world, everything that is dear to oneself—all these should be given as gifts (*Dāna*) with the Pitṛs in view, if people wish for the same to be everlasting. A man who gives (serves) cooked rice obtains a divine golden heavenly car resembling the sun and filled with celestial damsels.

4. He who gifts at the time of the Śrāddha rites an unbeaten (without washing i.e. new) garment obtains longevity, illumination, affluence and comeliness.

5. If a person gives a water-pot to a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, a cow that exudes honey-like milk follows the donor.

* The framework of actual procedure of Śrāddha is given in the ancient *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (11.4.2.2-21). It is slightly modified in the Sūtra period. (For details see HD IV Ch. IX.) This Purāṇa does not give such details but notes some customs current at Prabhāsa.

6. If the devotee accords *Abhaya* (protection during danger) to living beings seeking life, at the time of Śrāddha (it is beneficial). Granting of freedom from fear excels the gift of a thousand horses, of a hundred chariots and of a thousand elephants.

7. A man devoutly attached to his father (or the Pitṛs) immediately obtains everything—all the jewels on the earth, all the vehicles and all the women.

8. In all the worlds, in all Tīrthas and times Pitṛs like Devatās, wholly come to a man like cows (cattle) flocking to a water-trough near a well.

9. Let them not go back without being duly honoured during the *Parva* occasions. Let not their hopes here as well as hereafter be frustrated at all.

10. If a devotee feeds a single Brāhmaṇa in the vicinity of Sarasvatī, he gets the benefit of feeding a crore of Brāhmaṇas. There is no doubt about this.

11. If a man partakes of food (in the house) of another man on a New-Moon day, the donor of cooked rice obtains the merit attained in the course of one month by other man.

12. If a man partakes of food in the house of another man on an Ayana day (transit of the Sun), all his merits attained in the course of the six months perish. If a man partakes of food in the house of another man on the Viṣuva day (equinox), all the merits accrued in the course of three months perish. If a man partakes of food in another man's house during a solar or lunar eclipse, all the merits earned in the course of twelve years perish entirely.

13. If the food is taken at the time of the transit of the Sun (from one house of the Zodiac to another) the merits of more than a month perish; in the case of the first Śrāddha, the merit of three years ; in the case of the *Māsika* (monthly Śrāddha) the merit of a year and in the case of half-yearly Śrāddha, the merit of a half of the year perishes.

14. If the food is taken at *Saṅcayana Śrāddha* the merit acquired in the course of the whole life perishes. There is no purificatory rite for a man who accepts the gift of a dead man's bed, a man who sells the Veda and a man who misappropriates the assets of a Brāhmaṇa.

15. A person who illegally takes possession of a plot of land

is not purified through the merit of digging a thousand lakes, performing a hundred horse-sacrifices and by gifting a crore of cows.

16. A man who illegally takes possession of even a *Māṣa* of gold, a cow or even half an inch of the earth falls into hell and remains there until all living beings are annihilated.

17. The sin arising from Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, imbibing liquor, seizing the assets of a poor man, association with the wife of preceptor and stealing gold will cause the downfall of even a man staying in Svarga.

18. Gift of a cow is on a par with the gift of a thousand other things; that of a bull is on a par with that of ten cows; the gift of a vehicle is on a par with that of ten bulls; and the gift of a horse is on a par with the gift of ten vehicles.

19. The gift of a virgin is on a par with the gift of ten horses and the gifts of plots of land is superior to it. Hence one should assiduously make gifts of plots of lands; one should not sell them.

20. Especially so in a great holy spot that is destructive of all sins. If one touches a pile of wood intended for funeral pyre or *Yajña Yūpas* (sacrificial posts) or persons who sell the Vedas, one should take holy bath. It has been enjoined.

21. He who gives the order, and he who reads it (aloud and proclaims), both of them are sinners sure to be the residents of *Pātālatala* (bottom of the nether worlds).

22-23. A man who reads the royal proclamation at the entrance to the palace shall, O goddess, grow as a tree full of thorns in an arid land. The same occurs to a man who stands at the gate to the palace and indulges in selling the Vedas, for the sin is on a par with that of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. Such a sin there never was nor will there ever be. O goddess, he may very well commit that sin, but he should never commit the sin of selling the Vedas.

24. A base Brāhmaṇa may very well kill cows and eat their flesh, he may very well live in close association with barbarians, but he should not commit the sin of selling the Vedas.

25. Selling of the Vedas is of six types, mentioned as: *Pratyakṣokti*(direct statement), *Pratyaya*(solemn oath), *Praśnāpūrvah pratigrahah* (acceptance of remuneration after answering a

question), *Yājana* (performing Yajñas), *Adhyāpana* (teaching) and *Vāda* (disputation).

26. One who commits sale of the Vedas incurs as many sins of foeticide as the number of Vedic syllables which the sinner has employed for his own selfish ends.

27. If a person gives *Pratigraha* (donation, fee) to a Brāhmaṇa after a censure and reproof thereof he falls into hell first and the Brāhmaṇa thereafter.

28. Brāhmaṇas may be endowed with Vedic knowledge. Yet if they are devoid of (performance of) Vaiśvadeva, and if they are without hospitality, they are Vṛṣalas completely by their conduct.

29. All these belong to Śūdra caste: those who carry no self-study of the Vedas, those who do not maintain sacred fires and those who do not belong to the family of Veda-learners.

30. O fair lady, a Brāhmaṇa who does not respectfully perform Śrāddha on the day of the death of his father or of his mother is on a par with a Śūdra.

31. One should consider that person a Śūdra who takes food on the day of a death, when there is the eclipse of the Sun or of the Moon and during the Parva Gajacchāyā.

32. In regard to (the death of) a bachelor, one engaged in a Yajña, an ascetic, an artisan, one who is initiated for Yajña, (while in) Sattrā and Yajña, there is no *Sūtaka* (pollution due to birth etc.).

33. The following Brāhmaṇas should be treated like Śūdras: those who tend cows and cattle, traders, craftsman and usurers.

34. A Brāhmaṇa engaged in misdemeanour leading to downfall, an arrogant fellow and one who is usually engaged in evil deeds—all are remembered as equal to a Śūdra.

35. One who takes food without bathing is actually eating rubbish; one who takes food without performing Japa is actually taking in putrid blood; one who takes food without performing Homa is actually eating worms; and one who takes without offering (it to others) is actually consuming poison.

36. If a person eats food of others (given by others) and begets sons (those sons) are the sons of the food-giver because semen is created from cooked food.

37. The food of (i.e. given by) a king takes away brilliance; the food of a Śūdra, the Brāhmaṇical splendour; the food of

a goldsmith takes away longevity; and that of a cobbler, takes away fame.

38. The food of a *Kāruka* (an artisan, a mechanic) kills the progeny; that of a washerman takes away strength. The food of *Gāṇa* (mob, group of people) and *Gāṇikā*(harlot) deprives one of the (heavenly) worlds.

39. The food of a physician is (like) putrid matter; the food of an unchaste woman is (like) semen; the food of a usurer is faeces; and that of a seller of weapons is rubbish.

40. Better is a Brāhmaṇa though (merely) conversant with the essence of Gāyatrī, if he is a man of self-control. Not so a Brāhmaṇa conversant with all the four Vedas, if he has no self-control, if he eats everything (indiscriminately) and sells everything.

41. One falls down immediately through (selling) meat, red lac and salt. A Brāhmaṇa becomes a Śūdra in three days through selling milk.

42. Juices should be checked through juices but not through juices in the case of salt. Kṛtānna (cooked food) should be checked through *Kṛtānna*. Gingelly seeds equal to them through grains.

43. If anyone does anything else with gingelly seeds except taking in as food, anointing the body as oil or gifting away, he will be born as a worm in shit and goes down along with his Pitṛs.

44. (Or if the unlettered takes these as *Pratigraha* viz.) Pratigraha of fried pie, gold, cow, horse (a plot of) earth and gingelly seeds, he becomes reduced to ash like a piece of wood.

45. (*Pratigraha* of) gold and jewels take away longevity; a plot of land and a cow pull up the body; a horse pulls the eye; a garment spoils the skin; ghee spoils the splendour and gingelly seeds the progeny.

46. If a person is made an *Agnihotrī* or to undertake penance with the aid (of cash and materials), all the (fruits of) *Agnihotra* and *Tapas* (penance) become the assets of the financier.

47. Gift becomes shit if it is given to a habitual seller of Soma. It becomes putrid blood if made to (that of) medicine. Gift is doomed (has no fruit) if made to a *Devalaka* (paid worshipper in a temple) and censured if made to a usurer.

48. A Brāhmaṇa engaged in worshipping the deity for the sake of ready cash is named *Devalaka*. He is censured in *Havyas* and *Kavyas* (i.e. worship of the deities and the Pitṛs) in all the three worlds.

49. If a man indulges lustfully in intercourse with the wife of his dead brother though she is *Niyuktā* (conventionally engaged by way of religious duty) he should be known as *Didhiṣūpāti* (husband of a widow).

50. Even while the elder brother remains (a bachelor) if anyone marries and maintains sacred fires, he should be known as *Parivettā* and that elder brother is *Parivitti*.

51. If a man makes use of and enjoys other person's garments, wells, parks and houses, though they are not offered to him, he incurs a fourth of the sin committed by that person.

52. If a person invited to a Śrāddha enjoys it with a *Vṛṣalā* (Śūdra woman), he entirely incurs all the sins and misdemeanour of the donor (performer) of the Śrāddha.

53-55. The daily diet should be known as *Rta*. The food received without begging is called *Amṛta*. Maintenance of oneself by means of usury is called *Mṛta*. Cultivation (Agriculture) is remembered as *Pramṛta*. Engaging oneself in trading activities is called *Satyānṛta* (truth and lie). One can very well live and sustain oneself through *Rta* and *Amṛta*, through *Mṛta* or *Pramṛta* or through *Satya* and *Anṛta*. But one should never maintain oneself through *Svavṛtti* (canine behaviour). *Sevā*(service to others) is called *Śvavṛtti*. Hence one should avoid it.

56-57. After being born in Brāhmaṇa womb (i.e. as a Brāhmaṇa) one should avoid *Samkara* (inter-mixture). Human birth is rarely achieved in the world. The state of being a Brāhmaṇa is more so. *Samkara* (inter-mixture) is said to be of nine kinds: (1) Sitting in the same seat, (2) Lying on the same bed, (3) Sitting in the same row (*pañkti*), (4) Using the same utensils, (5) Exchanging sweetmeats, (6) *Miśraṇa* (free social intercourse), (7) Performing *Yajña* and teaching, (8) *Yoni* (i.e. intermarriage), and (9) Taking food together. These activities should not be shared with base people.

58. If a Brāhmaṇa is unable to sustain himself through his own legitimate traditional activity, he should do the work of a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya. He must avoid the activity of a *Vṛṣala* (i.e. Śūdra) i.e. Service.

59. A Brāhmaṇa should engage himself in usury, agriculture and trading during emergency though he is defiled. (After bath such a Brāhmaṇa becomes touchable.)

60. When he acquires profit, he should propitiate the Pitṛs, Devas and Brāhmaṇas. On being satisfied, they undoubtedly quell his sin.

61. During famine, the following are remembered as means of sustenance: water, cow, cart, park, begging, usury, trading activities, marshy lands, mountain and king.

62. If a man takes money from a wicked person and gives it to good people, that money redeems that man as well as the wicked person from an impossible difficult position.

63. *Dāna* made to a Śūdra has ordinary fruit. In regard to a Vaiśya it is remembered as yielding double fruit. In regard to a Śrotriya (Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas), it gives thousandfold fruit and in regard to an Agnihotrin it gives infinite fruit.

64. A Brāhmaṇa should not be transgressed. A person who does not follow this conventional order (errs). One should not perform Homa in the ashes after discarding the burning fire.

65. A *Pratigraha* (gift as *Dāna*) should not be accepted by one who is deficient in learning and power of penance. If he accepts, he causes the downfall of the giver as well as of himself.

66. Hence a Śrotriya (a master of Vedas) having purity, good qualities and virtuous habits alone is qualified. One without defects or bodily deficiencies is remembered as the most deserving person.

67. Water held in a skull and milk poured into a leather (water) bag are defiled due to the defect of the container. So also is the learning in a man of base avocation.

68. A *Pratigraha* (gift) offered to an underserving person after overlooking a deserving person, is like giving of the daily allotment of cow's fodder to a donkey after overlooking the cow.

69. Hence one should preserve character and conduct. If money is lost, it may come again. One poor in wealth is not really poor, but one doomed in character is doomed for ever.

70. A devotee should, at the outset, offer excellent gift to preceptor and then in due order to the other Brāhmaṇas according to their competence and qualifications.

71-72. What is given to deserving persons by men is (also) considered as the due *Dāna* made to the preceptor.

If an evil-minded one insults his preceptor and makes him angry and then offers a gift, it shall be futile and the person (donor) goes down. A deluded person doomed by dishonouring the preceptor will never get peace.

73. In case the preceptor is not present, his son should be honoured. If the son is not present, the wife of the preceptor is to be honoured. A grandson through son or daughter or anyone of the family is to be honoured duly.

74. If it is known that the preceptor is present within five Yojanas there should be no overlooking of the Guru. He must make gifts to the deserving person.

75. If an ascetic, out of greed, requests for some special gift, it should not be given by learned people. Greed is not commendable in an ascetic.

76. After getting wealth, an ascetic may cease to practise vow of silence (sagehood) and acquisition of knowledge. Enjoyment of pleasures will be encouraged through *Dāna* whereas his life should be sacred through celibacy.

77-78. Those who have gained birth in a noble family, thanks to their initiation, are excellent men. By avoiding spirituous liquor indeed, one attains conjugal felicity. If one avoids meat, all his children will be long-lived.

79. One should abandon clothes and ornaments and wear bark-garments. By fasting a man attains the overlordship of serpents.

80. By means of truthful speech one sports with the Devas in heaven. Through non-violence, he gains health and through liberal gifts one attains fame duly.

81. By rendering service to Brāhmaṇas one shall acquire kingdom and very excellent state of being a Brāhmaṇa. By serving Devas a man attains divine form.

82. One shall get satisfaction through the gift of food. He shall have fulfilled all excellent desires. By gifting a lamp a man becomes endowed with (good) vision.

83-84. By gifting scents and garlands one shall always have satisfaction. Those who give gifts of salt, gingelly seeds and ghee are born brilliant and long-lived. They enjoy pleasures. A man who gifts excellent variegated garments and ornaments

and bed with pillows, shall get a wife endowed with beauty and charming features such as excellent curved eyelashes.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHT

Brāhmaṇas Eligible for Dāna*

The Devī said:

1-4. Śruti says: "This should be given. This should be gifted". I wish to know exactly the details of this *Dāna* (religious gifts) and *Ādāna* (acceptance).

What are the *Dānas* specially recommended. To whom what should be given? O Lord, tell me everything, including the proper time, place and deserving person.

Īśvara said:

There are four *Vṛthā Janmas* (futile births) and sixteen *Vṛthā Dānas* (futile gifts). *Sujanmas* (excellent births) are four and *Mahādānas* (great gifts) are sixteen.

The Devī said:

O Lord of Devas, O Lord of the universe, do tell me this in detail.

Īśvara said:

5-6. Know from me what the four *Vṛthā Janmas* are:

(1) Birth of bad sons; (2) of those who are excluded from virtuous society; (3) of those who are in exile and are always enamoured of other men's wives; and (4) of those who eat what is cooked by others and are attached to other men's wives is futile. That which cannot be refused is *Vṛthā Dāna*. O my beloved, what is faulty is also *Vṛthā Dāna*.

7. A gift to an *Ārūḍhapatita* (a *Sannyāsin* who has reverted to the *Gṛhastha* stage), (*Dāna* of) property acquired by illegal

* The topic is discussed in details in HD. II, ii, Ch XXV, 837-888.

means, Dāna unto a Brāhmaṇa-slayer is futile, that to a (socially) fallen person and a robber is also futile.

8. A gift to one who causes displeasure to the preceptor, that to an ungrateful person, to a person who acts as the Yājaka of the entire village, what is given to a Brahmanabandhu (a Brāhmaṇa in name only) and what is given to a Vṛṣalīpati. (husband of a Śūdra woman) is futile.

9. What is given to a person selling the Veda, to one in whose house there is another husband (i.e. paramour) and what is given to one subdued by a woman (henpecked)—these are the sixteen Vṛthā Dānas (Evidently a few words are missing in the text.)

10. Sujanmas are: (1) the birth of good sons; (2) of men who are engaged in piety; (3) of those who do not go in exile and (4) of those who are averse to other men's wives.

11-12. O great goddess, these are the sixteen Mahādānas*: Cows, gold, silver, jewels, Sarasvatī (i.e. learning), gingelly seeds, a virgin, an elephant, a horse, a bed, a garment, earth (a plot of land), grain, milk, an umbrella, and a house fully furnished.

13-14. What is given out of pride or fear or anger, one reaps the result thereof even while one is in the womb. So is the case when something is given with sorrow or offence or for the sake of monetary gain or hypocrisy—he suffers while he is a boy.

15. If anyone makes a gift at the proper time and place, to a deserving person with pure mind, if one gives what is legitimately earned, one enjoys the fruit thereof in one's youth.

16. If anyone makes a gift of an article or wealth illegally got, to a non-deserving person, with mental distress and without caring for the injunctions, he reaps the consequence during old age.

17. Hence a man should make a gift of what is acquired legally, at the proper time and place, to a deserving person, observing the injunction. He must have perfect faith and he should not have Śāthyā (bad intention).

18. They say that a person as this is a deserving person: He should be master in the studies of the Veda and practise

* There is another text of Mahādānas in Agni Purāṇa 209. 23-24.

Yoga; he should be quiescent; he should be conversant with Purāṇas; he should be afraid of sins; he should be liberal; he should be virtuous; he should be polite to women; he should be one offering refuge to cattle; he should be an observer of Vratas.

19. The following are the characteristics of a deserving person: Truthfulness, mental control, penance, purity, contentment, absence of jealousy, frankness, wisdom, control of sense-organs and compassion.

20-22. If a devotee gives a splendid cow as a gift to such a deserving person, he will be honoured in Rudraloka. The cow should be *Kapilā* (tawny-coloured) with all good qualities. She should be accompanied by her calf. There should be silver covering to the legs (hooves) and gold (tops) adorning the horns.

One who has ten cows should make the gift of one cow. One who has a hundred cows shall make the gift of ten cows. One who has a thousand cows shall make the gift of a hundred cows. All are remembered as attaining equal merit.*

The cow shall be timid and well-behaved. She should have *Soma* (the fragrance in the month due to the grass and fodder she is accustomed to eat). She should be a milch cow of youthful features accompanied by her calf. Such a cow acquired by fair means should be given to a Brāhmaṇa.

23. A cow as this should never be given: a barren one, a sickly one, one deficient in limbs, a wicked cow of wild temper, an old cow, a cow whose calf is dead, one acquired illegally and one stationed (tethered) far away.

24. O great goddess, a man who gives such a cow with a deity in view meets with downfall and undergoes sufferings.

25. A cow which is angry (nasty-natured), distressed, feeble and sickly should not be given. Nor should a cow the price of which has not been paid (to the owner) be gifted. If someone gives a cow to Brāhmaṇas that involves them in troubles all the worlds of the donor become futile.

26. Even if a single (cow) is gifted to a suffering Brāhmaṇa who maintains the sacred fire, to a guest who is a calm and quiescent Brāhmaṇa, a master in the Vedas, it shall become beneficial many times.

* Cf. Agni Purāṇa 211.1.

27. O goddess, if a Brāhmaṇa of poor wisdom sells the cow, he is not considered a deserving person. In fact, he is not (to be) reckoned as a Brāhmaṇa.

28. Cows, horses, women etc., should not be gifted to several ones (at a time). Divided Dakṣinā (monetary and other gifts) does not give merit to a donor.

29. Those who gift cows go to the region where palaces are golden; beds are resplendent with jewels and where excellent celestial damsels live.

30. There is no gift on a par with that of a plot of land; there is no river on a par with Gaṅgā. There is no greater virtue than truthfulness; there is no god greater than Maheśvara.

31. A plot of land as this should not be gifted: where there are big boulders and rocks; that which is, not level; which is arid (or even in case it is level, an arid land should not be gifted); or a land of no stable shape on the banks of a river.

32. A person gifting a land dwells in heaven for sixty thousand years. One who seizes the land so gifted, one who abets such act, falls into hell and remains there as many (i.e. 60,000) years.

33. If a person who is in straitened circumstances commits a sin, he can become pure by offering a plot of land even if it be of the width of a cow's hide.

34. Śiva's world is remembered as the fruit of the gift of these: an umbrella, a bed, a seat, a couch, an elephant, a horse, chowries, virgins and a plot of land.

35. A householder who has a grandson should not observe fast on Sundays, on days of the transit of the Sun, solar and lunar eclipses, at the time of a gift of a cow, and when the Pāraṇā (breaking of the fast) has to be performed.

36. If a person has already observed fast for a hundred Ekādaśī days and wishes for a steady line of progeny, he should not observe fast on *Indukṣaya* (New-Moon days) and on *Saṅkrānti* days (transit of the Sun).

37. It does not make any difference whether Ekādaśī is in the bright half or dark half. Yet there is always an increase of *Dharma* (virtue, piety) if it falls in the bright half.

38. If the Daśamī (tenth day) is overlapped with Ekādaśī and there is Kṣaya (deficiency) in Dvādaśī (12th day) the devotee should take *Nakta* (nocturnal) food and shall not observe fast.

39. If anyone observes fast on the eleventh day but takes *Pāraṇā* on the thirteenth day, he shall forfeit the benefit of twelve *Dvādaśīs*.

40. One shall not use tooth-pick twigs on the fast days and on Śrāddha days. If the twig comes into contact with the teeth, seven generations of the family shall become affected.

41. A person who does not duly observe the anniversary of father's death, *Darśa* (New-Moon day) and *Paurnamāsa* (Full-Moon day) with due overlapping of the previous (lunar day) will fall into Naraka.

42. Loss of (and to) the progeny also has been mentioned; he shall become unfortunate too.

Now I shall describe the procedure for Śrāddha exactly if there is lack of *Dravya* (money, material).

43-45. One shall perform the Śrāddha of six *Pindas* (rice-balls) by inviting a single Brāhmaṇa (Priest). Six *Arghyas* should be offered to them (six ancestors) duly. Father present in the hand of the Brāhmaṇa takes food from there; grandfather from the mouth. Great-grandfather is present in the palate. Maternal grandfather is remembered as present in the throat. Pra-Mātāmaha (the maternal great-grandfather) is present in the heart and the *Vṛddha* (the great-great-grandfather) is present in the navel.

O my beloved, if no Brāhmaṇa is available, Darbha grass should be made the representative of a Brāhmaṇa. This is being stated after taking the essential from all Purāṇas.

46. This should not be imparted to an atheist, a calumniator or to one who censures the Veda. Everyday in the morning, this has to be listened to after worshipping Maheśvara.

47. One should honour and make the gift of an umbrella to one who propounds this ritualistic procedure, who is of noble birth and who is conversant with all the scriptures as though he is Lord Maheśvara himself.

48. One who listens to even one *Śloka* (verse) from an unworthy *Vācaka* (reciter or expounder) does not attain merit. He is remembered as *Sāstracaura* (scripture-thief).

49. Hence, by all means a wise man should honour the *Vācaka* (the reader or expounder). Otherwise his listening to the text shall be futile.

50. If thus a rare scriptural text is present in the house

of anyone, O goddess, Śiva shall be present there himself along with the Tīrthas.

51-52. Of what avail is much talk? He shall be the deserving recipient of salvation. This should not be offered to an atheist nor to a hypocrite. This should be offered to a tranquil Śaiva Brāhmaṇa of good mental and physical control.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINE

Glory of Mārkaṇḍeyaśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the excellent shrine of Mārkaṇḍeyaśa, installed by Mārkaṇḍa to the north thereof (i.e. Maṇkiśvara).

It is situated not far from the shrine of Sāvitri in the east. Formerly, there was a sage named Mārkaṇḍeya. Due to the favour of the Lotus-born Lord he was one immune from old age and death. He went there and realized that the holy spot was very excellent. The leading Brāhmaṇa thereupon installed the Liṅga of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas.

4. The sage sat on the right of the Liṅga and adored it in accordance with the injunctions. He seated himself in the lotus-pose and entered into meditation.

5. Even as the leading sage continued to be engaged in meditation, hundreds and millions of Yugas passed off but he did not realize it.

6. Then the palatial temple of Śiva began to get buried, O goddess, in the course of a long time under dust particles raised by the wind.

7. After some time, the excellent sage woke up. He found the entire temple covered up with dust particles.

8. The leading sage dug up the dust-layers and came out with great difficulty. O fair lady, he made a big door for the purpose of his adoration.

9. He who devoutly enters it and worships the Bull-embled Lord, goes to the great spot where Lord Maheśvara is present.

The Devī said:

10. How did the excellent sage Mārkandā attain immortality ? This curiosity has been awakened in me. It behoves you to explain.

11. O Śāṅkara, no living being on the earth is immortal. Even Devas perish at the end of a Kalpa. So how did the sage not meet with death ?

Īśvara said:

12. Now I shall narrate to you how he became immortal. In a former Kalpa, there was a sage well-known as Mṛkaṇḍa.

13. He was the son of Bhṛgu and the sage of esteemed fortune stayed along with his wife and performed a penance. While he was staying in the forest, a son was born to him.

14. He reached the age of five years. Even as a boy his qualities became evident. After some time a seer came there.

15. O my beloved, the boy was seen by him moving about in the courtyard. He recollects something. Impelled by the future event, he laughed for a long time.

16. The excellent seer conversant with Physiognomy was seen by his (the boy's) father. He was asked the reason for his laughter, by the father whose mind was overcome with surprise.

17. "O Brāhmaṇa, why did you laugh on seeing my son. O Brāhmaṇa, it behoves you to mention the reason thereof exactly."

18. On hearing these words of his, the Brāhmaṇa-seer uttered thus:

19-20. "O sage, this son of yours is endowed with all good characteristics. But, within six months from to-day, he will meet with his death. Yet, if he were to survive the death, he will become one long-lived. Hence, I laughed. Wonderfully inscrutable is the way of Karma".

21. After hearing these terrible words uttered by the seer, the father performed all the rites pertaining to the sacred thread ceremony of the boy.

22. On seeing the son of the Brāhmaṇa who came there the sage said, "All the three castes are to be bowed to. Thereby you will attain great welfare."

23. O lady of excellent countenance, the Brāhmaṇa boy who was thus instructed continued with his act of obeisance. A boy that he was, he did not mind the lower-born ones.

24. Five months and twenty five days elapsed. In the meantime, the pure Seven Sages arrived there.

25. O beautiful lady, they came that way in the course of their pilgrimage at that time. The boy wearing bark-garments and holding a staff duly made obeisance to them and he was blessed by them, "Be long-lived."

26. After saying thus, they looked at the boy once again and realized that his life was about to end. They came to know that he would live only for five more days. They became afraid of the lie implied therein.

27. Taking the religious student along with them they went near Brahmā. They placed the boy before Pitāmaha and bowed down to him.

28. Thereafter Brahmā was paid obeisance by that boy. In the presence of the sages, the boy was blessed, "Long live" by Brahmā.

29. On hearing the words from Pitāmaha, those sages were pleased. On seeing the sages who appeared surprised Pitāmaha spoke to them, "For what specific purpose did you come here? Why was the boy introduced?"

The sages said:

30. Mṛkaṇḍa is the son of Bhṛgu. The life span of his son is of short duration. Realizing this, the father tied the *Mekhalā* (religious girdle for sacred thread ceremony) before due time.

31-33. The sacred thread was also put. The boy was instructed by the Brāhmaṇas: "Whoever may be the twice-born that you may meet walking about in the world, O dear son, you must pay obeisance to him always. Then, O excellent one, we were met by the boy as we were engaged in pilgrimage. As Providence willed it, O Pitāmaha, he was given the blessing: "Be a long-lived one" by us, as we were bowed to.

34. He was brought to your presence and the same thing was uttered by you. O Lord, how can our words as well as those of yours turn out to be untrue?

35-36a. Pointing out the boy the Lotus-born One laughed and said: "This boy Mārkaṇḍeya shall have a life span on a

par with that of mine. At the beginning and the conclusion of the Kalpa he will assist me."

36b. Then the delighted sages took the boy of the sage and left him at the place whence he was picked up.

37. The Brāhmaṇas continued their pilgrimage and Mārkaṇḍeya went home and said to Mṛkaṇḍa, the excellent sage:

38-40a. "Dear father, I was taken to the world of Brahmā by the Seven Sages. This was spoken by Brahmā: 'This boy shall be my comrade (and assistant) at the beginning and conclusion of the Kalpa. There is no doubt about it. The boy shall have a life span on a par with that of mine.' Thereafter I was brought back by them and left near the hermitage. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, your anxiety and anguish on my account may be dispelled."

40b. On hearing the words of Mārkaṇḍeya, Mṛkaṇḍa the excellent sage, became extremely pleased, although he had experienced unbearable grief for a moment.

41. Then he summoned courage to pronounce thus:

42-44. "To-day my life has become fruitful and my living style has turned out to be excellent, since you, my excellent son, have seen the Grandfather of the worlds. My dear son, without effort you have seen the Lotus-born One whom learned people cannot see by means of a thousand Vājapeya and a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices. You have been made long-lived by him. I was miserable day and night due to you and could not even sleep. That excessive misery has disappeared now."

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TEN

Greatness of Pulastyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Pulastyeśvara situated within a distance of five Dhanus to the north of Mārkaṇḍeya shrine.

O goddess, by viewing that deity and by worshipping it in accordance with injunctions, a man becomes released from the

sins accumulated in the course of seven births. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED ELEVEN

Greatness of Pulaheśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. O goddess, a pilgrim should worship the deity named Pulaheśvara with devotion. The shrine is situated within eight Dhanus to the south-west of Pulastyeśvara. By making a gift of gold, he gets the benefit of a perfect pilgrimage.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWELVE

Greatness of Kratvīśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. By viewing the deity named Kratvīśvara, O goddess, a man shall obtain the benefit of the Yajña named Paṇḍarīka. It bestows the fruit of great sacrifices. O goddess, it is situated within a distance of eight Dhanus to the south-west of Pulaheśvara. He will never meet with poverty or any sort of misery in the course of seven births.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Greatness of Kaśyapeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the deity named Kaśyapeśvara stationed within a distance of sixteen Dhanus to the east of Kratvīśa. It is destructive of great sins. O goddess, by viewing the deity a man shall become

endowed with riches and progeny. Even if he is defiled by all sins he shall undoubtedly get them.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN

Greatness of Kauśikeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. The shrine of the deity named Kauśikeśvara is destructive of great sins. It is situated within a distance of eight *Dhanus* to the north-east of Kaśyapeśvara.

After killing the sons of Vasiṣṭha, the excellent scion of the family of Kuśika (i.e. Viśvāmitra) installed that Liṅga there. He became relieved of sins thereby.

By viewing and worshipping the deity a devotee obtains the benefit desired.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Greatness of Kumāreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine Kumāreśvara, which is not very far from Mārkaṇḍeśvara, to the south, O goddess. It is stationed within a distance of twenty *Dhanus*. O beautiful lady, it has been installed by Svāmin (Skanda). Kārttikeya had installed it. He performed a severe penance for the purpose of destroying the sins arising from abducting wives of other men. He installed the Liṅga there and was relieved of the sins thereby. Out of dejection and regret, he eschewed youth and assumed boyhood once again.

4-7. Formerly, Sumālin killed his Pitṛs (ancestors). Thereafter, he propitiated the deity, O goddess, and he too was relieved of the sins due to the slaughter of the Pitṛs.

This deity named Kumāreśvara was adored by Suras and Asuras.

O beautiful lady, in front of the shrine there is a well of Kumāra.

He who worships the Trident-bearing Lord, earlier worshipped by Svāmin, after taking his bath there (in the well), shall be freed from sins and shall go to the great Svāmipura.

He who offers a golden cock to the twice-born with the Svāmin in view, shall obtain the benefit of the pilgrimage.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Greatness of Gautameśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. O goddess, the excellent Liṅga named Gautameśvara is situated within a distance of fifteen *Dhanus* to the north of Mārkaṇḍeśvara.

O goddess, Gautama had killed his preceptor earlier. He became miserable due to the sins thereof. He installed a Liṅga there and got relief from that sin.

He who takes his bath in the river there in accordance with the injunctions and duly worships the Liṅga and offers a tawny-coloured cow, shall be relieved of all the five sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Glory of Devarājeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. The deity named Devarājeśvara is stationed in the shrine within a distance of sixteen *Dhanus*, not very far indeed to the west of Gautameśvara. He installed the Liṅga and thereby was relieved of the sins.

A man who worships the deity with concentrated mind, shall become relieved from the sin arising from human weaknesses.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

Greatness of Mānaveśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. There itself is the Mānava Liṅga installed by Manu formerly. O goddess, Manu became defiled by sins due to the slaughter of his son. After realizing that the holy spot is destructive of sins, he installed Īśvara and was relieved from that sin arising from the murder of his son. A man who worships it shall be relieved of sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETEEN

Greatness of Mārkandeyeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. O great goddess, there is a *Guhāliṅga* (a Liṅga in the cave) well-known as Nīlakanṭha. It is near the shrine of Mārkandeya in the south-east corner.

Earlier, it was worshipped by Viṣṇu. It is destructive of all sins.

He who devoutly worships that Liṅga, rejoices on the surface of the earth fully endowed with sons and cattle wealth. He becomes intelligent. The Liṅga is thus destructive of sins.

4. Thus, O great goddess, O beautiful lady, even to-day, hermitages of sages are seen in the vicinity of Mārkandeyeśa.

5. O goddess of Devas, eighty-eight thousand sages of sublimated sexuality dwell there in the vicinity of Mārkandeyeśa.

6. All the caves of the sages are seen there fully endowed with installed Liṅgas. The sages live in hermitages there and perform meritorious penance.

7. He who installs a Liṅga in the vicinity of Mārkandeyeśa there, redeems a hundred generations of his family and rejoices in heaven like a Deva.

8. All the worlds are permeated by Śiva. Everything is well-established in Śiva. Hence a wise man should worship Śiva, if he wishes for his own welfare.

9. A king who is not a devotee of Śiva but is devoted to other gods, is like a young woman who abandons her husband and gets herself diverted by others.

10. All the Suras beginning with Brahmā, kings of great prosperity, all men and sages worship the Liṅga.

11. Liṅgas marked after their own names have been duly installed by Indra and others in different places. They have been installed by human beings too in plenty.

12. By installing these, sins of Brāhmaṇa murder, foeticide and other great sins too have been surmounted by them, thanks to the glory of Śiva.

13. Formerly Śakra had killed Vṛtra but he installed a Liṅga of Śaṅkara named Mahendra. Thereby he was relieved of all sins and he went back to heaven.

14. Sūrya (Sun-god) installed Śiva (Liṅga) at the confluence of Gaṅgā and ocean and became free from ailments. So also the Moon-god after installing a Liṅga in Prabhāsa on the shore of the western ocean.

15. Āditya installed the Lord of the universe at Kāśī and Garuḍa and Kaśyapa on the Sahya mountain and attained great glory and stability.

16. Ahalyā whose fault became well-known was cursed by her husband (and converted into a rock) but she regained her womanhood by installing Iśāna. She then begot excellent sons.

17. Even to-day, women and men who take their holy bath and view Ahalyeśvara, are undoubtedly relieved of their defects and faults.

18. After installing Iśvara on the Śvetāśaila mountain both Bali and Virocana became the foremost among powerful ones and became immortal.

19. After killing Rāvaṇa along with his army, the Lord of Devas (Śiva) was installed by Rāma duly and devoutly on the shore of the ocean.

20. Nowhere is the earth seen bereft of the Liṅgas either self-born or installed by the sages or Devas etc. Abandon all other activities and worship Śiva always. All are seen to be close to the city of the god of Death.

21. O goddess, of what avail is much description and vain talk again and again. The essence of Prabhāsakṣetra is due to the hermitage of Mārkandeya.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTY

Greatness of Vṛṣabhadhvajeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-6. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go the shrine of the deity named Vṛṣabhadhvajeśvara, adored by all the three worlds. It is situated to the south thereof.

What is the immutable and unmanifest Supreme Being, than which there is nothing greater has neither beginning nor end. It is comprehensible only through Yoga which is on a par with Vṛṣabhadhvaja.

O goddess, it is full of all miracles. It is comprehensible through intellect. It is free from ailments. It has hands and feet everywhere. It has eyes, heads and mouths everywhere. The following sixteen (?) kings are blessed: Pṛthu, Marut, Bharata, Śāśabindu, Gaya, Śibi, Rāma, Ambarīṣa, Māndhātā, Dilipa, Bhagīratha, Suhotra, Rantideva, Yayāti, and Sagara (? fifteen?). They resorted to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and propitiated Vṛṣabhadhvajeśa Sthānu for a long time, performed Yajñas and went to heaven.

7. I tell the truth. I tell you what is beneficial. I tell you the essence repeatedly. In the insignificant damned world it is the worship of Śiva that is of some essence.

8. Birth and death recur again and again. There is pain and old age. Like a *Ghaṭīyantra* (wheel-contrivance for lifting water) this happens always but in the case of a devotee of Śiva it is not so.

9. The *Śveta* (white) knot of the worldly existence is difficult to cut. Let the adoration of Bhava be pursued. It puts an end to the worldly existence (*Saṁsāra*).

10. If there is devotion in anyone for Śiva, it is as good as though the *Cintāmaṇi* (Philosopher's Stone) is in his house. It is as though the *Kalpa tree* is in his family. It is as though Kubera is his servant.

11. Devotion to the Bull-emblemed One (Śiva) is the very fortune of men, if it is of the desirable nature. The very form is conducive to welfare.

12. By adoring Maheśvara here, even with five flowers, a man attains the fruit of ten horse-sacrifices.

13. (A replica in gold or a real) ‘bull should be gifted at this shrine in the presence of Vṛṣabhadhvaja by those who desire to obtain the fruit of a perfect pilgrimage, for the sake of quelling all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYONE

Greatness of Rṇamocana

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the deity named Rṇamocana. If the deity is visited, there shall no longer remain the indebtedness to mothers and fathers.

Formerly all the Pitṛs gathered together at Prabhāsa and stayed there for many years engaged in penance.

The Pitṛs called Agniśvāttas, Barhiṣads, Somapas and Ājyapas installed the Linga and all of them worshipped it devoutly.

4. After a great deal of time, Maheśvara became pleased with them. Appearing before them, he spoke these words:

5. “Welfare unto ye all. I am pleased. Speak out what is mentally desired and cherished.”

The Pitṛs said:

6. In this universe created by yourself let maintenance be granted to us on the earth, on behalf of the Devas, sages and human beings.

7-8. Let them be free from sins and be released from the indebtedness to ancestors. O Lotus-born One, you alone are the greatest among all in the world. Let all the people of the four castes endowed with faith, come here and be released from the indebtedness to the Pitṛs. O most excellent one among Suras, let them whose Pitṛs have attained the status of spirits be free from the same (state).

9-11. Let the greatest goal be attained by all those to whom libation has been offered here viz., those *Pitāmahas* who were killed by serpents, fire or poison, those for whom the sixteen Ekoddīṣṭa Srāddha rites were not performed due to want of Sapiṇḍikaraṇa whether they have sons or not, those on whose behalf the Vṛṣotsarga (release of a bull) was not performed, those who were killed by cows or base-born ones, and others who are dead but purificatory rites were not performed.

Śrī Bhagavān said:

12-13. Men with great devotion to the Pitṛs should take their bath in the holy waters and offer libation. I shall be the bestower of boons to them. I shall at that very moment redeem all of them even if they are defiled by hundreds of sins. There is no doubt.

14-15. A man who takes his holy bath in this holy Tīrtha and worships the Liṅga installed by you all, shall be relieved of indebtedness to the Pitṛs. It has been named Rṇamocana by me because by paying a visit to this Liṅga people are relieved of indebtedness.

16. A devotee should place gold on his head and take his holy bath in the Rṇamocana Tīrtha. Thereby he shall get his own self redeemed. It will be as though a hundred cows are given off (as religious gift).

17. After saying this the Lord vanished there itself. Hence, one shall perform Srāddha there assiduously. O great goddess, he shall worship that Pitṛliṅga which the Pitṛs like.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Greatness of Rukmavatīśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. There itself is situated the Liṅga installed by Rukmavatī. It suppresses all the sins and bestows all the desired benefits.

A pilgrim should take his holy bath in the great Tīrtha and pour water over the Liṅga carefully. Then he should make gifts of money to Brāhmaṇas. He will be relieved of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Greatness of Puruṣottama Tīrtha

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Liṅga well-known as Gātrotṣarga, which is adored by all the three worlds. It is stationed to the south thereof (i.e. of Rukmavatiśvara). It is the place where the wise Balabhadra and other Yādavas of great repute abandoned their bodies in the course of a battle.

It is the place where the Yādavas became weak and feeble due to the curse of Brāhmaṇas, as though they were bitten by a powerful serpent. This Puruṣottama Kṣetra extends to a hundred Dhanus all round.

4. O goddess, Lord Puruṣottama stands there directly manifested. This Vaiṣṇava Kṣetra is highly destructive of sins in the Kali age.

5. O goddess, this is a great secret. This most excellent of all Tīrthas was remembered as Pretatīrtha earlier in Kṛtayuga. After the advent of Kali Yuga, it became Gātrotṣarga.

6. In the centre of the region near Ṛṇamocana and Pāpamocana, if anyone happens to die he is relieved of all sins.

7. O goddess, how can the great and infinite merit of the pilgrimage there be extolled? By taking the holy bath there, the merit of a thousand horse-sacrifices is obtained.

8. It was here that Keśava resorted to an Aśvattha (holy fig tree), and directed his mind in a deep absorption. Thereafter he discharged through *Brahma-randhra* (cerebral aperture) the vital airs which are ordinarily very difficult to give up.

9. By worshipping directly in accordance with the injunctions, Nārāyaṇa, Balabhadra and Rukmiṇī there, the pilgrim is relieved of the three types of sins.

10. One should devoutly take his holy bath there and offer libation unto the Pitṛs. Those Pitṛs of the pilgrim who performs Śrāddha will become free from the state of *Preta* (a ghost, a spirit).

11. A man may be a Goghna (one who kills cows), Surāpa (one who imbibes liquor), Durmedhas (wicked-minded), Brāhmahā

(Brāhmaṇa-slayer), and Gurutalpaga (defiler of the bed of the preceptor). By taking the holy bath there, he immediately becomes free from sins.

12. A man may have committed sins during his childhood, youth or in old age, knowingly or unknowingly, O beloved, but by taking the holy bath in the Gātrapramocana Tīrtha (i.e. Gātrotṣarga) he shall become relieved of them.

13. Formerly Hari had said that by offering balls of rice there, the Pitṛs can be propitiated for a period of a hundred years.

14. If, O goddess of Devas, a man makes the gift of food there with great mental concentration and purity, no one in his family becomes a *Preta* (ghost).

Śrī Devi said:

15. It was originally called Pretatīrtha and afterwards Gātravimocana. Tell me, O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, the reason (why it was called) Pretatīrtha.

Īśvara said:

16. Listen, O goddess, I shall mention why it was called Pretatīrtha. On listening to this devoutly, a man shall become relieved of all sins.

17-19. Formerly, there was a great sage named Gautama of esteemed holy rites. He came to the excellent Prābhāsika Kṣetra from Bhṛgu Kalpa (modern Broach) with a desire to see Śrīsomeśa at the time of the sacred Uttarāyaṇa (Northern Transit).

After visiting Lord Someśvara and taking holy bath in all the Tīrthas, he proceeded on his pilgrimage and reached Gātrotṣarga.

20. O goddess, when this Brāhmaṇa reached that place, the outskirts of the place, the Vaiṣṇava forest, a favourite of Viṣṇu was seen.

21. It is a holy spot named Puruṣottama extending to an area of a hundred Dhanus. In that holy spot, he saw five horrible *Pretas*.

22-23. Those huge-bodied, excessively powerful *Pretas* were on a great tree. Their hairs were standing up erect and they

had spike-like ears. Their blood vessels were prominently visible on their bodies. They were devoid of blood and flesh. Their bodies were black and they were nude. On seeing them, he became extremely frightened and thought that he was doomed.

24-25. After meditating for a long time, he summoned courage and asked: "Who are you having hideous form? Formerly you were not seen by me. Why have you come to the centre of the holy spot? Distressed with great sorrow you appear to be running about. Hence is my great curiosity."

The ghosts said:

26-28. O highly esteemed one, we are *Pretas* (ghosts). On hearing that this holy spot is very sacred we have come from a very far-off place. But we are unable to gain an access therein. We have been shattered by the invisible *Gaṇas* by means of blows.

Our names are Lekhaka, Rohaka, Śūcaka, Śīghraga and I am the fifth one named Paryuṣita, the most sinful of all.

Gautama said:

29. Here it excites a great curiosity in me. By whom have these names been given to you all who have entered the state of ghosts?

The Pretas said:

30. This being here was wont to write on the ground the name of the Brāhmaṇa who used to come for begging. He does not read anything (gives anything) thereafter. Hence he is remembered as Lekhaka.

31. The second one used to climb on to the terrace because he was afraid of Brāhmaṇa. Therefore he came to be known as Rohaka. O Brāhmaṇa, hear about the third one.

32. Many Brāhmaṇas having wealth have been scandalously reported to the king by this being. Therefore he became notorious on the earth as Śūcaka due to this sin.

33. Whenever he was pressed with the requests of Brāhmaṇas, he used to run away. He never gave anyone anything. Hence this fellow is remembered as Śīghraga.

34. Stale and rotten food was always served to excellent Brāhmaṇas by me. On the other hand I always received gifts from Brāhmaṇas and adequate nourishment from sweet food. Hence I became nick-named as *Paryuṣita* on the earth.

Gautama said:

35. No living being can exist on the earth without food. What then is the diet that sustains you all? Do mention this to satisfy my curiosity.

The Pretas said:

36. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, should there be any quarrel over the food at the time of meal, the essence of that food is our intake.

37. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, if men neglect cleanliness and begin to take food while the ground is not swept neatly and daubed over properly that will form part of our food.

38. If anyone partakes of food without washing his feet or with his head covered with a turban, *Pretas* always take that food away.

39. If Śrāddha food is glanced at by a dog, a woman in her monthly period, a low-born one or a pig that constitutes our food.

40-41. If anyone were to make a monetary gift willy-nilly to someone other than the Brāhmaṇa traditionally honoured by his ancestors, we desire the sacred benefit of that *Dāna*. If there is perpetual quarrel in any house, if leavings of food are always scattered over and if there is no Vaiśvadeva sacrifice, we gleefully partake of that food there.

Gautama said:

42. Of what nature is that house where you people have no access? Tell me the truth. No untruth, please. Truth is befitting to good people.

The Pretas said:

43. O Brāhmaṇa, we have no entry into that house where the fumigation of incense arising from Vaiśvadeva is to be seen.

44. If a house is washed and daubed with cow-dung in the morning and the sound of the Vedic chants is audible, we have no entry therein.

Gautama said:

45. What is that sinful act whereby a man turns out to be a ghost? It behoves you to explain this in detail and also exactly.

The Pretas said:

46. Those who take away things under false pretext, those who move away with leavings of food unwashed, and those who are killed by cows and Brāhmaṇas turn out to be Pretas.

47. Those who habitually engage themselves in calumny, men who indulge in perjury, and those who never abide by justice, become *Pretas* after death.

48. Those men, who defile a lake by throwing into it human faeces, phlegm and urine become Pretas and wander here and there.

49. If, when some gift is made to Brāhmaṇas or sick men or cows, anyone objects to it by proclaiming "Do not give" they become *Pretas*.

50. If a Brāhmaṇa dies with the food offered by a Śūdra remaining undigested within his belly he certainly becomes a *Preta* even if he has learned all the six *Āngas* of the Vedas.

51. A man haughty enough to yoke three bullocks to the plough, and that too on the New-Moon day, becomes a *Preta*.

52. A man who is an atheist who curses and censures (good people, things etc.), who is petty-minded, who does not perform *Nitya* and *Naimittika* rites and who alienates Brāhmaṇas certainly becomes a *Preta*.

53. A man who commits breach of trust, who slays a Brāhmaṇa, who engages himself in committing the murder of a woman, who kills cows, and who commits patricide becomes a *Preta*.

54. If the sixteen Ekoddīṣṭa Śrāddha rites are not offered on behalf of anyone or Vṛṣotsarga (letting free a bull) is not performed to anyone, he becomes a *Preta*.

55. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, what we were asked has been completely answered. If still you have any doubt ask me again.

Gautama said:

56. What is that sacred rite as a result of which a man can avoid becoming a *Preta*? Do explain to me this completely. I am curious about it.

The Pretas said:

57. A man who is engaged in pilgrimage, who is devoted to the adoration of deities, and who is always a devotee of Brāhmaṇas, does not become a *Preta*.

58. He who always listens to the scriptures, who serves learned men and always puts question to the elders (for clearing doubt) never becomes a *Preta*.

59. It is for this reason that we have come here from afar. But we are unable to enter this excellent holy Kṣetra.

60. We are disgusted with *Pretahood*. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, be our redeemer. O highly esteemed one, endeavour to serve us all.

Gautama said:

61. How shall your release be effected? Tell me in full. With my mind moved with pity. I shall undoubtedly endeavour in this regard.

The Pretas said:

62. It is a long time for which we are in this *Preta* stage, O Lord. No man comes across our path to be able to redeem us.

63. Hence go to the Vaiṣṇava Kṣetra and offer us Śrāddha mentioning our names and lineage. Thereby we will get released.

Īśvara said:

64. Thereafter, the Brāhmaṇa who was overcome with pity went to Hari's abode and offered severally the Śrāddha unto each of them.

65. As the excellent Brāhmaṇa performed the Śrāddha unto one, he came to him in dream and spoke these words:

66. "O leading Brāhmaṇa, thanks to your favour. I have been relieved of Preta-hood. Hail unto you! My aerial chariot has come. I shall go."

67. In this manner he redeemed four excellent Brāhmaṇas.

68. When the fifth day dawned, this excellent Brāhmaṇa duly performed the Śrāddha unto Paryuṣita.

69. In dream he saw Paryuṣita in human form uttering piteous words and frequently sighing in distress.

Paryuṣita said:

70. O Brāhmaṇa, unlucky and sinful that I am, I am not redeemed yet because I had misappropriated the wealth collected for the sake of a lake.

Gautama said:

71. How can your redemption be brought about ? Tell me quickly in full. I shall do so even if it is very difficult. There is no doubt about it.

Paryuṣita said:

72. After the advent of Uttarāyaṇa (Northern transit of the Sun) you go to the Tīrtha dear to Hari and offer Śrāddha. Thereby I shall get redemption.

Īśvara said:

73. On being told thus by that *Preta*, the sage went to the Tīrtha that is Hari's favourite, during Uttarāyaṇa, and duly offered the Śrāddha to Paryuṣita.

74. At night Paryuṣita appeared to him in dream. He was beaming with pleasure. He was wearing divine garlands. He spoke these words:

Paryuṣita said:

75. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, with your favour, I have become released from the state of *Preta*. Hail unto you! I shall go. The aerial chariot has come.

76. I have attained divinity. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I am capable (of granting boons). I shall grant you a decent boon. Accept it.

77. Expiation has been laid down by good men in the case of a Brāhmaṇa-slayer, one who imbibes liquor, in regard to a thief, and one who has defaulted in the course of a *Vrata*. But no expiation has been laid down in the case of an ungrateful man.

Gautama said:

78. If a boon has to be granted to me, if you are capable of granting it, then I shall have this boon. I shall make my penance-grove at the spot where you all were seen as ghosts in great misery. I shall perform excellent penance.

79-80. I will be going back to my house after taking my holy bath in this great Tīrtha.

A man who, after taking bath devoutly, offers Śrāddha and propitiates gods there in accordance with the injunctions with the Pitṛs in view, shall become holy. With your favour, let there be no Pretahood in his family even if someone is sinful.

Paryuṣita said:

81. Do go, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, and make a hermitage there. You will attain great Siddhi and will attain renown in the world.

82. A man who devoutly offers Śrāddha there will be excellent. They will ride in the aerial chariot of the Pitṛs and go to heaven.

83-84. None among the members of his family shall attain Pretahood. Learned men of steadfast intellect say that friendship is formed with seven words (spoken) and seven steps (taken) together. With such a friendship in view, I shall proclaim now which please listen to. Your hermitage and penance-grove shall become a very sacred one on the earth.

85. It shall suppress all sins. It shall be destructive of all miseries. O lord, may this Tīrtha become famous after my name as *Preta-Tīrtha*.

Īśvara said:

86. "Let it be so" said the excellent Brāhmaṇa and performed all rites in accordance with what has been mentioned in the Vedas.

87-88. O my beloved, Paryuṣita too became delighted and attained heaven. All these events took place in this holy spot named *Gātramocana*. He who listens to this well, shall be released from all sins. He who visits Puruṣottama at the time of Śayana and Utthāpana at the Gātrotṣarga shall attain the benefit of ten thousand Yajñas.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Greatness of Indreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Liṅga installed by Indra. It is named Pāpamocana and it is to the south of Puruṣottama.

Formerly Śakra incurred the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter (Brahmahatyā) because he killed Vṛtra. He asked the sages of divine origin, how this sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter could be dispelled.

She (Brahmahatyā) was horrible to behold. It (she) caused a different colour to his body. She caused a stinking odour to spread everywhere and has destroyed all splendour.

4-5a. Then the groups of Devas and great sages beginning with Nārada told him, "O Lord of Devas, go to Prabhāsa. It is a holy spot that dispels sins. By propitiating Mahādeva there, you will be relieved of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter."

5b. O lady of excellent countenance, he said "So it shall be" and went there.

6. He installed a Liṅga of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas and became always engaged in adoring it through incense, scents and unguents.

7. Thereupon the bad odour of his body got destroyed soon. The discoloration vanished and the body became excellent.

8-9. Then he became delighted in his mind and said these words: "A man who comes here and adores this deity devoutly, shall be relieved of sins of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter etc." After saying thus, the Thousand-eyed One (Indra) went to heaven.

10. Having been relieved of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter, he was honoured by the Heaven-dwellers.

In that holy spot, a cow should be gifted to a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas. In order to dispel the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter the devotee should perform Śrāddha.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

Greatness of Anarakeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-6. O great goddess, a pilgrim should thence go to the shrine of the deity Anarakeśvara situated to the north thereof (i.e. Indreśvara). It is destructive of all sins. O my beloved, I shall explain its greatness, listen attentively.

The city named Mathurā is well-known all over the earth. Formerly there was a Brāhmaṇa well-known as Devaśarmā in that city. He was born of the Agastya Gotra. He was learned but was greatly afflicted with poverty.

O goddess of Devas, there was another Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas. He had the same name and descended from the same Gotra. In form and age he was also the same as the other one.

Once Yama ordered his messenger Raudramūrdhaśiroruha (one with hideous head and hairs). "O, go to Mathurā quickly and bring Devaśarman."

Accordingly the messenger came there and took Devaśarman. On seeing him Yama bowed down to him but said to the messenger angrily. "You have not been asked to fetch this Devaśarman. There is another Devaśarman whose span of life has come to an end. Bring him here. Take this Brāhmaṇa of long span of life back to that place quickly."

Īśvara said:

7. Then the Brāhmaṇa said: "O Lord, I will not go home. O Lord of Suras, throughout my life I have been pestered by poverty and I have become disgusted. I shall spend the rest of my life here in your presence."

Yama said:

8. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, no one comes here before time. If the time (duration of life) is over no one stays on the earth even for a short while.

9. That is why my name is well-known as Dharmarāja.

10. There is no one on the surface of the earth who can be called intimate friend or anyone worthy of being hated (by me). Even if a man is pierced by a hundred arrows, he does not die before the stipulated time.

11. If the time (span of life) is over, then if a man is pricked by even the tip of a blade of Kuśa grass, he does not remain alive.

Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, go back before the body is cremated.

12-15. Then the Brāhmaṇa said, "O Lord, if you are sending me back, it behoves you to explain exactly the following question. O Lord, meeting good people cannot pass off in vain at any place. Particularly so in your case. So I am saying thus. O Yama, here we see extremely horrible Narakas (Hells). What is that (sinful) deed as a result of which a man goes to a Naraka? How many are these Narakas? Of what extent? O most excellent one among Suras, it behoves you to explain everything as it is."

Yama said:

16. O Sir, listen. I shall mention how many of these Narakas are there. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, I shall also mention the act as a result of which a man goes there. Twenty-one Narakas are stated to be in my abode.

17. Here, O Brāhmaṇa, you see some people trapped between machines and tortured by my servants. They are ungrateful ones full of sins.

18-22. You see some whose eyes are plucked out by crows with steel-like beaks. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the wives of others have been always eyed lustfully by these sinners of wicked hearts.

Here you see some sinners cooked in the Kumbhipāka. They were indulging in perjury and utterances of harsh words.

Here some wicked-minded people who had been in close

intimacy with other men's wives are seen embracing heated iron pillars blazing like fires.

O excellent Brāhmaṇa, all these are guilty of breach of trust, these who lie in the middle of the Vaitaraṇī, turbid with putrid blood.

Those who are being cut and smashed to pieces in the hideous Asipatravana are those who had fled away forsaking their masters when a war was imminent.

23. These base men who are being dragged through heaps of blazing coals were those who indulged in treachery against their masters and were (atheists) engaged in controversial disputations.

24. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, those who never gifted shoes are base men. Here they move about bare-footed in the places full of iron spikes and cry aloud.

25. These base men who are tied to the trees in topsy-turvy position above burning fire are guilty of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

26. These people who are being bitten and eaten by mosquitoes, bugs, crows and other birds had been engaged in teasing persons performing *Vratas* and spoiling their *Vratas* as well.

27. These people with axes held against their necks are mostly like the people of wicked soul, killing cows and censoring deities and Brāhmaṇas.

28-29. Those who are being eaten by jackals and wolves with their jaws hard like steel are those who had misappropriated other people's wealth and abducted other men's wives.

O excellent Brāhmaṇa, these sinners who seem to be very hungry and go on eating their own flesh are ones by whom cooked food was never given to others.

These people who drink blood mixed with putrid fat are those who were always bent upon destroying Brāhmaṇas and cows.

30. These people who are tied to Kūṭaśālmalī (thorny species of trees intended for torture) and are being tortured with sharp thorns were those who were always eager to find out vulnerable foibles and weaknesses of others.

31. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, these people who are being cut with *Krakacas* (saws) were eager to eat prohibited food, thereby defiling their own religion and righteousness.

32. Those who sold virgins and spoiled the lives of virgins are now kept inside burning husks (Kārīṣa) and scorched by my servants.

33. (Here you see) some whose tongues are frequently plucked out, they are those who were engaged in transgressing their own promises and uttering falsehood.

34. These people who are frequently shivering and who are distressed due to chilliness are those who had taken away Brāhmaṇas' money and temple assets.

35. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, huge and excessive burden has been placed upon the heads of those people. Hence, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, they howl horribly.

Yama said:

36. Thus, O excellent Brāhmaṇa, the nature and salient features of Narakas have been narrated to you. So also their ways of functioning.

37. O highly esteemed one, go back quickly lest your body should be burned.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

38. O most excellent one among Suras, tell me everything with single-pointed attention. How can a man avert falling into Narakā?

39. Persons of clever intellect say that friendship is formed on *Saptapada* (speaking of seven words/walking together seven steps). It behoves you to explain succinctly considering our friendship.

Yama said:

40. A man who goes to Prabhāśa Kṣetra and visits the excellent shrine of Anarakeśvara devoutly will never see Narakā.

41-42a. It is this Liṅga that was installed by me, endowed with devotion to Śiva. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, this secret has been divulged to you out of love. At my instance this should be guarded assiduously.

42b. The Brāhmaṇa who was told thus went to the earth himself.

43. He regained his body. On recollecting those words of Dharmarāja he became wonderstruck.

44. O lady of excellent beauty, he went there (i.e. to Prabhāsa) and always worshipped the Lord as long as he lived. Then he attained the greatest Siddhi.

45. Hence a man should devoutly and assiduously visit the deity. Even if he is a sinner, he never falls into a hell.

46. He who performs Śrāddha there on the fourteenth day in the dark half of Aśvayuk, in accordance with the injunctions, shall derive the merit of a horse-sacrifice.

47. The hide of a black antelope should be gifted there to a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas. He is honoured in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the hide.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

Greatness of Megheśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. There is a shrine destructive of all sins well-known as Megheśvara. It is situated to the east of that (the shrine Anarakeśvara) and to the south-west of Pāpamocana.

When there is the danger from draught, Śānti rites should be performed there through Brāhmaṇas. The ground to the west should be adored after drenching it with water.

There is no fear from drought at the place where the Liṅga installed by the clouds is worshipped everyday.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

Greatness of Balabhadreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the shrine of the Liṅga installed by Balabhadra situated to the north of Gātrotṣarga. It is destructive of great sins.

The great Liṅga, O goddess, is conducive to the attainment of great Siddhis. It was installed by Balabhadra in accordance with the injunctions for the purification of sins.

He who devoutly adores it with sweet scents, flowers etc., on the day when *Trīyā* (third lunar day) and Revatī coincide, shall obtain the position of a master of Yoga.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

Greatness of Bhairaveśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine at the holy site of the Mothers. It is well-known as Bhairaveśa and is destructive of all fears and dangers.

On the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half, the devotee of great self-restraint should worship by means of scented flowers and oblation of great excellence. The Yoginīs, the Mothers, protect him like their own son.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

Greatness of Gaṅgā

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to Gaṅgā of triple streams to the north-east of Anarakeśa shrine.

It has sprung by itself from the centre of the earth. It was brought by Viṣṇu earlier for the salvation of the Yādavas and to quell all sins.

He who, out of accumulated merits gathered with difficulty, performs the rite of ablution and Śrāddha rite in accordance with the injunctions will not regret or bemoan his omissions and commissions.

4. O goddess, by bathing in the waters of Jāhnavī on the Full-Moon day in the month of Kārttika one shall obtain the merit that one gets by making the gift of the entire Cosmic Egg.

5. After the advent of Kali Age, the opportunity of viewing it is very rare. Holy bath and ritualistic gifts in the waters of Jāhnavī at Prabhāsa is still rarer.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTY

Greatness of Gaṇapati

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the deity, my dear Gaṇapati. It is situated there itself. He was appointed there guarding the holy spot, O goddess, on the south of Gaṅgā. The devotee should worship the deity on the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half of the month of Māgha with the divine food offerings of *Modakas* (sweetmeats), flowers, incense etc. in due order. As long as he stays in the holy spot, he will never meet with any obstacle.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Greatness of Jāmbavatī Nadī (River)

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, a pilgrim should go to the spot where the Jāmbavatī river flows.

Formerly the favourite crowned queen of Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the chaste lady named Jāmbavatī, asked Arjuna, “O scion of the family of Kurus, tell me the news.”

On hearing her words, Arjuna heaved sighs again and again and said with words choked with tears. He said: “O fair lady, we have been abandoned by the noble-souled Yādavas, the

heroic Baladeva, the noble-souled Sātyaki and other Yādava heroes. I have been dismissed by Vāsudeva and am a hard-hearted sinner. I have come here to keep alive somehow."

5-8. The great chaste lady heard the (news of) death of her husband from Arjuna, flashing like fire. She kindled the funeral pyre on the banks of Gaṅgā. She abandoned her gross body and issued forth in the form of a river. Then the holy Jāmbavatī gathered all the ashes of her husband from the funeral pyre and entered the ocean.

O goddess of Devas, if a woman devoutly takes her holy bath there, no woman in her family shall ever face widowhood.

Hence one, whether man or woman, should assiduously bathe there (in the river). He or she attains the greatest goal.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

Greatness of Pāṇḍava Kūpa

Īśvara said:

1-3. To the west of the holy spot thereof is the well of the noble-souled Pāṇḍavas, O great goddess. It is adored by all the three worlds.

O great goddess, wandering over the whole surface of the earth, the Pāṇḍavas entered the forest and reached the holy spot of Prabhāsa. Then they lived there for some time with great concentration.

Kṛṣṇa (Draupadī) came to the meritorious holy spot and said:

4-5. "Thousands of Brāhmaṇas take food in the abode of you all noble ones. Whatsoever water reservoir there may be is very far-off. Further we do not have many servants. Hence a water reservoir should be created very near our hermitage where due to your graceful favour I will take my regular bath."

6. O lady of excellent countenance, urged by Draupadi's utterance all the Pāṇḍavas jointly dug a well.

7. On hearing that the Pāṇḍavas had come there the Lord, the son of Devakī too, came there from Dvārakā along with his kinsmen.

8-10. He was accompanied by Pradyumna, Sāmba, Gada, Niṣadha, Yuyudhāna, Rāma and the wise Cārudeṣṇa. He was surrounded by other heroes, the Yādavas, skilled in fighting. All these leading Yādavas gathered together duly. Thereafter, at the end of their general discussion Vāsudeva spoke to the son of Pāṇḍu these words with some object in view:

11. “O Yudhiṣṭhīra, what desire of yours shall I fulfill? Is it kingdom, food-grains, wealth or the destruction of enemies (that you desire)?”

Yudhiṣṭhīra said:

12. O excellent one among the Yādavas, you are competent in all undertakings. There is no doubt. Formerly you promised (us) our happiness within twelve years.

13. O Lord of the Universe, you are bowed to by all the Devas. There is nothing which cannot be achieved on the earth, rather in all the three worlds, if you are pleased.

14. Certainly if you are pleased with me, O Lord of all the worlds, O Janārdana, come and remain in this well.

15. If a man comes here and devoutly takes bath here, O Keśava, let him go to the abode of Viṣṇu with your favour.

Īśvara said:

16. After saying, “It will be so.” Krṣṇa bowed to by all the worlds, took leave of Yudhiṣṭhīra and went to Dvārakā.

17-20. By performing Śrāddha therein, a man obtains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice by the grace of Viṣṇu, the Lord of Devas, the Lord of unmeasured splendour. By means of libation, a moiety of that benefit and by holy ablution a fourth thereof, shall be obtained. Hence one should perform Śrāddha with all efforts. He who takes bath, and performs Śrāddha after adoring Sāvitrī, will go to the greatest region. The gift of a cow should be made there by those who wish to get the benefit of a perfect *pilgrimage*.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

Greatness of Pāñdaveśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. O goddess, a purified pilgrim should adore the five Liṅgas installed by the noble-souled Pāñdavas.

He who adores them devoutly shall become relieved of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

Greatness of Daśāśvamedhā (Tīrtha)

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the Tīrtha named Daśāśvamedhika. It is destructive of major sins and is well-known all over the three worlds.

Considering this Kṣetra as very excellent, Bharata came here formerly and performed ten horse-sacrifices, O fair lady.

O fair lady, the Thousand-eyed Lord was pleased by imbibing Soma there. Wretched ones were pleased due to the food-stuffs and beverages and the twice-born ones were pleased with the monetary gifts. All the Devas who were delighted spoke to king Bharata: “O mighty one, we have been gratified by means of your Yajñas. O great king, choose your boon whatever you have in your mind.”

The king said:

5. Let a man who comes here and devoutly takes his holy bath obtain the splendid benefit of ten horse-sacrifices.

The Devas said:

6. Due to one’s faith one will attain the benefit of ten horse-sacrifices. This Tīrtha will become famous after the name *Daśāśvamedhika* all over the earth. O great king, no doubt need be entertained in this respect.

Īśvara said:

7. Ever since then that Tīrtha, the destroyer of all sins, came to be well-known as *Daśāśvamedhika*.

8. The Aśvamedhika Kṣetra extends east to west from Gomukha. Learned men know that the holy spot of Śiva is in between.

9. It is divine and destructive of all sins. It is like a flight of stairs unto heaven. It is glorified as the abode of one and a quarter crores of Tīrthas.

10-12. If life is given up there, one rejoices in the world of Śiva. Sinful ones, worms, birds and animals and all brutish beings too go to the greatest abode where Lord Maheśvara dwells.

By offering libation of gingelly seeds mixed with water, all the Pitṛs on mother's side and father's side become pleased till all living beings get annihilated.

There, innumerable excellent Yajñas were performed earlier by Brahmā.

13. By performing a Yajña there, Śakra obtained the kingship of Devas.

One hundred Yajñas were formerly performed by Kārtavīrya there.

14. Thus, O my beloved, that excellent spot within the Kṣetra is very excellent. It accords freedom from rebirth unto all creatures that die there.

15. He who has purified his soul and performs the rite of Vṛṣotsarga (setting a bull free) is honoured in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the body of the bull.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Liṅgatraya

Īśvara said:

1-3. A devotee should visit the three excellent Liṅgas stationed there itself. They are *Śatamedha*, *Sahasramedha* and *Koṭimedha* in due order.

The *Satamedha Liṅga* situated on the southern side yields the merit of a hundred Yajñas. Formerly a hundred Yajñas were performed there by Kārtavīrya after installing the great Liṅga that is destructive of all sins.

The Liṅga that is in the middle is well-known as *Koṭimedha*.

4. After installing Śaṅkara, the great Lord, the benefactor of the worlds there, excellent *Makhas* (*Yajñas*) numbering a crore were performed by Brahmā formerly.

5-8. The Liṅga that is on the northern side is named *Sahasramedha*. It was there that Śakra, the king of Devas, performed a thousand *Kratus* (*Yajñas*) after installing the great Liṅga of the primordial deity of all Devas.

If a devotee worships them in accordance with the injunctions with sweet scents and flowers as well as fresh waters with Pañcāmrta Rasa, he shall attain the stipulated benefit, O fair lady. This is the origin and there are the names of the Liṅgas.

Gift of cows should be made there are by those who wish to derive the benefit of perfect pilgrimage. O fair lady, there are a million Tirthas there and the three Liṅgas in the middle are destructive of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Greatness of Durvāsāditya

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the excellent shrine of Durvāsāditya where penance was performed by sage Durvāsas for a period of a thousand years without taking any food. Eager for the propitiation of the Sun-god, he completely subdued the desire for food.

After the lapse of a long time, the Sun-god of divine splendour, the Lord protector of People, appeared personally before the great sage and said:

Sūrya said:

O Brāhmaṇa, do not be rash. O sage of excellent holy rites,

choose your boon. I shall grant you whatever has been cherished in your mind even if it be inaccessible and rare.

Durvāsas said:

4-6. O Lord, if you are pleased, if I desire any boon, you must stay here in this spot as long as this world exists.

Let a beautiful icon of yours installed by me here become famous in the world after my name as Durvāsāditya.

O Lord of the universe, let there be your presence therein. So also let your daughter Yamunā be present. So also, your son of great splendour, the mighty Dharmarāja (Yama).

Sūrya said:

7-8. O excellent sage, all this sought by you shall take place. O great sage, another crore of the Tīrthas beginning with Gaṅgā, shall certainly come to your holy spot at my bidding. O holy Brāhmaṇa, I shall also be present in this spot along with Devas.

9. Aided by their greatness as well as the might of the Ādityas residing within the Cosmic Egg, O great sage, I shall be present here.

10. At the vision of Durvāsāditya, one shall get crore times the merit obtained when a thousand Savitṛs (Sun-gods) are viewed.

11. All living beings shall earn that merit and also the merit of a crore of Yajñas.

After saying thus, Sūrya remembered his daughter and also Dharmarāja, the controller of all living beings.

12. Immediately after being remembered, she pierced through the surface of the nether-worlds and rose up in the form of a river accompanied by a crore of Tīrthas.

13. Lord Yama too, holding the Kāladaṇḍa (Staff of Death) came out. Both of them told Sūrya, the witness unto the universe, with great feelings of affection.

Yama said:

14. May the Lord of the universe command me and Yamunā too. Undoubtedly I shall carry out the task necessary for the inevitable future.

Sūta (Sūrya ?) said:

15-19. At my bidding you must stay here in this holy spot in your own form. Assiduously you must guard living beings and sinners. All householder Brāhmaṇas, devotees of the Sun-god, should always be protected.

O Yamunā, you too stay here, delighted in this holy spot originated by Durvāsas. You shall be in the company of a crore of Tīrthas.

After saying thus in the presence of Durvāsas the Lord of Devas vanished even as all the Devas were watching.

While the delighted Durvāsas was surveying his hermitage, Yamunā issued forth through the path of Pātāla. The delighted Lord Yama was also present there assuming the form of Kṣetrapa (Guardian of the holy spot).

Īśvara said:

20-22. It was in this manner that the Kuṇḍa of Yamunā originated there. It is to the south of Āditya (i.e. Durvāsāditya) and Dundubhi is to the east. It is the Kṣetrapāla, O great goddess, because he had the sound of Dundubhi (a drum).

If a devotee takes his holy bath in the great Kuṇḍa and offers libation to the Pitṛs, the grandfathers will be pleased for fifteen years. Rice-balls offered shall gratify the Pitṛs. There is no doubt about this that those who are in Naraka will become liberated.

23. A devotee who controls himself and worships Durvāsāditya on the seventh day in the bright half of the month of Māgha, shall become relieved of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

24. In the month of Mādhava, after taking holy bath in the Yamunākundā, the man (the devotee) should devoutly worship Ravi (Sun-god) who is the ornament unto firmament.

25. He should read (recite) the Thousand Names in the vicinity of Durvāsāditya. The man (the creature) shall become liberated even if he were a Brāhmaṇa-slayer.

26. Who will not worship the deity, the Sun-god named Durvāsāditya, the destroyer of all sins, and who is the most auspicious of all auspicious things!

27. O my beloved, there is no danger or fear that does not get dispelled by viewing the deity, Durvāsāditya, there.

28. All desires become realized whatever may be wished for. The deity accords the gain of a son unto even barren women. It destroys the terror of all those who are afraid.

29. The vision of Durvāsāditya bestows prosperity on the impoverished ones. It is the greatest antidote for lepers. It dispels (the effect of) malefic Planets and Rākṣasas (spirits) of all children. It suppresses great sins.

30. A golden horse should be gifted to a Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas with the Sun-god in view, O fair lady, which is as meritorious as though the entire earth is donated as a religious gift.

31. A man who worships Lord Kṣetrapāla, Dundubhi, shall become endowed with sons, cattle, intellect and prosperity.

32-33. O lady of excellent complexion, he will not have the threefold fear (bodily, caused by gods and those caused by living beings). There is not even half a Gavyūti there, where the name of Ravi is not remembered. No creature devoid of devotion to the Sun-god can enter that holy spot. Thus, O goddess, the greatness of the Sun-god has been told.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

Greatness of Vajrēśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to, the excellent holy spot Yādavasthala where fifty-six crores of Yādavas perished.*

It was here that Lord Vajrēśvara was always propitiated by Vajra. It was here that there was a community-centre and hermitage of sages of divine vision.

The Devī said:

O Lord, how did the Andhakas and the powerful Bhojas perish along with the Vṛṣnis even as Vāsudeva was watching?

By whom were those heroic Vṛṣnis, Bhojas, Andhakas and

* The fratricidal battle of Yādavas.

others cursed and destroyed? O Mahādeva, narrate this in detail to me.

Īśvara said:

5. When the thirty-sixth Kali Year arrived* Andhakas and Vṛṣṇis, urged by Kāla (God of death, bad time) hit one another with pestles and killed.

6. Bhojas with Sāraṇa as their leader** saw Viśvāmitra, Kanva, the glorious Nārada and other sages who visited Dvārakā.

7. Harassed by the divine punishment (as it were) they adorned Sāmba like a woman and brought him near the sages and said:

8. "O sages, this is the wife of Babhru of unmeasured splendour who is desirous of a son. You know fully well what she will deliver."

9. On being told thus, O goddess, those sages, assailed by this deceitful trick, replied. Listen to it exactly as it is.

The sages said:

10. This Sāmba, the son of Vāsudeva, will deliver a terrible iron *Musala* (huge pestle) for the purpose of destroying Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas.

11. Thereby you, the ruthless people of highly wicked activities, will become angry and will cause the annihilation of the entire family except Rāma and Janārdana.

12. The glorious Lord wielding the ploughshare as his weapon will abandon you all and the earth as well and will go away. Even as the highly esteemed Kṛṣṇa remains lying, (a hunter named) Jara will hit him (with an arrow).

13. O goddess, so said the sages who had been deceived by the evil-minded ones. Their eyes were red with anger and they looked at one another (meaningfully).

14-15. Thereafter, on hearing this, the intelligent Madhusūdana (Kṛṣṇa), the knower of everything, told Vṛṣṇis: "It is the inevitable fate." After saying this, the Lord entered his house.

* According to BhP.and other Purāṇas Kali Yuga started on the very day (time) Kṛṣṇa died. The Purāṇa-author is not correct here.

** The reading in the text 'sāraṇa-pramukhān bhojān' should be amended as 'sāraṇa-pramukhāḥ bhojāḥ' as they are the doers. Hence nominative case is necessary.

16. The Lord of the universe, did not wish to alter the destiny. When the day dawned, Sāmba gave birth to the *Musala*.

17. He delivered the great *Musala* that resembled the servant of Yama, and that was capable of destroying the Vṛṣnis and Andhakas. By it all the male members in the families of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas were reduced to ashes.

18. He gave birth to the terrible (pestle) as a result of the curse and showed it to the king. The king who was in a dilemma got it reduced to fine powder.

19-21. The officer commanded by the king, hurled it into the ocean. Then, at the bidding of Āhuka (grandfather of Kṛṣṇa), Janārdana, Rāma and the noble-souled Babhru, the officer proclaimed: "From today no liquor or wine should be imbibed by any of the residents of the realm in the houses of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas. If it comes to be known that any man among you has done so somewhere, he shall be impaled alive on the spike, not only himself but also his immediate kinsmen."

22. Thereat, all of them restrained themselves due to the fear of the king. Further, they knew that it was the bidding of Rāma of unwearied actions.

23. Even as the Vṛṣnis along with the Andhakas were endeavouring to act upto this, Kāla (god of Death) wandered around their houses everyday.

24-25. A hideous, horrendous being with shaven head, dark and tawny in colour, went round surveying the houses of Vṛṣnis. His prominent emblem was a broom. He was adorned with Japā flowers, and Raktikās (Guñjā seeds) were his ear-rings. His vehicle was a chameleon.

26. He had a great bow with hundreds and thousands of arrows. He was not able to hit the Lord in whom all living beings always merge.

27. For the sake of predicting annihilation of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas, violent gusts of winds blew everyday. They caused horripilation and were terrible.

28. Mice increased in number. They scoured on the streets. They cut with their teeth the hairs of young women and men while asleep at night.

29. Sārikā birds shrieked "cī-cī-kū-cī" in the abodes of Vṛṣnis. That noise continued day and night and never ceased.

30. O fair lady, in the houses of Vṛṣṇis owls hooted after the crowing of crows and goats bleated imitating the howling of jackals.

31. Grey-coloured birds urged by Kāla and pigeons with red feet hovered around the houses of Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas.

32. Donkeys were born of cows and camels of mules; cats were born of bitches and mice of mongooses.

33. Committing sins resulting in the three types of distresses, Vṛṣṇis alienated Brāhmaṇas, manes and gods.

34. They insulted the elders and preceptors but not Rāma and Janārdana. Wives were faithless and disloyal to their husbands and men violated fidelity to their wives.

35. When kindled, fire (in the Agniśālā) whirled leftwards. Blue, pink and madder-red flames became diffused severally.

36. At the time of setting and rising everyday the sun appeared diffused. Once it was seen surrounded by headless trunks by men.

37. O fair lady of excellent countenance, when food was got ready cooked in the kitchens and when seasoned food was being taken, worms were seen.

38. When Puṇyāha (auspicious day) was being announced (thrice) and when saints and noble souls recited sacred syllables, it was heard as though people were running but no one was seen directly.

39. Everyone saw the constellation of another being struck down by all the planets but not his own.

40. The fire consecrated by Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas did not cook the offerings made in it by Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas. Donkeys of hideous howl screamed and shrieked all round.

41. Seeing that ominous changes of times had come thus, Hṛṣīkeśa observed that the New-Moon day had fallen on the thirteenth Tithi (i.e. the fortnight was of thirteen day).

42-43. "This thirteenth lunar day as the fifteenth lunar day has been brought about by Rāhu once again. It first occurred at the time of the Mahābhārata battle, and now it has occurred again for the purpose of our destruction. Fie upon that (bad) time!" After reflecting on it, Janārdana, the slayer of Keśin, become sure that the thirty-sixth year (the year to which Gāndhārī who was grieving over her sons, had referred to) had come.

44-46. Hṛṣikeśa noticed that the same thing had repeated itself. Formerly when the armies were set ready, Yudhiṣṭhīra had noticed terrible bad omens and he had averred at that time thus: "Nothing else can bring about welfare except listening to holy scriptures, performance of Śānti (peace) Homas, expiatory rites and ablutions in the holy Tīrthas."

After expressing this, Vāsudeva, the suppressor of enemies, desired to carry it out earnestly. He then commanded them to proceed on pilgrimage.

47. O lady of excellent complexion, at the bidding of Keśava, persons-in-charge thereof announced thus: "Pilgrimage to Prabhāsa should be undertaken."

48. I shall now mention the pertentious phenomena foreboding evil around the city of Dvārakā. A woman of dark complexion with grey teeth entered the city at night.

49.50. She ran towards Dvārakā abducting women during their dreams in sleep. The terrifying woman was seen in the dream devouring Vṛṣnis and Andhakas in their abodes of Agnihotra and other sacred centres. Accompanied by cocks and dogs, she raised terrible cries and shrieks.

51. From the wombs of women, thousands of terrible four-armed Rākṣasas and Guhyakas were born.

52. Ornaments, umbrellas, flags and armours were seen being taken away by terrible Rākṣasas.

53. Even as Vṛṣnis stood watching, the steel discus Vajranābha of Kṛṣṇa which was given to him by Agni (Fire-god) went up into the sky.

54. They saw the awē-inspiring divine chariot of Dāruka blazing like the Sun and readily fitted (with horses). They saw the four important horses as swift as mind, standing above the ocean.

55. And also (they saw) the two great banners honoured much by Rāma and Janārdana, viz. Tāla (Palm tree) and Suparṇa (Garuḍa) sung (i.e. praised) by excellent celestial damsels. They proclaimed: "May the pilgrimage be undertaken."

56. Then the mighty warriors of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas wanted to proceed ahead. Those bulls among men desired to undertake the pilgrimage along with their womenfolk.

57. Confirmed meat-eaters, those Vṛṣnis joyously prepared

different kinds of beverages and all varieties of non-vegetarian dishes in their abodes.

58. After the liquors were got ready, they set out from the city. They appeared glorious and fiery in splendour with their horses, elephants and vehicles.

59. Then the Yādavas and their womenfolk encamped in Prabhāsa in their respective abodes and areas equipped with plenty of foodstuffs and drinks.

60. Having heard that they had properly settled down on the seashore, Uddhava, well-conversant with the practice of Yoga and proficient in all subjects, took leave of all those heroes.

61. As that noble-souled one joined his palms in veneration and set off, Hari returned the salutation. Realizing the utter annihilation of Bhojas, he did not desire to restrain him.

62. Surrounded by Kāla (assailed by the agents of Kāla) those mighty warriors of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas watched Uddhava going ahead illuminating heaven and earth.

63. O lady of excellent countenance, they gave unto those in charge of vehicles, the food that had been prepared for the Brāhmaṇas. They added various scented juices and liquor to the original foodstuffs.

64. Thereafter the drunken bout of the people of fiery splendour started there at Prabhāsa. There were hundreds of musical instruments. The place was over-crowded with actors and dancers.

65. In the presence of Kṛṣṇa, Rāma had his drink along with Kṛtavarman. Yuyudhāna, Gada and Babhru too drank.

66. Then in the open assembly the inebriated Yuyudhāna laughed derisively. Insulting Kṛtavarman he said thus:

67. "Which man professing to be a (true) Kṣatriya will slay sleeping persons no better than dead ones?". Hārdikya did not tolerate it. Is what you had committed a good thing ?" (He retorted.)

68. When this was said by Yuyudhāna, Pradyumna, the foremost among warriors moving about in chariots, honoured his words, even rebuking Hārdikya.

69. Thereat Kṛtavarman became furious again. Penetrating him (as it were) contemptuously with his left hand, he said to him:

70. "Bhūriśravas had maimed arms. He was in ritualistic fast. Yet he was slain ruthlessly and spitefully like a cruel hunter."

71. On hearing these words of his, Keśava, the slayer of inimical heroes, saw obliquely with an angry look, although he is the Puruṣa (the primordial Being) of equanimity.

72. How did Sātyaki remind Madhusūdana of Syamantaka? The jewel Syamantaka belonged to Satrājīt.

73. On hearing it, the chaste lady Satyabhāmā fell into the lap of Keśava with great perturbation and she cried. This made Janārdana angry.

74.77. Then Sātyaki sprang up angrily and said these words: "O Satyabhāmā, I shall follow the truthful path of the five sons of Draupadi and Śikhaṇḍī and Dhṛṣṭadyumna during their sleep. They were killed by that evil-minded one, the sinful Kṛtavarman helped by the son of Drona (i.e. Aśvatthāmā). O lady of slender (excellent) middle, his life and fame will end to-day." After uttering this in the vicinity of Keśava, he cut off the head of Kṛtavarman angrily.

78. As Yuyudhāna was killing others too all round Hṛṣīkeśa ran after him in a bid to restrain him.

79. Due to the adversereness of his time, Bhojas and Andhakas joined together and surrounded the great king Śaineya (i.e. Yuyudhāna).

80. Though the highly lustrous Janārdana watched those furious persons rushing quickly, he did not get angry because he was aware of the adverse change of the time.

81. But they (Bhojas etc.) were urged by their fury and were fully inebriated due to the wine. They assailed Yuyudhāna with hands smeared with leavings of the foodstuffs (i.e. without washing their hands.).

82. As Śaineya was being hit, the son of Rukmiṇī became angry. He wished to get the son of Śini released and so rushed in between.

83. He was pitted against Bhojas and Sātyaki against Andhakas. Even as Kṛṣṇa stood watching both the heroes were killed because the enemies were too many.

84. On seeing his son and Śaineya killed, Kṛṣṇa, the scion of the family of Yadus, angrily grasped a handful of Erakā grass.

85. That was turned into a terrible Muśala (Pestle) of hard steel comparable to the thunderbolt. Kṛṣṇa killed all those standing in front with the same.

86. Due to the compelling urge of Kāla, Bhojas, Andhakas, Śinis and Vṛṣnis attacked one another with Muśalas and shouted and howled.

87. O my beloved goddess, if any of those angry men took up any Erakā grass that was seen turned into Vajra (thunderbolt).

88. Even the minutest grass there was seen turned into a Muśala. O fair lady, understand that it was the effect of the Brāhmaṇical punishment.

89. O goddess of Devas, they discharged the arrows and hit one another. That was seen turned into Vajra Muśala.

90. Son killed father and vice versa, O fair lady. Those inebriated and arrogant fellows went on fighting one another.

91. Like locusts in fire, the leading Yadus fell down. None had any desire or intention to flee although hit and killed thus.

92. The mighty Madhusūdana noticed it and realized the change of time and the adverseness of Kāla (god of Death). He then grasped the Muśala and stood ready.

93. O fair lady, he (Mādhava) was extremely angry on seeing Sāmba, Cārudeṣṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha killed.

94. Extremely angry, the wielder of Śārṅga bow, Cakra and Gadā made the Yādavas lying prostrate on the ground utterly (i.e. massacred them).

95. It was thus, O great goddess, that the Yādava Sthala (Battleground of the Yādavas) took its origin there. It is remembered that the funeral pyres extended to a Gavyūti (3 Kms.).

96. The mass of their bones assumed the form of a mound. Therefore, it became the Yādavasthala, a heap of ashes.

97. On account of the gemset crowns of the Yādavas the place abounds in divine jewels and is filled with gems. A divine fragrance overspread the area.

98. Gaṅgā and Gaṇapati have the task of guarding them. Of all the Yādavas, only Vajra remained alive.

99. During his last days he crowned his well-known son named Mahadbala. Then he came to the holy region of Prabhāsa.

100. That wise Yādava chief installed the Liṅga famous as Vajreśvara. It continues to be there at Yādavsthala.

101. With the advice of Nārada, an elaborate penance was performed by him for a long time in the sin-destroying Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

102-103. That king, the most excellent one among Yādavas, attained the great Siddhi. A devotee should take his holy ablution there in the waters of Jāmbavatī, worship Vajreśvara and feed Brāhmaṇas in the vicinity of Yādavasthala. He will get the merit of gifting a thousand cows.

104. A devotee should make a hexagonal figure with his finger on the Yādava Mound. If he has perfect faith, he will get the benefit of the pilgrimage.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

Greatness of Hiranyaḥ Nadī

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the sin-destroying Hiranyaḥ, the holy (river) that fulfills all cherished desires and puts an end to poverty.

By taking the holy ablution there in accordance with the injunctions, by offering rice-balls and water libations, one shall attain everlasting worlds through the redemption of the ancestors from sins.

If the devotee feeds one Brāhmaṇa of laudable holy vows there, he shall be deemed as one who has fed thousands and ten thousands of Brāhmaṇas (elsewhere).

There a gold chariot should be gifted to a Brāhmaṇa who has mastered the Vedas, with Śiva in view and in accordance with the injunctions. The devotee shall thereby attain ten thousand times the merit of the pilgrimage.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

Greatness of Nāgarārka

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine known as Nāgarāditya which is destructive of all diseases. It is situated by the side of Hiranyā.

Formerly the noble-souled Yādava king Satrājīt who went to Dvāravatī propitiated Bhāskara (the Sun-god).

The wise son of Nighna had practised great Vratas. The Sun who was pleased then gave him the jewel Syamantaka*.

4-5. That jewel produced everyday eight Bhāras (a weight of two thousand Palas) of pure gold. The king endowed with devotion, penance and practice of holy vows, was further told thus, O lady of excellent countenance: "Speak out the boon you choose." He then told Bhāskara, the Lord of the chiefs of Devas (literally the thief of water i.e. the evaporator of water):

6. "O Lord, if you are pleased with me and are prepared to grant a boon, then do be always present in this holy hermitage."

7. The Sun-god said to King Satrājīt, "It will be so", blessed him with the boon and vanished there itself.

8. O lady of excellent complexion, a bright idol of Bhāsvan (Sun), the Lord of Devas, was installed there itself by that son of Nighna.

9. He installed it to the accompaniment of the loud sounds of Śaṅkha and Dundubhis and the magnificent chantings of the Vedic Mantras. Thereafter, he invited all excellent Nāgara Brāhmaṇas, granted them highly valuable means of subsistence, bowed to them and said:

10. "By the grace of your holy feet and the blessings of the Sun-god, this idol has been installed by me after performing a severe penance.

11. The demon (Indrajit), the son of the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, formerly vanquished Indra and brought this idol from heaven and installed it in Laṅkā.

* The story of this gold-yielding precious stone is given in BhP X. 56.1-3 and 32-44.

12. Rāma accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa killed him and brought it to Ayodhyā. It is a thing that symbolizes the victory of the son of Sumitrā.

13. It was then handed over to Vasiṣṭha, the son of Mitra and Varuṇa. He was pleased with me and gave it to me at Dvārāvatī.

14-15. I realized that this holy region is excellent and so installed it here. There is no necessity to say too much. All of you should endeavour to guard it jealously as long as the stars and Moon continue to shine. Verily this auspicious idol has been given over to you.

16. You are residents of Someśapura and you are a Nāgara Brāhmaṇa*. Therefore, the name Nāgarāditya has been given (to this idol)."

The Brāhmaṇas said:

17. We shall carry out the entire job of taking care of the Lord. As long as the earth, the Moon, the Sun and the sea continue to exist your everlasting fame shall remain permanent in this holy spot.

18. After saying this, all those leading Nāgara Brāhmaṇas went away. The king who was pleased, then went back to the city of Dvārāvatī.

Īśvara said:

19. Listen, O goddess, I shall tell you what benefit will accrue when that (Lord) is viewed. By viewing the Nāgarārka deity one obtains that merit which results when a hundred cows are duly gifted in holy Prayāga.

20. Who else is competent to dispel the affliction due to poverty, misery and grief, excepting the deity Nāgara Bhāskara in the holy spot of Prabhāsa ?

21. Those men of limited intellect who endure the misery of bondage, leprosy etc. do not know the physician Nāgarabhāskara in regard to that (ailment).

22. A man who takes his holy bath in the waters of Hiraṇyā and adores him, is honoured in the world of the Sun for thousands and crores of Kalpas.

* There seems to be a colony of Nāgara Brāhmaṇas at Prabhāsa.

23. If the transit of the Sun occurs on the seventh lunar day in bright half, that day is well-known as Mahājaya (highly victorious). This Saptamī is a favourite of Bhāskara.

24. The holy ablution, offering of gifts, Japa, *Homa* and the adoration of Pitṛs and Devas—all these occurring on that day are mentioned as yielding a crore times the usual merit, according to the words of Bhāskara.

25. "If the devotee feeds one Brāhmaṇa there in the presence of the Sun-god, it is as good as though the feeding of a crore (of Brāhmaṇas) has been carried out by him". So says Lord Hari.

26. O lady of excellent countenance, what has been spoken by me was never said earlier. A man who listens to this devoutly, shall attain the region of Bhāskara.

27. O goddess, hear from me the secret names of the Sun-god. The thousand names (of other deities) are not required. Recite this auspicious prayer.

28-31. The twenty-one names included in this prayer called *Stavarāja* (King of prayers) enhance physical health. They are: Vikartana, Vivasvān, Mārtanda, Bhāskara, Ravi, *Lokaprakāśaka* (illuminator of the worlds), Śrīmān, *Lokacakṣu* (Eye of the worlds), Graheśvara (Lord of the Planets), *Lokasāksin* (Witness of the worlds), *Trilokeśa* (Lord of the three worlds), *Kartā* (Doer), *Hartā* (Remover), *Tamisrahā* (Dispeller of darkness), *Tapana* (Scorcher), *Tāpana* (One who blazes), Śuci (Pure), *Saptāśvavāhana* (Having Seven horses for his vehicle), *Gabhastihasta* (Having rays of light for his hands), *Brahmā* and *Sarvadevanamaskṛta* (Bowed to by all the Devas).

32. O great goddess, he who eulogizes Nāgarārka by means of this prayer during dusk and dawn, shall get the desired benefit.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTY

Greatness of Balabhadra-Subhadrā-Kṛṣṇa

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Balabhadra, the Lord of Suras, Subhadrā, and Kṛṣṇa, the destroyer of all sins.

O great goddess, it was here that Hari discarded his body. In this Kalpa it is remembered as *Gātrotṣarga*. People who adore Balabhadra, Subhadrā and Kṛṣṇa there in the presence of Nāgarāditya will go to heaven.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYONE

Greatness of Śeṣa

Īśvara said:

1-4. A pilgrim should see the physical form of Balabhadra present there where he had cast away his body in the form of Śeṣa.

He had gone to the Traisaṅgama Tīrtha through the Pātāla (nether worlds) path. O goddess, the extremely lustrous body is situated in the form of a Liṅga in this *Mitravana* of an area of two *Gavyūtis*. The deity is accompanied by Revatī and it is well-known by the name Śeṣa.

O goddess, formerly a *Kaulika* (a weaver, Śakti-worshipper, heretic) named Jarā attained Siddhi here. He had killed Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) in the Bhalla Tīrtha and he became merged at this place.

5. Ever since then, the deity became Śeṣa in the entire region. A man who worships the deity on the thirteenth lunar day in bright half, passes a year with all welfare, sons, grandsons and cattle wealth.

6-8. Children need not be afraid of smallpox and other diseases. No one anywhere will suffer from Visphoṭaka (boils) and other ailments.

In this highly perfected holy spot, if a man perfectly performs a Yajña, he shall become extremely dear to all the castes and intermediate castes as well.

Śeṣa, the destroyer of all sins, becomes pleased quickly through oblations of various kinds and offerings of animals and flowers.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTWO

Greatness of Kumārī

Īśvara said:

1-4. O great goddess, a devotee should go to the shrine situated to the east thereof. The goddess Kumārikā is stationed there for giving of protection.

Formerly in the Rathantara Kalpa, there was a great Asura named Ruru. He was huge-bodied from his very birth and he struck terror in all the worlds.

Devas including Gandharvas were frightened and were driven out of heaven. Becoming afraid of him, all of them went and occupied the world of Brahmā.

That evil-minded demon killed Brāhmaṇas performing Yajñas on the earth and penance as well as other righteous persons.

5. Afflicted by the great fright from Ruru, the entire surface of the earth became bereft of Svādhyāya and Vaṣṭakāra. Yajñas and festivities became defunct.

6. All the distressed Devas and great sages gathered together and consulted one another in regard to the slaying of that evil-minded fellow.

7. Even as all of them were engaged in deep thought and consultations, drops of sweat arose from their bodies which they caught together and held.

8. A lotus-eyed divine girl issued forth enveloping all the quarters and stood in front of all of them.

She said to the Devas:

9-10. Why have I been created? I shall carry out your task.

On hearing her words, the Devas spoke out their distress due to the activity of Ruru. On hearing it, the goddess laughed boisterously for accomplishing the task of Devas.

11. While she laughed loudly, girls of excellent limbs with supple buttocks and breasts issued forth. All of them held nooses and goads.

12. They frightened the mobile and immobile beings with their shrieks and howls alone. The renowned (goddess) accompanied them to the place where Ruru was present.

13. A terribly tumultuous battle ensued between them with weapons and missiles of various kinds destructive of the enemies.

14. All his followers were shattered by them with blows. They were turned back in a trice. Some of them were struck down.

15. Noticing that his army had been killed, Ruru created his magical illusion (*Māyā*) named Tāmasī (creator of darkness). But, O goddess of Devas, she did not faint thereby.

16. When the entire region became enveloped in darkness, the goddess hit Ruru, the Daitya, in his heart with her Śakti (javelin). He swooned thereat.

17. In a short while, he regained consciousness and became fully aware of her prowess. He became then inclined to run away and proceeded towards the sea.

18. The goddess pursued the evil-minded one closely behind, eulogized by groups of Suras, Kinnaras and *Mahoragas*. (great serpents).

19-20. She entered the ocean and found out the Dānava. With the tip of her sword she cut off his head. Holding the shield and his head, she came out of the ocean and came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra accompanied by her resplendent army of diverse forms.

21. The excellent goddess was seen holding the shield and the head by the Devas who were wonder-struck. The Devas then stood with palms joined together in veneration and eulogized.

The Devas said:

22-25. [Prayer of Kumārī by Devas:]

Be victorious, O goddess, Camuṇḍā. Be victorious, O destroyer of the distress of the earth.

Be victorious, O omnipresent goddess. O Kālarātri, obeisance to you.

O Śivā of terrific form, O great *Māyā* and Vidyā of great prosperity! O highly esteemed Jayā and Jṛimbhā of terrible eyes, of terrible appearance!

O Mahāmāyā of diverse limbs, O auspicious one, fond of music and dance ! O terrible one, O Mahākālī, O Kālikā in the form of god of Death and of eternal Time!

O goddess with Trident in the hand, staff in the hands,

O terrible one of terrible hands and face! O Cāmuṇḍā with blazing mouth, sharp fangs and great strength! O goddess seated on the corpse, O goddess served by the groups of Devas!

26. On being eulogized thus by all of them with Śakra as the leader, the goddess appeared pleased and spoke these words:

27. "Welfare unto you all. Choose your boon, whatever has been cherished in the mind for long. I shall grant you all, even if it be difficult of access."

The Devas said:

28. O fair lady, we are blessed since the Dānava has been killed by you.

29. O goddess of excellent countenance, if anyone eulogizes you by means of this prayer, to him you, the omnipresent one, should grant boons.

30. May the person, O goddess, who devoutly listens to your origin be rid of all sins and may be attain the greatest goal.

31. O auspicious goddess, a permanent residence must be taken by you in this holy spot.

32. A devotee who has perfect concentration and purity of mind, should adore you here on the ninth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Āśvina. You must always grant him auspiciousness.

Īśvara said:

33. On being requested thus, the great goddess remained steady there itself. The Devas went to heaven. They were happy because the enemies had been killed.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Greatness of Mantrāvali Kṣetrapāla

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to

the shrine of the highly lustrous Kṣetrapāla situated in the north-eastern direction.

This deity is adorned with a series of Mantras. It is stationed there on the banks of Hiranyā for the sake of protection.

The holy spot there is *Hīraka* and the Lord keeps watch over there. A man (devotee) should adore the Lord on the thirteenth lunar day in the dark half of a month by means of scents, flowers, offerings and oblations. The deity thus worshipped shall be the bestower of all cherished desires.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Greatness of Vicitrēśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of great, excellent god named Vicitrēśvara. It is situated on the banks of Hiranyā and is destructive of great sins.

A severe penance was performed, O great goddess, by Vicitra, a clerk of Yama, and the great Liṅga pertaining to Rudra was installed.

By seeing the deity, O goddess, one can avoid meeting with Yama.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

Greatness of Brahmeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine situated there itself a little higher up. O goddess, it is on the banks of Sarasvatī to the west of Parṇāditya.

A great Liṅga is there formerly installed by Brahmā. It is well-known as Brahmeśvara. It is destructive of all sins.

The pilgrim should take his holy bath there on second lunar day and observe fast. He should control all the sense-organs. He should then worship the Lord of Devas named Brahmeśvara, the auspicious one. If he wishes for the eternal region, he should offer libations unto the Pitṛs in the rite of Śrāddha.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Greatness of Piṅgā Nadī

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the sin-destroying holy river Piṅgalī (Piṅgalā). It is situated to the west of Rṣitīrtha. This river flows towards the sea.

O great goddess, a man becomes handsome by viewing this river.

Formerly, some sages came to the holy region of Prabhāsa with a desire to view Lord Someśvara. After reaching Prabhāsa, they encamped on the banks of the river.

O great goddess, Southerners are usually dark in colour and ugly in appearance.

4-9. They had their holy bath at the hermitage. When they surveyed themselves, they found themselves resembling Lord Kāma, at which all of them were surprised much.

Their eyes beamed with wonder. All of them said simultaneously: "Since all of us attained reddish brown colour after taking bath here, the name of this river shall henceforth be Piṅgā. If pilgrims take their bath here with great devotion, no one in their family (race) will be bad-looking. By viewing the river a man gets the benefit of Pitṛmedha (sacrifice offered to the Manes). Twice that is obtained through a holy bath therein and four times that by offering libation. If a pilgrim performs a Śrāddha here the benefit is beyond reckoning."

After saying this, O fair-complexioned lady, all those excellent sages divided the river bank into holy spots each of the length of Yajñopavīta.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Greatness of Piṅgalāditya, Piṅgādevī & Śukreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. A pilgrim should view the sin-destroying Sun-god stationed there itself and also goddess Piṅgalā in the guise of Pārvatī.

He who observes fast on the third lunar day in particular, shall obtain all desires. He shall be rich and become blessed with a son.

The pilgrim shall also see the deity well-known as Śukreśvara. O goddess, on seeing the deity the man shall be rid of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Greatness of Brahmeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine situated to the west of Parṇāditya. As already mentioned, it is adored by Brahmā. It is on the banks of Sarasvatī.

O my beloved, I shall mention its origin. Listen with rapt attention. Even as Brahmā was creating the four divisions of living beings formerly, a lady of lotus-like eyes with wonderfully exquisite beauty was born. Her neck resembled conch shell. Her tresses were fine. Her lips were like Bimbā fruit and her waist was slender. Her navel was deep. She had excellent buttocks, fully developed breasts and hips. Her face was like the full moon. The ankles were hidden (under muscles) and her face wore a smile. She shone to such an extent that there was no Devī (Deva-woman), no Gāndhārī, no Āsurī and no serpent-girl who had a similar beautiful form.

6. On seeing her richly endowed with beauty, Brahmā became overwhelmed with love, O lady of excellent complexion. He requested her for granting him the pleasure of love-play.

7. When he made this request, O great goddess, his fifth head assumed the form of an ass and fell down due to that sin in an instant.

8. After realizing the great sin due to the lustfulness for his own daughter, he became extremely disgusted. He, therefore, went to the holy region of Prabhāsa.

9. Since there can be no sanctity of the body without holy ablution in the Tīrtha, O lady of excellent countenance, he took bath in the holy waters of Sarasvatī.

10. He installed the Liṅga of the Trident-bearing Lord of Devas. Thereby he became free from sins and went back to his abode.

11. He who takes his bath in the waters of Sarasvatī and views the Liṅga, shall be rid of all sins, and will be honoured in the world of Brahmā.

12. A man who visits the deity on the fourteenth lunar day in the bright half of the month of Caitra attains that great region where Lord Maheśvara resides.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Greatness of Saṅgameśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Lord Saṅgameśvara well-known as Golakṣa and destructive of all sins.

It is situated there itself on the western side. It bestows all desired benefits. There was formerly a sage of great austerity named Uddālaka, O great goddess of Suras. Once, formerly, he went to the confluence of Sarasvatī and Piṅgā and performed a penance. That confluence is destructive of all sins.

4. O beautiful lady, the noble soul was performing a severe penance with great devotion. At that time, a Liṅga rose in front of him.

5-7. At that very time, an unembodied voice said: “O Uddālaka of powerful arms, listen to my words:

From now onwards, I will stay here permanently. Since the excellent Liṅga rose up in the *Saṅgama* (confluence) its name shall be Saṅgameśvara. Those men who take their bath at the confluence well-known throughout the world and view Lord Saṅgameśvara attain the greatest goal."

Īśvara said:

8. Then he adored the deity day and night without lassitude. When the body came to an end he went to the place where Maheśvara is present.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

Greatness of Gaṇeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the Liṅga well-known in all the three worlds as Gaṇeśvara. It is situated to the west of Saṅgameśvara.

Gaṅgā was summoned by Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) the powerful one, O lady of excellent countenance, for washing his body at the time of its end.

Gaṅgā saw the entire Kṣetra so holy and resorted to by sages. Everywhere there were Liṅgas and hermitages.

Thereupon, Gaṅgā, the most excellent one among rivers, flowing towards the eastern ocean installed that Liṅga because she was much devoted to Śiva.

By viewing the Liṅga, O excellent lady, a man attains the benefit of the holy ablution in Gaṅgā as well as that of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Greatness of Śaṅkarāditya

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to

the excellent shrine of Śaṅkarāditya situated to the east of Gaṅgeśvara. It was installed by Śaṅkara.

He who adores this deity on sixth lunar day of bright half, will go to that great region where Lord Divākara (Sun) dwells.

With great concentration of mind, a man should offer *Arghya* in a copper vessel with red flowers mixed with red sandalpaste. He will attain the greatest Siddhi. He will never be reduced to poverty.

Hence, O lady of excellent countenance, one should endeavour in every way to adore Śaṅkarāditya, the bestower of all desired benefits.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Greatness of Śaṅkaranātha

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should visit the Liṅga well-known in all the three worlds as Śaṅkaranātha. It is destructive of sins.

O fair lady, it was installed by the Sun-god there, after performing severe penance.

The pilgrim should observe fast and worship Maheśvara, the Lord of Devas. He should control his senses, perform Srāddha and then feed Brāhmaṇas. With concentration and mental purity, he should give clothes and gold to Brāhmaṇas in accordance with his capacity. He goes to the greatest region. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Greatness of Gupheśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent Gupheśvara on the northern side of Hiraṇī. It

is destructive of all sins. By viewing it, O fair lady, the man dispels a crore of sins of slaughter.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

Greatness of Ghaṇṭeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. A devotee should view the deity well-known as Ghaṇṭeśvara there itself. It is destructive of all sins. It is adored by both Devas and Dānavas. It is worshipped by sages and Siddhas. It bestows all desired benefits. A man who worships it on Mondays and eighth lunar day, shall get desired benefits. He shall be rid of sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

Glory of Ṛṣitīrtha

Īśvara said:

1-7. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the Tīrtha well-known all over the three worlds. It belongs to the sages of meritorious deeds and is situated to the west thereof (i.e. of Ghaṇṭeśvara). O fair lady, three-eyed fishes are seen therein even to-day.

These sages reside there: Aṅgiras, Gautama, Agastya, Sumati, Susakhī, Viśvāmitra, Sthūlaśiras, Samivarta, Pratimardana, Raibhya, Bṛhaspati, Cyavana, Kaśyapa, Bhṛgu, Durvāsas, Jāmadagnya, Mārkanḍeya, Gālava, Uśanas, Bharadvāja, Yavakṛita, Trita, Sthūlākṣa, Sakalākṣa, Kāṇva, Medhātithi, Kuśa, Nārada, Parvata, Vasiṣṭha, Arundhatī, Kāṇva, Gautama, Dhaumya, Śatānanda, Akṛtavraṇa, Jamadagni, Rāma, Baka and others, Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana too accompanied by his sons and disciples.

After coming to this holy region Prabhāsa, the noble-souled excellent sages performed different kinds of excessively wonderful penances.

8. These sages with self-control and suppressed sense-organs desired to win (attain) the eternal world of Brahman by means of Samādhi (mental absorption).

9. Once, O my beloved, there occurred a very great and severe drought and the entire world was faced with disaster and was extremely distressed due to hunger.

10-11. *The sages were faced with a disaster. There was no food in the entire world. With a desire to retain their souls, they brought a dead boy and cooked him. King Vṛṣādarbhi who was travelling through the sky, saw those sages facing great trouble and disaster. Thereupon he uttered these words:

The King said:

12. Acceptance of gifts by Brāhmaṇas is seen as an uncensured means of livelihood. Hence, O leading sages, take gifts from me.

13. I shall give you green gram, pulses, rice grains, jewels, gold and whatever other rare things there may be. Hence all of you desist from this sinful act at least.

The sages said:

14. Knowing as we do it, O king, how can we accept your gift ?

15. A *Cakrin* (vendor of liquor) is on a par with ten *Sūnās*. A *Dhvajin* (distiller of spirits) is on a par with ten *Cakrins*. A harlot is on a par with ten *Dhvajins*.

16. And a king is on a par with ten harlots. A Brāhmaṇa, deluded by avarice, who accepts gifts from a king is cooked in the terrible hells Tāmisra etc.

17. Hence, O king, go away along with your offered gifts; welfare unto you! These may be given to others.

18. After saying this they went to the forest. Then at the behest of the king, the ministers went there and scattered on the ground *Uduṁbara* (Indian figs) with gold (concealed) within.

19. Then, O lady of excellent complexion, the sages collected them. Realizing that they were weightier (than usual), Angiras said that they should not be taken.

* This story is repeated with a slight difference from Nāgara Khanḍa. There it extols the greatness of the Ṛṣi-tīrtha at Hāṭakeśvara Kṣetra.

Atri said:

20. O dullard, we are not, we do not remain, ignorant. We know that these are golden ones. We have been awakened from stupidity.

Vasiṣṭha said:

21. (Even) he who collects things for the sake of pious purposes is not praised. I, Vasiṣṭha, consider the collection of austerities as the true collection of assets.

22. Eschew all those collections and hoardings which bring harm to classes of people. A hoarder is never seen free from calamities.

23. As a Brāhmaṇa abstains from accepting gift from indecent (*Asat*) people, his Brāhmaṇical splendour always grows.

24. I weighed in a balance *Akiñcanatva* (poverty) (i.e. not possessing anything) against a kingdom and certainly (I found) poverty excelling (weighing more than) the dominion.

Kaśyapa said:

25. It is unto the Brāhmaṇa alone that the vast hoarding of wealth causes disaster and harm. A Brāhmaṇa who is confounded due to affluence falls down from what is conducive to the ultimate welfare.

26. Richness in wealth leads to delusion and a great deal of sorrow. Hence one who seeks ultimate welfare, should avoid worldly wealth which by its very name spells disaster.

27. Even he who tries to acquire wealth for the sake of piety does not actually realize it. It is better to avoid the touch of mud rather than begin to wash it after getting defiled by it.

Bharadvāja said:

28. As a man grows old the hairs turn aged and grey. As one grows old the teeth decay. Even the eyes and ears become withered; but thirst i.e. avarice alone does not wither.

29. A needle brings together two (pieces of) clothes by means of the thread. In that manner Trṣṇā (avaricious greed) acts as the needle in the case of the thread in the form of worldly existence.

30. Just as the horn of a deer grows along with its body

(so is avarice). Avariciousness which has no limit and cannot be avoided or surmounted always begets agony. It abounds in sinfulness. One should, therefore, eschew it.

Gautama said:

31. Who cannot maintain himself even with fruits, if he is contented? All people wade through (the quagmire of) disaster due to the covetousness of the sense-organs.

32. If one's mind is contented, riches rush unto that person from everywhere. Indeed one whose feet are well protected by shoes feels that the whole earth is covered with hide.

33. Where can people who are avaricious of wealth and whose minds are disturbed and lacking in peace get the happiness of those people with quiescent mind who are contented with the nectar of satiety?

Viśvāmitra said:

34. If the passion of a person seeking passionate love is realized, another love (desire) pierces him all the more like an arrow.

35. Love does not definitely get subdued at all through indulgence. Love and passion get inflamed like the holy fire that blazes all the more by offering oblations of clarified butter into it.

36. A man cannot attain happiness if he gets more involved in indulgence of desire. Out of avarice, after getting (the pleasure of) the shade of a tree, a man entertains the desire for a house.

37. Even a king who enjoys this entire earth bounded by the four oceans is not contented. It is the resident of a forest who is really contented and not the king.

Jamadagni said:

38. One who is capable of offering *Pratigraha* increases the power of penance. But if one abstains from accepting *Pratigraha* his power of penance increases a thousandfold.

39. There are people affluent enough to offer *Pratigraha* and also there are people who abstain from accepting *Pratigraha*.

The worlds attained by the abstainers are the same as those of the donors.

Arundhatī said:

40. (Just as) lotus-fibre is present everywhere in the lotus-stalk, (so) avaricious thirst which has neither beginning nor end is always present in the body of a person.

41. Happiness comes to one who eschews *Tṛṣṇā* (greed, thirst), which is very difficult for the weak-minded to eschew. It never gets decreased even in a man growing old and it is (like) a disease ending with the destruction of the vital airs.

Candā (the maid-servant of the sages) said:

42. I am afraid of (accepting) *Pratigraha* like these powerful Lords (Sages) who, though they are very powerful are yet afraid of the terrible *Pratigraha* like the feeble ones.

Paśumukha (the man-servant of the sages) said:

43. A wise man desirous of his welfare should always practice what the learned ones, who are always devoted to the performance of their duties (piety), practice.

Īśvara said:

44. After saying thus, all the sages of steadfast vow left all those fruits with gold concealed within and went elsewhere.

45. As they continued their ramblings, O lady of excellent complexion, they saw a great lake covered with lotus plants all round.

46. At that time the recluse Śunomukha happened to come to that place. All the great sages took their holy bath therein in the company of that recluse.

47. They entered the water and collected the lotus stalks which they placed on the banks of the lake before their holy rituals inside the water.

48. They rose up from the pond and met one another. They could not see the lotus stalks there. They thus talked to one another:

The sages said:

49. O leading sages, what is that sin on our part whereby despite our being distressed with hunger all the lotus stalks have been taken away?

50. Those excellent Brāhmaṇas began to suspect one another and so asked this question (who has taken them?). O fair lady, they duly affirmed by means of swearing:

Kaśyapa said:

51. May he who is guilty of the theft of the lotus stalks be the eater of everything (i.e. let him incur the same sin), be the misappropriator of the deposits (i.e. one who repudiates the deposit really made) and one guilty of perjury.

Vasiṣṭha said:

52. May he who is guilty of theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner like one who indulges in sexual intercourse on days other than the permitted ones after menstruation and that too with another man's wife. Let him incur the sin of being host and guest by turn.

Bharadvāja said:

53. May he who is guilty of theft of the lotus stalks be a ruthless wicked one, one who is arrogant due to affluence, one who is hostile and iminical and one who indulges in slandering.

Viśvāmitra said:

54. May he who is guilty of the theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner akin to one who is ever indulgent in love making, one who has sexual intercourse during the day-time and one who is engaged in mean activities for ever.

Jamadagni said:

55. May he who is guilty of the theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner akin to one who gives his daughter in marriage to an aged person, one who becomes the husband of a Vṛṣalī (Śūdra woman) himself, and one who is a practising usurer.

Gautama said:

56. May he who is guilty of the theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner akin to one who receives the gift of ewes, one who sells horses and one who habitually censures his preceptor.

Atri said:

57. May he who is guilty of the theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner akin to one who is evil-minded enough to slight his mother and father always and to one who seeks the guidance of a Śūdra in the affairs concerning religious piety and righteousness.

Arundhatī said:

58. May that woman of defiled habits who is guilty of theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner on a par with that woman who takes food and goes to bed before her husband.

Candā said:

59. May that woman who is guilty of theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner on a par with that woman who is antagonistic to her Lord and master (husband), with one who hates piety and righteousness and one engaged in habitually teasing and hating good people.

Paśumukha said:

60. May he who is guilty of theft of the lotus stalks be a sinner akin to one who is always a servant at the beck and call of others in all births. Let him be one abandoning all righteousness and holy rites.

Śunomukha said:

61. May he who has stolen the lotus stalks be one who reads and recites the Vedas duly, one who is a householder fond of guests and one who always tells the truth.

The sages said:

62. O Śunomukha, what you have asserted now by way of

swearing is something liked and approved of by the Brāhmaṇas.
It is you who have stolen the lotus stalks belonging to us.

Śunomukha said:

63. These stalks belonging to all of you have been stolen by me, O Brāhmaṇas, because I was eager to listen to piety and holy rites. Know me as Purandara (Indra).

64. O excellent sages, everlasting worlds and regions have been won over by you all, with your absence of greed. Seek any clean and pure boons. Undoubtedly all those (will be granted).

The sages said:

65-66. O Purandara, may the man who comes here, remains pure and observes fast for three nights, takes his holy bath, offers libation and performs Śrāddha, get the merit arising from visiting all the Tīrthas. Let him not meet with downfall. Let him rejoice with Devas.

Saying “So be it” Śakra vanished there itself.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYSIX

Greatness of Nandāditya

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim with mental concentration and purity, should go to the shrine of Nandāditya. Formerly it was established by Nanda of unlimited intellect.

Formerly, there was a king named Nanda who gave happiness to the entire world. There was no famine. No sickness tormented men nor was there premature death (among his subjects). When that king conversant with righteousness ruled over the kingdom, there was no danger or disaster caused by drought.

After a lapse of some time, evidently due to previous Karmas, he was attacked by the fell disease of leprosy. He got fed up with everything and became disgusted with the world.

Divākara, the Sun-god, the Lord of Devas, was installed on the banks of a river by that king who was tormented by that ailment. He became rid of that ailment.

The Devī said:

5. Was this ailing king an Emperor or an ordinary king of the realm? How did it happen that a righteous king like him contracted that illness?

Īśvara said:

6. This valorous king Nanda was very pious and abided by Dharma. Seated on his excellent aerial chariot, he used to wander over all the worlds.

7. This aerial chariot had been granted to him by Viṣṇu who was pleased with him. It could go anywhere he pleased (to go) and was rendered reverberating by the peacocks of excellent physical hue.

8. Once, in the course of his wanderings, the excellent king went to the divine lake called Mānasa. It was full of groups of Devas. He remained there.

9. He saw a large lotus, white in colour, growing in the middle of the lake. An excellent Puruṣa of the size of thumb only dwelt therein.

10-11. He was two-handed. He was clad in red garments and had fiery splendour. On seeing him, he told the charioteer "Fetch that lotus. I shall wear that on my head in the presence of all the people, so that I will be deemed praiseworthy. Hence fetch it. Do not delay."

12. On being ordered thus by him, the charioteer entered the water, O lady of excellent complexion. He began to pluck the lotus. As soon as the lotus was touched, there was a hissing sound of 'hum'.

13. Due to that hissing sound, all of a sudden, that king became a leper of faded complexion and deprived of his power and valour.

14. On seeing his own plight in such a way, the excellent one among men stood there grief-stricken thinking: 'What may be this ?'

15. Even as he stood there pondering, sage Vasiṣṭha, a son

of god Brahmā, an intelligent sage of great penance, came there. The king asked him:

16-17. "O holy Sir, an evil transformation has befallen my body. Being overpowered by the disease of leprosy, I have no desire to stay alive. O holy Sir, tell me the means of cure for this illness. Tell me of other means of remedy such as holy vow, charity or Yajña."

Vasiṣṭha said:

18. This lotus called *Brahmodbhava* (arising from Brahman) is famous all over the three worlds. If this is seen, all the other deities become seen.

19-20. O king, this lotus is seen only by blessed people and by a very few of them, and that too only somewhere. Immediately after it is seen, if one enters water, he shall be rid of all sins and attain salvation.

This charioteer of yours entered water to pluck it immediately after seeing the lotus.

21. O great king, it was at your instance. He will contract this disease and become dead. Therefore, although I am son of Brahmā, I visit the great Lord.

22-23. I visit him everyday. Coming here casually you were seen. Even Devas cherish this desire in their heart: 'When shall we see the *Brahmapadma* (lotus) in the Mānasa lake, take our bath there and attain the great Brahman after attaining which one will not be born again.'

24-26. This is one cause, O king, listen to a second cause of leprosy which you contracted because you were desirous of taking away the lotus. Pradyotana (the Sun-god) is present in the womb of this himself. On seeing this excellent lotus, this desire occurred to you: 'I shall wear this on my head in the midst of the people as an ornament.' The sin of yours resulting from thinking thus has been pointed out by the Lord (Sun) in this manner.

27. Hence, by all means propitiate Bhāskara (Sun-god). You will be rid of this, with the favour of the Lord of Devas. There is no doubt about this.

28. O great king, go to Prabhāsa Tīrtha well-known all over the three worlds. Siddhi is achieved there by all distressed beings of the earth.

Īśvara said:

29-30. On hearing the words of that noble-souled Vasiṣṭha, the king went to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and installed Nandāditya on the sacred banks of Māheśvarī. He worshipped the deity with scents, incense and unguents as well as different kinds of flowers, big and small.

31. The Lord of Day (Sun-god) became pleased and said, "I shall grant you boons." He thereupon said:

Nanda said:

32. O Divākara, O most excellent one among Suras, see me tormented by the fell disease of leprosy. See to it that it is quelled.

33. O Lord of Devas, be present always at this holy site.

Sūrya said:

34-35. O great king, you will immediately be free from the disease. Men on the earth who come here and see me on a Sunday coinciding with seventh lunar day will attain the greatest goal. I shall be present here on Sundays coinciding with seventh lunar day. There is no doubt about it. I shall take leave of you and wish you happiness.

36. After saying this, the thousand-rayed Sun-god vanished there itself.

37-40. He became free from the ailment and ruled over the excellent dominion. Then he attained the great region where Lord Sun is present.

Any devotee can come here and take his holy bath in the Tīrtha. He should then perform Śrāddha scrupulously and visit Nandāditya once again. He will never be born as a man again (i.e. will attain Mokṣa). The devotee should make a gift of a *Kapilā* (tawny-coloured) cow there to a Brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Vedas. He should observe fast for a day and a night and then make the gift of a *Gṛhṇa Dhenu* (cow made of ghee). No one can calculate the merit he attains.

Thus is stated the greatness of the Lord with blazing rays. O lady with excellent buttocks, this sin-destroying story has been narrated to you.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYSEVEN

Greatness of Trita Kūpa

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the holy well remembered as Trita Kūpa. It is situated to the east of Nandāditya at a distance of three Yojanas ($3 \times 12 = 36$ Kms.).

In the land of Saurāṣṭra, there was a learned eminent king well-known as Ātreya. He was a master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas.

He approached his wife only on the prescribed days after menstruation. He begot three sons named Ekata, Dvita and Trita, O fair lady.

4. Trita was the youngest of the lot. He was a master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He was endowed with all the good qualities. The two elders were foolish.

5. After some time, Ātreya the excellent Dvija (twice-born) performed a very severe penance and passed away.

6. Among them (the sons) Trita who was better-endowed with good qualities became king. This son carried on the burden formerly borne by him (Ātreya).

7. He had the idea of performing a Yajña. He invited excellent Brāhmaṇas well-versed in the rites of Yajña.

8. After invoking all the Suras beginning with Indra duly, he went to Prabhāsa for distributing the Dakṣinā among Brāhmaṇas. The twice-born took his brothers with him and set off for getting cows.

9. To whichever house he went, i.e. Trita, the master of all the Vedas, was given excellent adoration and a number of good cows.

10. O fair lady, after getting wealth in the form of a good number of cows, he became extremely pleased. He set off homewards accompanied by his brothers.

11. Trita went ahead and the two brothers closely followed him. Tending their cattle asset, they reached Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

12. After seeing the plenty of cattle gathered together for offering *Dāna* (liberal gifts) an evil thought arose in the minds of the two (elder) brothers against the third (youngest) brother.

13-15. The two evil-minded brothers whispered to each other: "This Trita is an expert in the ritual of Yajña and very proficient in the Vedas. He is worthy of honour and adoration everywhere. We are foolish and worthless fellows. Trita will gift away all this large asset of cattle during the excellent Makha (Yajña). What has been inherited from our father by us should be shared equally. Hence killing this Trita, the performer of Yajñas, is but proper."

16. After determining thus the two brothers set off. Trita went ahead as before, a straightforward unsuspecting scholar that he was.

17. A tiger appeared there, O fair lady. He had terrible appearance. Opening its jaws widely he gave off a terrible roar.

18. On account of that roaring noise, the cows ran away in different directions and got lost. In that region there was a deep, dark well covered with plants. It was extremely terrible.

19. On one side there was the terrible tiger. On the other side was the well even more terrible. On seeing this all the brothers were frightened and they fled from the place.

20. Then, O fair lady, they came to the rugged brink of the well and stopped there. Their idea was to stay there till the tiger went away so that they could go thereafter.

21. Then, O fair lady, the excellent king Trita was hurled into the terrible old well without water.

22. The two brothers joyously took the cows with them and Trita fell into the well without water.

23. The intelligent one reflected: 'I do not grieve so much for continuation of my life. Excellent Brāhmaṇas were invited by me for the sake of the Yajña. They are all masters of the Vedas. The Suras beginning with Indra are also invited by me. But that *Kratu* (Yajña) is not to take place. Hence I bewail.'

24. The master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas thought thus. O lady of excellent complexion, he began a mental performance of sacrifice there.

25. That excellent Brāhmaṇa recited the hymns himself and performed the Homa with sand particles. The Devas became satisfied.

26. Seeing his faith, the deities became all the more satisfied. They came to the Brāhmaṇa held up in the middle of the well.

The Devas said:

27. O Brāhmaṇa, all of us have been propitiated by you through this mental Yajña. So, do tell us what is being cherished in your mind.

The Brāhmaṇa said:

28. If the Devas are pleased with me, let me go to my mansion after getting out of this well. I shall perform the Devayajña,

Īśvara said:

29. On being instructed by the Devas Sarasvatī pierced the ground and came out and filled the dry well with water.

30. The Brāhmaṇa came out of the well and went away to his mansion. Ever since then, O goddess of Devas, it is called Trita Kūpa.

31. A pilgrim should have his holy bath there and be pure. Then he should propitiate the Pitṛs. He shall be rid of all sins and get the benefit of an *Aśvamedha* (horse-sacrifice).

32. O goddess, gift of gingelly seeds with gold is (recommended as) praise-worthy there. O fair lady, this Tīrtha is a favourite of the Pitṛs always.

33. O goddess of Devas, all the celestial Pitṛs remembered as Agniṣvāttas and Barhiṣadṣ are to be invoked with the Mantra beginning with “āyantu nah”. O fair lady, all of them, the celestial Pitṛs, are indeed present here.

34. O most excellent one among Suras, by mere sight of the Tīrtha, all living beings are rid of sins committed ever since birth and till death.

35. If one desires one's own welfare, one should by all means take one's bath there after reaching Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYEIGHT

Greatness of Śaśāpāna

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to

the Tīrtha remembered as Śaśāpāna. It is to the south of the same (i.e. Tritakūpa). It is destructive of all sins.

A man who duly takes his holy bath there, need not have the fear of premature death. Hence, O my beloved, listen to the origin thereof, even as I narrate it.

After churning the ocean and obtaining the excellent nectar, the Devas hurriedly went there and imbibed it as they pleased.

As the Devas drank the nectar, O lady of excellent complexion, hundreds and thousands of drops of nectar fell on the ground.

5. At the same time, O lady of excellent complexion, a hare came there. As he was distressed with thirst, he entered the water.

6. He attained immortality and began to grow in the water pond. On seeing him, all the Devas repeatedly vied with him. They realized that the nectar had got mixed with water. Becoming frightened, they began to consult one another.

7-8. "Men will consume the nectar that has fallen on the earth. Thereby they will become immortal. There is no doubt about this. This poor little hare born of the brutish species, has the audacity to vie with us! Hence there is cause of fear."

9-10a. Then there came the Moon-god who had been overpowered by the fell disease. He said to all the Devas. "Give nectar unto me. I have become assailed by a great difficulty. I am unable even to move."

10b-13a. Then all the Devas said: "Everything has been swallowed by us. O Lord of night, you were forgotten (by us). How is it that you have come here after a long time? O Moon, O dispeller of darkness, act according to our suggestion. Even as we were drinking the nectar much of it got spilled into this water. Hence, O Lord of night, drink up the whole of this pond. Listen to this truth. About half the quantity of nectar has fallen therein."

13b-15. On hearing their words, the cool-rayed Moon hurriedly drank the entire quantity of water along with the hare. His body that had been reduced to mere skeleton of bones instantly became well-nourished due to the nectar that he drank then. He was rendered brilliant by means of a mass of splendour. Though the body constituents and secretions had become wasted, he got nourished through the nectar.

16. The hare that entered his belly did not die because he had swallowed the nectar. Even today he can be seen in the Moon's physical form.

17-18. Regaining lustre of great magnitude, he became pleased very much instantly. They said: "Let it be dug up so that there will be more of water again. Due to our action and contact this pit and pond has become dry. This is not proper. Such should not be the act of good people."

19. Then they began to dig till there came up more water. Thereupon all of them became pleased much and said:

20-23a. "Since this pond has been drunk by the Moon-god along with the hare, this (Tīrtha) shall be known as Śāśāpāna.

A man who comes here and takes his holy bath devoutly, will go to that great region where Lord Maheśvara dwells.

To those who offer cooked food to Brāhmaṇas with mental concentration and purity, all the benefits of a Yajña shall undoubtedly accrue.

When this (Tīrtha) is visited it shall be as though all the deities have been seen."

23b. After saying this, all the Suras went to heaven.

24. After a great deal of time, the (river) Sarasvatī came there along with Vaḍavāgni (Submarine Fire) and flooded the whole place.

25. Thereby, O lady of excellent complexion, the Tīrtha became all the more sanctifier. Hence by all means, one should take one's holy bath there with great efforts.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED FIFTYNINE

Greatness of Parṇāditya

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Lord of Suras, Parṇāditya. It is situated on the northern bank of Prācī Sarasvatī.

Formerly, O goddess, in Tretāyuga, a certain Brāhmaṇa named Parṇāda came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and performed a very severe penance. Endowed with great devotion, he propitiated the Sun-god.

He offered incense, garlands and unguents to the Lord by way of propitiation; he recited hymns and prayers to the Sun-god as mentioned in the Vedas, with great concentration and mental purity, day and night.

Even as he meditated upon the Sun-god thus for a great period of time, Lord Sun became pleased with him and spoke these words:

5. “O eminent Brāhmaṇa of good holy vows, I am pleased with this penance of yours. Welfare unto you; choose your boon, what has been always desired.”

The Brāhmaṇa said:

6. This alone is the most excellent boon that the Lord himself is pleased (with me). O Lord, vision of thine, even in dreams, is very rare, O Lord of Devas.

7. O Divākara, if a boon is to be necessarily granted to me, O Bhāskara, be always present here.

8. With your favour, O Lord Divākara, let all your devotees go to your world.

After saying, “It will be so” Lord Ravi vanished.

Parṇāda also continued to stay there engaged in the adoration of Ravi.

9. A devotee should take his holy bath there on the sixth lunar day in the month of Bhādrapada and then visit the deity Parṇāditya. He shall never get into misery.

10. By visiting Parṇāditya, a man gets that benefit which one gets after gifting a hundred cows duly at Prayāga.

11. Those who suffer from chronic leprosy, limping, scabbies etc., but do not know Parṇāditya at all, are dull-witted ones.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTY

Greatness of Siddheśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the great shrine of Siddheśvara formerly installed by Siddhas on the western side thereof (i.e. Parṇāditya)

Formerly, O lady of excellent countenance, the class of Devas named Siddhas came there and installed the Liṅga for achieving perfection in every affair.

O great goddess, Śiva was pleased to see their great penance and granted them all *Aiśvaryas* (Siddhis) beginning with *Ānimā* (Minuteness).

4-5. He said, "My presence shall always be here. One who adores me on the fourteenth lunar day in the bright half of Caitra, shall be a meritorious one. With my favour, he will attain the greatest region."

6. After saying thus, the Lord vanished. Siddhas come there on the mentioned days and worship Maheśvara.

7. He who devoutly propitiates (him) obtains wonderful *Samsiddhi* (miraculous power) and whatever is desired, O most excellent one among Suras. Hence, one should always adore that deity.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYONE

Greatness of Nyaṅkumati

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the place where the river Nyaṅkumati had been brought by Śambhu for the delimitation of the Kṣetra as well as preservation of peace.

It is situated to the south of that (Siddheśvara shrine). It is destructive of all sins. A man who duly takes his holy bath therein and performs Śrāddha shall redeem all the ancestors from hell. There is no doubt about it.

O fair lady, a pilgrim should take his holy bath therein on the third lunar day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. He should then offer libation with water mixed with gingelly seeds and Darbha grass devoutly. There is no doubt therein that this is as good as performing Śrāddha on Gaṅgā.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYTWO

Greatness of Varāhasvāmī

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Varāha stationed there itself to the south of the Gospada (pit made by the hoofs of cows). It is destructive of sins.

A man who worships the deity on the eleventh lunar day in the bright half of a month, shall be rid of all sins. He shall go to the great region of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYTHREE

Greatness of Chāyā Liṅga

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of many miracles remembered as Chāyāliṅga. It is situated on the north of Nyākumatī. It yields great merit.

O fair lady, a man who visits that deity, is rid of the five sins. The holy Ksetra extends to three Yojanas and twelve and half Hastas (1 Hasta = 45 Cms.) Those men who are very sinful do not see this (holy centre).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYFOUR

Greatness of Nandinī Guphā

Īśvara said:

1-2. O goddess, there itself is situated the *Guphā* (cave named Nandinī) that is destructive of sins. It is the place where is the residence of Siddhas of meritorious minds.

A man who goes there and sees the *Guphā* (Cave) shall be rid of all sins. He will obtain the benefit of a Cāndrāyaṇa (expiation).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYFIVE

Greatness of Kanakanandā

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the goddess Kanakanandā, situated to the north-east. She is the bestower of all desired benefits.

On the third lunar day in the bright half of Caitra, a wise man should perform the pilgrimage to that place in accordance with the injunctions. He shall obtain all desires.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYSIX

Greatness of Kumbhīśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Kumbhīśvara situated not very far to the east from the Śarabhasthāna. O fair lady, by visiting that deity, a man is rid of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYSEVEN

Greatness of Gaṅgāpathagaṅgeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the holy range called Gaṅgāpatha where Gaṅgā has a long flow of stream and Lord Śiva is called Gaṅgeśvara.

O goddess, Gaṅgā, the destroyer of sins, flows into the sea. It is well-known all over the earth as Uttānā. This river is an ornament unto all the three worlds.

O great goddess, one who takes the holy bath there and worships Gaṅgeśa shall be rid of terrible sins. He shall obtain the benefit of ten thousand *Aśvamedhas* (horse-sacrifices).

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYEIGHT

Greatness of Camasodbheda

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent Kṣetra called Camasodbheda where, O my beloved, God Brahmā performed a *Sattrā* for a thousand years.

The Devas and the great sages drank Soma juice by means of *Camasas* (ladles). Therefore, it became well-known as Camasodbheda in the world.

A man who takes his bath there in Sarasvatī and offers rice-balls on the Vaiśākhī day obtains ten million times the benefit of the performance of Śrāddha at Gayā.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SIXTYNINE

Greatness of Vidurāśrama

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the great hermitage of Vidura. It is the place where Vidura, the personified form of piety and righteousness, performed a very severe penance after installing the Liṅga of Maheśvara, the Lord of the three worlds.

On visiting that deity, O fair lady, a man shall obtain all desires.

The twelve *Sthānakas* (abodes) called Vidurāttalaka is resorted to by Gaṇas and Gandharvas. It cannot be gained by one of meagre merits.

O Pārvatī, never shall there be absence of rain. One should visit the divine Liṅgas there for suppressing sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY

Greatness of Prācī Sarasvatī*

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Liṅga well-known as Maṇkiśvara. It is situated in the place where Prācī Sarasvatī flows.

I shall tell its origin. It is destructive of all sins. Listen, O fair lady of great fortune, to the miracle that happened formerly.

There was a sage named Maṇkaṇaka. After coming to Prācī (Sarasvatī), he performed a great penance. He restrained his intake of food. He was eager to maintain his self-study of the Vedas.

O fair lady, many thousands of years passed by. Once, O lady of excellent countenance, his hand was cut by the tip of Kuṣa grass and juice of greens exuded therefrom. On seeing that wonderful miracle, he was extremely surprised.

6-10. He considered that he had attained a great Siddhi. Out of exultation, he began to dance. While he was dancing the entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings began to dance, O fair lady, by the power of that sage. Thereupon, the Devas including Mahendra, with Brahmā and Viṣṇu at their head, requested Lord Tripurahantā (i.e. Śiva, the slayer of the three Puras): "Do something to make him (Maṇkaṇaka) stop dancing. The mountains have been displaced from their original position. The sea has become agitated. O Lord, the earth has been shattered into pieces. The trees have been destroyed. The great rivers have swerved

* This story of Maṇkaṇaka is found in Mbh, *Vana* Ch. 83.

from their beds. The planets have become dislodged from their orbits. All the three worlds are in utter confusion. Before they get destroyed completely, do restrain it. No one else is capable of resisting it."

11-12. He approached the sage in the guise of a sage and spoke to him: "What is the event on which you have become ecstatic? O Brāhmaṇa, why do you dance? Do tell the fact quickly. We are highly curious and enthusiastic."

The sage said:

13. O Brāhmaṇa, don't you see the juice of greens exuding from my hand? That is why I dance. There is no doubt about this. I am a Siddha.

Īśvara said:

14. On hearing his words, Lord Tripurāntaka hit his thumb with the tip of his finger, O fair lady.

15. Instantly ashes, whitish like snow, oozed out of it. Then Lord Bhūtabhāvana (Śiva, the creator of the universe) laughed and said to him:

16. "See, O Brāhmaṇa, a lot of ash has come out of my thumb. I do not dance, O excellent sage, I am not at all elated and enthusiastic."

17. On seeing that great miracle, he became highly surprised. With palms joined in reverence, he spoke with the words faltering due to delight:

18. "Excepting you, the Bull-bannered One, I do not know any other Lord. No one else on the surface of the earth has such a power as this."

The great Lord said:

19. O tiger among sages, O most excellent one among knowers of the Vedas, you have recognised me. Welfare unto you; choose your boon, whatever has been desired always in your mind.

The sage said:

20. O great Lord, thanks to the favour of the Lord of Devas, let some way be found so that there will be no loss unto my penance due to (my) great dance.

Śambhu said:

21. O Brāhmaṇa, may thy penance enhance a thousand-fold with my favour. I shall stay along with you close to Prāci.

22-23. Sarasvatī is highly meritorious especially in this Kṣetra. O tiger among sages, he who forsakes his body on the northern shore of Sarasvatī, in the waters of Prāci does not come here (this world) again. One who takes his holy bath therein obtains the full benefit of a horse-sacrifice.

24-25. The sages may cause their bodies to become dried due to *Niyamas* (restraints) and *Upavāsas* (fasts). The sages may have water and air alone as their intake or the leaves of trees (for their maintenance). Others with restraints who regularly sleep on bare ground and also those who observe various controls and take bath in this Tīrtha regularly attain the greatest Siddhi, the highest region of Brahman.

26. If a devotee makes an offer or gift of even a *Trūṭi* (small bit) of gold in this Tīrtha to a leading Brāhmaṇa the benefit thereof shall be that of the gift on a par with Meru.

27. A man who performs Śrāddha at this Tīrtha will certainly go to heaven in the company of twenty-one generations of his family.

28. This Tīrtha is a favourite of Pitṛs. If they are propitiated even with a single riceball they will become redeemed by the excellent son and they will go to the world of Brahmā.

29. Those who offer much cooked food, will go along the path of salvation.

30. Those excellent Brāhmaṇas also of auspicious holy rites who visit Sarasvatī situated in Prabhāsa will go to the heavenly world.

31. Those men who are engaged in holy bath there will attain the world of Brahmā and will sport about with pleasure forever.

32. Whoever here gives excellent curds to a Brāhmaṇa attains the world of Agni and enjoys excellent pleasures.

33. He who devoutly gives a woollen shawl to an excellent Brāhmaṇa will attain the greatest Siddhi very difficult to be achieved by other men.

34. In the case of men who enter the water here for eradicating dirt, one can easily proclaim their benefit as the same as that of donating a cow.

35. If any man takes his holy bath there with mental feelings of devotion, he shall be freed from all sins. He shall be honoured in the world of Viṣṇu.

36. Even the Pitṛs who are in hells go to Svarga (heaven) redeemed by the excellent son by offering libations and rice-balls.

37. They obtain the everlasting worlds named after Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Īśa (i.e. Brahmaloka, Viṣṇuloka and Īśaloka). Those who offer much cooked rice attain the path of salvation.

38. Sarasvatī in Prabhāsa has become a ladder unto heaven. This great river cannot be attained by non-meritorious men.

39. Prācī Sarasvatī is very rarely accessible elsewhere especially (?except) in Kurukṣetra, Prabhāsa and Puṣkara.

40. After attaining Prācī Sarasvatī if anyone seeks another Tīrtha, he is like one who abandons the use of hand and makes use of the elbow for activities.

41. The holy bath is always ordained on the fourteenth lunar day in dark half. He who offers Piṇḍa there even with Pinyāka (oil cake) and Inguda (*Terminalia Catappa*) attains Pitṛloka. It will give everlasting benefit unto the Pitṛs.

42. Where can one have pleasure on a par with that of staying on the banks of Sarasvatī? Where are the good qualities (merits ?) on a par with that of staying near Sarasvatī? Men have gone to heaven after reaching Sarasvatī. They will remember Sarasvatī again.

Īśvara said:

43. After saying this the divine Lord vanished there itself. Ever since then Śaṅkara is present there.

44. In this connection there is a couplet sung by the victorious Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa), the all-powerful. O beloved, he spoke thus to Dharmaputra (Yudhiṣṭhira) with his mind filled with love:

45. “O son of Kuntī, do not go to Gaṅgā. Do not go to Prayāga and to Puṣkara. O best among the descendants of Kuru, go there where Prācī Sarasvatī is. present.”

46. Thus everything has been spoken to you, whatever you asked me. What more do you wish to hear regarding the greatness of Sarasvatī?

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYONE

Greatness of Jvāleśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. O goddess, very near the same shrine (i.e. Maṅkīśvara) is the Liṅga named Jvāleśvara. It is remembered as the place where the Pāśupata arrow was cast by the enemy of Tripuras even as it was blazing. Hence it is remembered as Jvāleśvara. By visiting it, a man is rid of all the sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYTWO

Greatness of Tripura-Liṅga-Traya

Īśvara said:

1-2. A pilgrim should visit the three Liṅgas named after the Tripuras, the great souls stationed there itself in the vicinity of Prācīdevī.

They are respectively Vidyunmālī, Tāraka and Kapola. By visiting the Liṅga installed by them, one is rid of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYTHREE

Greatness of Śaṇḍa Tīrtha

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent Śaṇḍa Tīrtha (Śaṇḍa—a bull) which eradicates all sins and bestows all desired benefits.

O my beloved, I shall narrate its origin. Listen with mental concentration.

Formerly Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds was five-headed. In a certain context for some reason, his head was cut off by me. There (the river) incurred the smell (of blood) due to the blood drops of Brahmā.

4. Huge *Tāla* (Palm) trees grew there. Hence it is remembered as *Tālavana*. The skull of Brahmā got stuck to my palm.

5. My body as well as that of my bull turned black. With suspected sins, I visited many Tirthas.

6. Nowhere did the sin go away. Then I came to Prabhāsa. In the Kṣetra (holy region) there the divine river Prācīsaravatī was seen by me.

7. There my bull entered into the water to have a bath. Instantly he turned white in colour. I was also rid of (sin of) slaughter.

8. The skull that had stuck to the middle of my hand fell then. The deity Kapālamocana stood there in the form of a Liṅga.

9. If anyone performs a Śrāddha there, in the vicinity of goddess Prācī, his maternal and paternal families upto a hundred generations become contented.

10. His satisfaction shall endure for seventy Kalpas. O goddess, in the month of Aśvayuj, during the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half, a pilgrim should resort to Dakṣiṇāmūrti and perform Śrāddha.

11. The Śrāddha should be offered to a deserving person with services in proportion to the wealth owned. His grandfathers will remain pleased for many thousand Yugas.

12. In order to purify oneself from all sins one should offer gifts of cooked food, gold, curds, blankets etc. in accordance with the injunctions.

13. Since the black-coloured bull attained whiteness, it is called Śaṅḍa Tīrtha. It is adored by all the three world.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYFOUR

Greatness of Sūrya Prācī

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the highly lustrous Sūryaprācī that subdues all the sins and bestows all desired benefits. O great goddess, one is rid of five sins by taking holy bath there.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYFIVE

Greatness of Trinetreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the Three-eyed Lord who destroys all sins. The shrine is near Rṣitīrtha. It is situated on the northern bank of Nyaṅkumatī and was formerly adored by sages.

There, the water is crystal-clear and the fishes are three-eyed. O goddess, by taking the holy bath there, a man is rid of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter.

The devotee should observe fast on the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half of the month of Bhādrapada and keep awake during the night.

He should perform Śrāddha in the morning and duly worship Śiva, O goddess. He shall reside in the world of Rudra for thirty thousand years.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYSIX

Greatness of Umāpati

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the extremely (desire-granting) great Kṣetra named Devikā (Kṣetra) in the vicinity of Rṣitīrtha.

There is a great park named Mahāsiddhivana there surrounded by (i.e. full of) sages and Siddhas. It is full of various kinds of trees and creepers embellishing the mountains. It is rendered beautiful with various kinds of trees and flowers such as Campaka, Bakula, divine Aśoka with great bunches of flowers Punnāga, Kiñkirāta, sweet-scented Nāgakeśara, the flowers of Mallikā, Utpala, Paṭala, Pārijāta, Cūta, Camphā, Kapittha, Śrīphala, Panasa, Kharjūra, Badara, Mātuliṅga, Dādima, divine Jambīra and Nāraṅga.

6-8a. It appeared to be singing with the sounds of

peacocks, cuckoos and black bees. There were various kinds of animals such as deer, bears, boars, lions, tigers and others. There were various kinds of beasts of prey of diverse shapes and sizes. There were caves. There were semidivine beings such as Suras, Asuras, Uragas, Nāgas of many types.

8b-9. Some of them were praying to and eulogizing Īśa and some were dancing in front. Some shower flowers. Others play with their mouths on musical instruments. Others are pleased and they laugh. Others roar.

10-11. Others have raised their arms (in penance) and are absorbed in meditation. O goddess, in that holy place of great auspiciousness on the banks of Devikā there is a shrine named Umāpatīśvara. I am present there always in all the Yugas, Manvantaras and Kalpas.

12. O goddess, I never abandon the splendid banks of Devikā. It is a very rare holy spot in all the worlds. It is sacred and is my favourite.

13. O lady of excellent countenance, I am staying in that holy spot along with you. Since my body is joined with Umā, I am well known as Umāpati.

14. O Pārvatī, one should perform Śrāddha with great purity and mental concentration on the New-Moon day in the Puṣpa Māsa (Puṣyamāsa i.e. Pauṣa). I do not find any decrease in the benefit in what is offered therein.

15-17. Merely by visiting it a thousand sins of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter vanish. A sensible man should make gifts of cows, lands, gold, garments etc. there. O fair lady, that son is the most excellent one who goes there and performs Śrāddha to the Pitṛs. It has no end. That excellent river was invoked by all the Devas for the purpose of holy bath. Therefore, it is called Devikā. It is destructive of sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYSEVEN

Greatness of Bhūdhara (Yajñavarāha)

Īśvara said:

1-6. A pilgrim should visit the deity named Bhūdhara

stationed there itself. Since the Lord lifted up the earth and held it by the tip of his curved teeth, he is called *Bhūdhara* (Holder of the Earth). He is stationed on the banks of Devikā.

The Lord stationed himself there in the form of Yajñavarāha.

The Vedas constituted his feet, the Yūpas, his *Damṣṭras* (curved teeth), *Kratu* (sacrifice) constituted his (ordinary) teeth, the *Sruk* (ladle) made up his snout, the Fire-god was his tongue, the *Darbha* grass constituted his hairs (on the body), Brahman was his head, the Lord of great penance had *Ahan* (day) and Rātra (night) for his eyes, the ancillaries (*Vedāṅgas*) were ear-ornaments, the Ādyas (classes of deities) constituted his nose, *Sruvā* was the snout. He produced loud sound by way of the chanting of *Sāman* Mantras. The Prāgvārṇa (apartment or the sacrificial chamber) was his physical form. He was lustrous, shining with different kinds of *Dikṣās* (initiations). The *Dakṣinā* constitutes his heart. He is the great Yogin whose bed was great *Sattra*. The *Upākarmā* rites constitute the pleasing lips and the *Pravargya* (ceremony before Soma Yāga) constitutes his curly ornaments. The different metres (in Vedas) constitute his gait and pathway and Brahman and the *Ukthas* constitute his *Krama* and *Vikrama* (steps and paces).

7-12. The pilgrim should perform *Śrāddha* on the eleventh lunar day or on the New-Moon day in the month of Puṣya. In the rainy season when the sun is in the Virgo Zodiac he should offer milk pudding with the Mantra *namo vah pitaro rasāyā* (VS 2.32, AV 184) and consecrate the cooked rice etc. therewith. The *Ājya* (clarified butter) should be consecrated with the Mantra *tejōsi sukram* etc. (VS 2.2) and the curd with the Mantra *dadhikrāvṇa* (RV 4.39.6) etc. All the *Vyañjanas* (side dishes, pickles etc.) with the Mantra *kṣīram ājyāya* etc. All eatables and edibles should be offered with the Mantra *mahān indreṇa* (RV. 8.6.1) etc. The Brāhmaṇa should offer water (for Ācamana etc.) by uttering the Mantra *samvatsaro niya* etc. After feeding the Brāhmaṇas thus, he should offer riceballs (to the Pitṛs). He who performs *Śrāddha* with strict adherence to these injunctions makes the Pitṛs satisfied for the duration of fourteen Indras. Without performing Gayā-śrāddha he will reap the benefit of Gayā-śrāddha.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYEIGHT

Greatness of Mū(śū)lasthāna

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine well-known as Śū(Mū)lasthāna. It is the shrine of Bhāskara, the thief of water, on the charming banks of Devikā.

It is the place where the leading sage Vālmīki performed a very severe penance. The Brāhmaṇa-sage named Vālmīki was a great sage who achieved Siddhi (perfection) there.

O my beloved, it is the place where the seven sages were robbed by that sage (Vālmiki). The Brāhmaṇas beginning with Marīci are (residents of the place) on the western side thereof.

The Devī said:

How did Sage Vālmīki become a Siddha? How did he feel inclined to theft? How were the seven sages robbed? O Śāṅkara, narrate this to me.

Īśvara said:

5. O fair lady, formerly there was a Brāhmaṇa well-known by the name Śamīmukha. He was a householder and he begot a son named Vaiśākha who became a man of ferocious activities.

6. Excepting the sole activity of service to elders, this Brāhmaṇa did not do anything worthy of a Brāhmaṇa.

7. O my beloved, after a long time, his parents grew old. They were extremely agitated. They became a burden unto him.

8. He (Vaiśākha) went to the highway everyday, robbed people in accordance with his capacity and maintained them.

9. Once he saw the seven sages engaged in pilgrimage going by the road.

10. On seeing them, he raised his stick and threatened them. He frequently called out to them in harsh tones, "Stop there".

11-12. Those sages were quiescent ones viewing a clod of earth, a stone and a piece of gold as of equal worth. They

were impartial towards enemies and friends. They were devoid of hatred, anger and passionate attachment. Sage Āngiras thought thus, ‘This man had the chance of seeing us. He had the opportunity to talk to us, the sages. Let it not be futile.’ He spoke these words:

Āngiras said:

13. O thief, for a moment listen to my words attentively. For your benefit, I shall tell you the truth. How many people are to be looked after and maintained by you? Tell me everything.

The thief said:

14. There are my parents in their old age; there is a wife without any child. There is one servant-maid. I too am there. There is no sixth one other than these.

Āngiras said:

15-16a. Go and ask them all who are being maintained by means of wealth acquired through sins: “I commit sins. All of you are those who eat (from my effort). To whom does the sin thereof pass on? Tell me quickly.”

16b. He went to them and asked the parents as told.

The parents replied:

17. One man commits sins, the general public and others enjoy the benefit. The enjoyers get exemption from the consequences. The sinning agent is afflicted with the adverse results and faults.

18. A dull-witted one who commits improper deeds for the sake of the family is certainly a very sinful man. To him his own soul is not dear.

Īśvara said:

19. On hearing their words, he became extremely frightened in his mind. He paid respects to his parents and spoke to them again:

20. “It is only for the benefit of both of you that I commit

improper deeds everywhere. Do tell me if any portion thereof is enjoyed by you two or not."

The parents said:

21. O my son, you are to be of necessity brought up by us in your early age only. Later on we have to be kept well-looked-after by you.

22. This sort of duty of mutual obligations has been enjoined by the Lotus-born One. Certainly we will reap the consequences of the deeds auspicious or otherwise committed by us for your sake.

23. Further, my dear son, you will definitely reap the consequences of whatever you do, good or bad. No one else here as well as hereafter in the other world (shall reap the consequence thereof).

24. A man necessarily enjoys and/or suffers due to the good and bad deeds (committed by him). Hence, only auspicious deeds should be performed by a sensible man of learning.

25. Food should be offered to us day and night by you by hard work whether it is stealing, cultivation of the lands, usury, commerce, business or doing service by running errands. My dear son, no defect or sin sticks to us.

26. After listening to their words he asked his wife. She too uttered the same words as spoken by the elders earlier. Thereupon, the excellent sage Vaiśākha became dejected and disaffected from Samsāra.

27-28. Being extremely miserable he repeatedly censured himself: "Fie upon me, the evil doer, always engaged in sinful activity ! I am devoid of the power of discretion. I am denied association with good people. This is what I feel in my heart of hearts that a man who commits sins, a man who never serves and resorts to learned ones does not care for his own soul (as if) it is not dear to him.

29-33. With such dilemma and indecision in his heart, he went near the sages and spoke humbly in sweet words: "Be pleased to go freely". Here let this seat be taken back, so also the water-pot, the bark garments and rough clothes and the entire deerskin. I am poor and wretched. May my crime be forgiven. O excellent sage, I am a fool and I am deprived of

the opportunity of associating with the good. I have to renounce this despicable, wicked and horrible activity from today. It is censured by good men. Hence do tell me the means to desist from this. Thereby, with your favour, I shall extricate myself from sins. Do tell some remedy such as fast, Mantra, restraint or self-control."

The sages said:

34. O dear one, you have excellently placed before us your problem. So listen with attention and single-mindedness. We shall speak in short. That is not to be divulged to anyone else.

35. You must repeat this four-syllabled Mantra "jhāṭaghoṭa" ('the horse of wood'). O sinner, if you repeat it, you will be freed from sin and attain salvation.

36. It dispels all the sins of men. It bestows the benefit of heavenly pleasures and salvation.

On being told thus by the leading sages, Vaiśakha stayed behind, engaged in the *Japa* (Repetition of the Mantra). The excellent sages went their way.

37. O fair lady, even as he was repeating this Mantra on the auspicious banks of Devikā, remaining a steadfast devotee of his preceptors, he had the mental absorption called *Samādhi*.

38. Hunger and thirst disappeared. The whole physical body attained great purity.

39. The *Siddhi* is in perfect concordance with the faith one cherishes in Mantra, Tirtha, Brāhmaṇa, astrologer, medicine and preceptor.

40. This (soul) is naturally free from impurities as in the case of the supreme soul. It is conducive to one's benefit. It takes up aberration after coming into contact with some *Upādhi* (delimiting condition) as in the case of a crystal assuming the colour of an object placed nearby.

41-42. Good people quote this instance: A bee devoid of any progeny may get at a small *Jīva* (living being) and places it in its own place. Then it may begin a contemplation on that living being. That living being may become inflected due to this contemplation and becomes a similar being or one originating from another species.

43. Even after being advised by the preceptor if the disciple

begins to doubt he is really unfortunate. He will never get the treasure like a luckless person.

44. When he continued his uttering of the Mantra and attained immortality thousands of years had passed by.

45. As time passed on he was enveloped in an anthill. He was completely covered therein but he was not aware of it.

46. Once those sages came there (even as it was enveloped in darkness). They held the hands of one another and proceeded ahead helping one another and then spoke to one another.

The sages said:

47. It was here that Vaiśākha, the terrible thief, of hideous features met us. When we reached this place all of us were robbed.

48. While talking thus, they clearly heard a pleasing sound arising from the middle of the anthill. This roused their curiosity.

49. By means of iron rods they dug up the anthill that had grown up like a mountain.

50. And (lo and behold) there the excellent sages saw Viśākha repeating the same four-syllabled Mantra incessantly.

51. They knew that he was in a trance. His body was in a state of sleep. Those Brāhmaṇas applied medicinal herbs as approved by the Yogic treatises and massaged (his body) thoroughly.

52-54. Then he said to all those sages: "May the things belonging to you and taken away by me in a sinful manner senselessly be accepted by you all, O Brāhmaṇas.

O Brāhmaṇas, all of you have been released by me. You are at liberty to go on pilgrimage. O excellent sages and Brāhmaṇas, do go and tell my parents and wife: 'Viśākha has become detached from all contacts. He does not desire to see you all as before'."

The sages said:

55. O sage, you have been staying here far too long. All those members of your family have passed away.

56. O excellent sage, there has been some delay in our Hinduism Discord Server <https://dsc.gg/dharma> | MADE WITH LOVE

coming back to this place. Certainly by the power of this Mantra, you have attained Siddhi.

57. While repeating this Mantra with concentration and meditation, an anthill, Valmīka, covered you. You will be known all over the earth by the name Vālmīki.

58. Goddess Bhāratī (Speech) will be at the tip of your tongue, in her free movement. After composing the epic poem *Rāmāyaṇa* you will attain salvation.

Vaiśākha said:

59. O tigers among sages, be pleased to accept the customary *Dakṣinā* of a preceptor so that I can be released from indebtedness and perform an elaborate penance.

The sages said:

60. O Brāhmaṇa, this alone constitutes our *Dakṣinā* that you have attained Siddhi and your soul has become enriched by the realization of all desires. O sage, we are contented. We have done our duty.

61. Further, choose your boon whatever may be lurking in your mind.

Vālmīki said:

62. If you are pleased with me, if a boon has to be granted to me, let this be mentioned to me immediately. Which deity has become installed here on the charming banks of Devikā, bestowing all the desired benefits?

The sages said:

63. O Brāhmaṇa, listen with a concentrated mind to what deity has become established here. O Brāhmaṇa, behold this *Nimba* (margosa) tree with its spreading branches.

64. God *Sūrya* (Sun-god) has established himself at its root at the beginning of the Kalpa. He is born of a portion of Brahmā. Do propitiate him because he is your deity at this holy place.

65. The place all round extending to a *Gavyūti* (3 Kilometres) is named *Sūryakṣetra*. Certainly all those who reside here will go to heaven.

66. This place is well-known as the Mūlasthāna (original spot). O leading Brāhmaṇa, it is the spot of the Sun-god. From now onwards you must take up your abode here.

67. This is a Tīrtha on the banks of Devikā. From now onwards it will attain great glory.

68. Formerly while we were at this Mūlasthāna we were robbed. It will become famous all over the world by the name Mūlasthāna.

69. Those men who take their holy bath on the northern (side of the) confluence with great devotion to Sūrya will go to heaven.

70. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, libation should be offered with water mixed with gingelly seeds. The Pitṛs will get the same satisfaction as with Gayā-Śrāddha.

71-72. If excellent men perform Śrāddha here with even greens, roots and fruits, provided they are endowed with great faith, their Pitṛs will attain salvation. There is no doubt about it.

73. Even locusts and insects, birds, beasts and deer who drink (or even touch) the water attain the great goal.

74. Undoubtedly, out of love for you, on the Full-Moon day in the month of Śrāvaṇa, we shall all be present here.

75. If a man offers libation to the Pitṛs on that day, all the eighteen types of leprosy perish instantly.

76-77. The eighteen Kuṣṭhas (leprosy) are: Kapāla, Udumbara, Indramanḍala, Vicarcikā, Ṛṣya Carma, Ekakītibhas, Idhma, Alasa, Vipādikā, Dadrūsitā, Aruci, Sphoṭa, Puṇḍarīka, Kākana, Pāmā and Carmadala.

78-79. They will disappear. There is no doubt.

After saying this they vanished.

The sage served the Sun-god and composed Rāmāyaṇa. Hence one should visit that deity who bestows the benefit of all Yajñas. He should listen to this story that is destructive of all sins.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED SEVENTYNINE

Greatness of Cyavanāditya

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Cyavanārka. It is situated to the east of Hiranyā. It was installed by Cyavana.

If it is worshipped in accordance with the injunctions, it fulfills all desires. On the seventh lunar day, a man should eulogize god Ravi (Sun) by means of the one hundred eight names with perfect faith.

O great goddess, listen to those names with concentration and purity.

4-5. Have patience for a moment, O goddess of Devas. I shall speak everything as spoken by Dhaumya, formerly, to the Son of Kuntī, the noble-souled (Yudhiṣṭhīra). The one hundred eight names have been narrated by him. O highly intelligent one, listen to it.

They are: *Sūrya, Aryaman, Bhaga, Tvaṣṭṛ, Pūṣan, Arka, Savitṛ, Ravi*.

6. *Gabhasṭimān, Aja, Kāla, Mṛtyu, Dhātṛ, Prabhākara*; he is fire; *Mahābhūta*s—earth, water, fire, ether and the wind; he is *Parāyāna*.

7. *Soma, Br̥haspati, Śukra, Budha* and *Āṅgāraka* (all these planets); *Indra, Vivasvān, Diptāṁśu, Śuci, Sauri, Śanaīsc'ara*.

8. He is identical with *Brahmā, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Skanda, Vaiśravāna, Yama*. He is the fire of the lightening and the gastric fire; he is *Indhana* (fuel); he is the Lord of Refulgence (*Tejasāṁpati*).

9. *Dharmadvaja, Vedakartṛ* (Creator of the Vedas), *Vedāṅga, Vedavāhana*; he is the four Yugas viz. *Kṛta, Tretā, Duāpara* and *Kali*; he is *Śarvāmarāśraya* (Support unto all the Devas).

10. He is the units of time such as *Kalā, Kāṣṭhā, Muhūrta, Pakṣa* (fortnight), *Māsa* (month), *Aharniśa* (day and night). He is the cause of the year, *Āsvastha* (seated on a horse), *Kālacakra, Vibhāvasu*.

11-12. *Śāśvata Puruṣa* (Eternal Being), *Yogin, Vyakta* (Manifest), *Avyakta* (Unmanifest), *Sanātana* (Eternal), *Lokādhyakṣa* (Presiding deity of the worlds), *Prajādhyakṣa* (Presiding deity

of the subjects), *Viśvakarman* (of multifarious activities), *Tamonuda* (dispeller of darkness),

Varuṇa, *Sagara*, *Āṁśu*, *Jīvanta* (Living), *Jīvana* (Enlivener), *Arihā* (Destroyer of enemies), *Bhūtāśraya* (Support of living beings), *Bhūtāpati* (Lord of living beings), *Sarva-bhūta-niṣevita* (Attended upon by all the living beings).

13. *Sraṣṭā* (Creator), *Samvartaka* (Fire of destruction), *Vahni*, *Sarvasya-ādikara* (The cause of all), *Amala* (Free from impurity), *Ananta* (Infinite), *Kapila*, *Bhānu*, *Kāmada* (Bestower of desires), *Sarvatomukha* (Omnifaced).

14. *Jaya* (victory), *Viṣāda* (Vexation or consumer of poison), *Varada* (Bestower of boons), *Sarvadhātuniṣevita* (Served by all), *Dhātus* (Metals, minerals), *Sama* (Impartial), *Suvarṇa* (Of excellent colour), *Bhūtādi* (Cause of the living beings), *Śīghraga* (Quick-paced), *Prāṇadhāraka* (Sustainer of vital airs).

15. *Dhanvantari*, *Dhūmaketu* (Smoke-emblemed), *Ādideva* (Primordial Lord), *Aditehsuta* (Son of Aditi), *Dvādaśātmā* (Twelve-souled), *Aravindākṣa* (Lotus-eyed), *Pitā*(father), *Mātā* (Mother), *Pitāmaha* (Grandfather).

16. *Svargadvāra* (Gateway to heaven), *Prajādvāra* (Entrance to the subjects), *Mokṣadvāra* (Entrance to salvation), *Triviṣṭapa* (Heaven), *Dehakartṛ* (Creator of the physical forms), *Praśāntātmā* (Quiet-souled), *Viśvātmā* (Soul of the universe), *Viśvatomukha* (Having faces all round), *Carācarātmā* (Soul of the mobile and immobile beings), *Sūkṣmātmā* (Subtle-souled), *Maitrena-vapuṣānvita* (Endowed with the physical form of Mitra).

17. These are the one hundred eight names of the Sun-god worthy of being eulogized and having unlimited splendour. They are recited by the wise Śakra.

18. Nārada got the names from Śakra; Dhaumya got them thereafter. Yudhiṣṭhira got them from Dhaumya and obtained all desires.

19. He who daily recites these names of the Sun-god worthy of being eulogized and having unlimited splendour, shall obtain all desires.

20. For your own benefit, pay respect to the Bhāskara who is served by Suras, Pitṛs, men and Yakṣas, who is saluted by the Asuras, Niśācaras and Siddhas, who has the lustre of excellent gold and of blazing fire.

21. He who recites these names at sunrise with concentration, shall beget sons. He will get wealth and heaps of

jewels. The man shall acquire the power of remembering previous births, excellent memory and prescience.

22. A man who reads this prayer of the most excellent one of Devas, he who eulogizes him with pure mind with concentration, becomes free from grief which has the force of a forest fire. He will get all things cherished in the mind.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY

Greatness of Cyavaneśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the excellent shrine of Cyavaneśvara. This Liṅga is situated there itself and is destructive of all sins.

It was here that Sukanyā was given by Śaryāti to the great sage (i.e. Cyavana).^{*} The sage made the army benumbed and distressed due to Ānāha (stopping their urination and excretion).

O fair lady, the place where the Yajña of Śaryāti took place shines here in the middle of Prabhāsa Kṣetra directly. It is destructive of sins.

There Kauśika imbibed Soma-juice directly along with Aśvins. Bhārgava of great austerities became angry with Mahendra.

5. Holy Lord Cyavana rendered Indra immobile. He obtained Sukanyā, the princess, as his wife.

The Devī said:

6. How was Lord Pākaśāsana (Indra) paralysed and rendered motionless by him. Wherefore did Bhārgava of great austerities become angry?

7. How did the holy sage make the Nāsatyas imbibe Soma juice? May you kindly mention all this as they happened.

Īśvara said:

8. The great sage named Cyavana was son of the great

* The story is based on Mbh, Vana, chs 122-125.

sage Bhṛgu. He came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and performed penance.

9. O fair lady of excellent countenance, he remained steady like a post. The sage of great splendour remained in one place for a long time in the posture called Virāsana.

10. He was covered by anthills and creepers. O fair lady, after a great deal of time he was completely covered by ants.

11. The intelligent sage became motionless like a lump of clay. Covered as he was by the anthill he performed a severe penance.

12. As time passed on thus, a king named Śaryāti came to the great Prabhāsa Kṣetra that destroys all sins. It was in the context of his pilgrimage and desire to see Śrīsomesa that he happened to come there.

13. He had four thousand ladies as wives but had only one excellent daughter named Sukanyā.

14. She was fully bedecked in all kinds of ornaments. She was accompanied by her female companions. She wandered here and there and came to the anthill covering Bhārgava.

15. The princess of excellent teeth sported about in the company of her friends and engaged herself in surveying and collecting charming plants.

16. With (the pride of) beauty and youth augmented by the inebriation due to imbibing liquor, she cut and broke the branches of the forest fully covered with blossoms.

17. The girl clad in a single cloth but fully adorned with ornaments was wandering nearby without any female companions. The intelligent Bhārgava (sage Cyavana) saw her like a walking lightning streak.

18. In that secluded spot the sage caught sight of her. The sage of great splendour was delighted within himself. The Brāhmaṇa-sage endowed with the power of penance felt his throat unusually parched.

19. He spoke something to the beautiful girl but she could not hear anything. But the girl Sukanyā saw the pair of (gleaming) eyes of Bhārgava through the anthill.

20. In her childish curiosity, she lost her sense and was deluded. "Oh, what is this?" She said and pierced his eyes with a thorn.

21. When his eyes were pierced, the already furious sage

became much enraged. Then he caused obstruction to the passage of urine and faeces of the men in the army of Śaryāti.

22. When there was obstruction of the faeces and urine, the entire army became miserable. On seeing the army in such a plight, the king became vexed.

23. (He asked the men:) "By whom was the noble-souled Bhārgava offended? He is an old man prone to be angry; but he is richly endowed with the power of penance always. Did anyone offend him knowingly or unknowingly? Tell me quickly."

24. All the soldiers averred: "We do not know anything about an offence (caused to the sage). Your Highness must probe into this matter as you choose and find out (the truth)."

25. Thereupon, the king began his enquiry among his friends (and followers) in appeasing and conciliatory tone at the outset, but later on sternly. But none of them could say anything definitely.

26. Thereupon, Sukanyā perceived the entire army distressed due to suppression of urine and faeces as told (by everyone in front) and also her father extremely grief-stricken. So she said:

27. "Dear father, something shining was seen in the anthill by me here. It was lustrous and was pierced by me out of ignorance (of the consequences)."

28. On hearing this Śaryāti quickly went to the anthill. There he saw Bhārgava, very old in age and senior to everyone due to his power of penance.

29. Then, on behalf of the army and for their sake, the king joined his palms in veneration and said: "It behoves you to forgive what has been done to you by the girl out of ignorance."

30-31. Then Cyavana, the son of Bhṛgu, spoke to the king: "O king, I will forgive only after accepting in marriage your same daughter who is endowed with beauty and exalted qualities although afflicted by greed and delusion. O king, I am speaking the truth."

Īśvara said:

32. After considering carefully the words of the sage, Śaryāti did not think upon it further. He gave his daughter to the noble-souled Cyavana.

33. After obtaining that girl, the holy Lord became pleased. When pleasant calmness was regained completely, the king went to the city along with the army.

34. After getting an ascetic of uncensured features as her husband, Sukanyā served him with pleasure observing restraints and practising penance.

35. She served the guests and preserved the sacred fires willingly (without malice). The girl of auspicious countenance was able to propitiate Sage Cyavana very soon.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYONE

Greatness of Cyavaneśvara (Continued)

Īśvara said:

1-3. Once, O my beloved, the Aśvin gods happened to see Sukanyā while taking her bath when she was almost nude. All her limbs worthy of being seen and admired made her like a princess in the family of the Lord of Devas. On seeing her, the Aśvins, the Nāsatyas, approached her and said: "O fair lady, to whom do you belong? What do you wish to do in this forest? O splendid lady, we wish to know about you fully. Do tell us the truth?"

4. Then Sukanyā dressed herself properly and spoke to the excellent Suras: "Know me as the daughter of Śaryāti and now the wife of Cyavana."

5-10. Thereupon, the Aśvins laughed and spoke to her again: "How was it that you were given in marriage by your father knowingly? How did you come to this forest?

O fair lady, you shine like lightning in the region of sky. We do not see anyone comparable to you even among Devas.

You are richly endowed with all kinds of ornaments. You wear excellent robes. Do not waste yourself, O lady of blameless limbs. Forsake this person of indiscretion.

How was it that in spite of being such an accomplished lady, you serve this (sage) with limbs shattered due to old age? O fair one, he is one not conversant with the emotions of love.

He is incapable of looking after you and saving you from difficulties. O lady of pure smiles. It is rather worthwhile that you leave off this Cyavana and woo one of us both.

O lady having the lustre of a divine birth (Lit. womb) choose one of us for your husband. Do not waste your youth."

On being told thus, she spoke to the Suras thus:

11-13. "I am attached to Cyavana, my husband. Do not suspect otherwise in this manner." They said again: "We are the physicians of gods. We shall make your husband a young man of handsome features. Thereafter, you can choose one among the three (i.e. he and the two of us) as your husband. O lady of excellent waist, with this condition satisfy (agree with) us."

O fair lady, at this instance, she approached Bhārgava and told him what they said to her about the son of Bhṛgu.

14. Cyavana said to his wife, "Let their words be honoured" On being told thus by Cyavana, Sukanyā said to them:

15. "O Devas, may what was said by you two be carried out quickly."

On being told thus by Sukanyā, the heavenly physicians told the princess: "Let your husband enter water."

16. Then Cyavana who sought a handsome physical form entered the water. O fair lady, then the Aśvins too entered the water.

17. Thereafter within a short while all of them emerged from the lake. All of them were youthful in divine form, wearing shining, polished earrings.

18-19. Not only were they in divine guise but also they increased the pleasure in the minds. All of them simultaneously spoke: "O splendid lady, choose one of us. O fair lady, it is our desire that since you are a lady of excellent complexion, you may choose anyone whom you love, O excellently splendid lady."

20. O goddess, she noticed all of them in similar divine forms and features standing before her. After steadyng herself in mind and intellect, she chose her own (original) husband.

21. Having obtained youthful age and handsome forms and also his own wife, Cyavana was delighted. The highly splendid sage spoke these words to the Nāsatyas:

22. "Though old, I have now become richly endowed with handsome form and youthfulness, thanks to your (benign)

action. I got back my wife too. Hence tell me, what you both wish. I shall carry it out."

Aśvins said:

23. We are the physicians of Devas. Yet Śakra does not make us qualified enough to imbibe the Soma juice. Hence do make us *Somapāyins* (those who drink Soma juice).

Cyavana said:

24. I shall make you capable enough to share portions of Yajña and imbibers of Soma juice.

Īśvara said:

25. Then both of them became delighted in their minds. The Nāsatyas went back to heaven. Cyavana and Sukanyā sported about like Suras.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYTWO

Creation of a Kṛtyā

Īśvara said:

1-3. Then Śaryāti who was present in the place called Valabhī^{*}, heard that Cyavana had regained youthful form. He became highly delighted in his mind.

The delighted king went to the hermitage of Bhārgava accompanied by his army. He saw Cyavana and his daughter Sukanyā in jovial mood. She appeared like a girl of Devas.

King Śaryāti found himself completely immersed in the ocean of happiness. The king and the queen were well-honoured by the sage. The king of exalted mind sat there and began to narrate tales of highly auspicious nature.

4. Later on, O fair lady, Sage Bhārgava said to the king consoling him: "O king, I shall perform a Yajña on your behalf. Gather together all the requisites."

*Mod. Wallay, a port in Saurashtra on Gulf of Cambay—De 18.

5. Thereupon, O great goddess, Śaryāti, the king, became extremely pleased. He honoured and approved those words of Cyavana.

6. On an auspicious day conducive to the performance of the Yajña, Śaryāti caused an excellent Yajñaśālā (sacrificial chamber) richly endowed with all desirable features.

7. O fair lady, there itself Cyavana performed the Yajña on behalf of the king. O great goddess, whatever happened there was miraculous.

8. Cyavana took up the Soma juice for the sake of the Aśvins. Indra restrained him saying, "Do not take up (offer) the *Graha* (share in the Yajña) for them."

Indra said:

9. It is my view that both these Nāsatyas do not deserve the Soma juice. Indeed they are the physicians of gods and due to that profession they are worthy of censure.

Cyavana said:

10. Do not insult and disregard these two noble souls endowed with beautiful form. It was they who made me now free from old age and on a par with Devas.

11. Why don't you view them on an equal footing with the other Devas ? O Devendra, O destroyer of enemies," understand that the Aśvins too are Devas.

Indra said:

12. They belong to the category of lay workers. They are mere physicians though they are equipped with the beautiful form of the god of Love. They further move about in the world of mortals. How do they deserve Soma juice?

Īśvara said:

13. When Vāsava (Indra) repeated the same statement Bhārgava disregarded Śakra (Indra) and lifted up the *Graha* (Soma-obloration).

14. On seeing that excellent (sage) about to raise (the ladle of) Soma juice on behalf of the Aśvins, the Lord, the enemy of Bala, spoke these words:

15. "If you yourself raise (the ladle of) Soma juice for their sake I will hit you with the excellent yet fierce Vajra."

16. On being told thus directly, Sage Bhārgava looked at Indra and duly raised the Soma *Graha* on behalf of the Aśvins.

17. Thereupon Indra, the consort of Śacī, angrily (tried to) hit him with the Vajra. Sage Bhārgava paralysed the arm of Indra even as he tried to hit.

18. After making the arm stiff and benumbed, Cyavana performed the Homa in the fire with the utterance of Mantra. The highly resplendent sage was bent upon retaliating him and so sought to invoke a Kṛtyā.

19. It resulted in the creation of a Kṛtyā from the Yajña, thanks to the power of the penance of the sage. It was a huge Asura with very big physical form named *Mada*. He possessed great virility.

20. The dimensions of his physical form could not be reckoned by Suras or Asuras. There was nothing comparable to the dimensions of his body.

21. His mouth was hideous, very wide and difficult to behold due to the curved fangs. One of his jaws rested on the ground and the other went up to heaven.

22. The four Dāniṣṭras (curved fangs) were each a hundred Yojanas long (Yojana =12 Kms.). His other teeth were ten Yojanas in length.

23. They were of the shape and size of the ramparts of a city. Their foot and tip were equally visible resembling a mountain ten thousands of Yojanas in length.

24. The eyes gleamed like the Sun and the Moon. The eyebrows resembled the god of Death. He was licking his face with his tongue shaking like lightning. He kept his mouth wide open. His eyes were terribly ferocious. He appeared to swallow the entire world forcibly.

25. Angrily he rushed at Śatakratu as though he would swallow him. All the worlds resounded with the loud report of his terrible shout.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYTHREE

Greatness of Cyavaneśvara (Continued)

Īśvara said:

1-2. On seeing the demon Mada of a hideous face rushing towards him with a wide open mouth like the god of Death, as though he would swallow him and licking the mouth (with the tongue) frequently, Lord Śatakratu became paralysed physically out of fear, O great goddess. He was extremely frightened and bowed to Cyavana and said:

3-6. "From now onwards, these Aśvins are entitled to Soma juice, O Bhārgava. What I am telling you is entirely true. O ascetic, let not your undertaking be futile. I fully know, O Brāhmaṇa-sage, that you will not do anything that is unfruitful. These Aśvins will become entitled to Soma juice again in the manner they have been made today by you. I did all these things so that, O Bhārgava, your power shall be revealed once again. I wanted the fame of the father of Sukanyā to spread in the world. So I revealed your power. Hence be pleased with me. Let everything be as you wish."

7. On being told thus by Śakra, the anger of Cyavana subsided. The prestige of the Lord of Suras was kept up.

8-10. Indra (or Cyavana) divided Mada among spirituous liquors, women, dice and hunting. The powerful Bhārgava deposited Mada created earlier into all these. He propitiated Śakra with Indu (i.e. Soma juice). He performed the Yajña on behalf of the king unto all the Devas including Aśvins. O lady of excellent complexion, he thus proclaimed his power all over the worlds.

Then he sported with Sukanyā in the great forest. O goddess, this Liṅga is associated with him bearing the name Cyavaneśvara.

11. The Liṅga installed by Cyavana is destructive of all sins. He who adores it in accordance with the injunctions shall attain the benefit of a horse-sacrifice.

12. Hence the sages frequent the Tīrtha of Candramas (Moon-god). Those sages are called Vaikhānasas and Vālakhilyas.

13-14. A man should perform Śraddha duly here in the month of Āśvina, especially on the Full-Moon day. He should

feed Brāhmaṇas separately. He will get the merit of visiting a crore of Tīrthas. There is no doubt about it.

A man who listens to this sin-destroying story shall become free of the sins of the entire life.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYFOUR

Greatness of Sukanyāśaras

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the excellent lake named Sukanyāśaras where, O Ambikā, Aśvins immersed themselves along with Cyavana. It was there that Cyavana became similar in form and features to Aśvins.

There Sukanyā, a woman of excellent complexion, achieved her cherished desires by the power of the ablution in the lake. Therefore, it is remembered as Kanyāśaras.

A splendid woman who takes her bath, especially on a Tṛtīyā day (third lunar day) will not meet with a breakdown in the domestic affairs, in the course of seven thousand births. Her husband can never be a poor man, a handicapped one, a wretched one or a blind one.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYFIVE

Greatness of Agastyaśrama Gaṅgeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the river Nyañkumati. There in the excellent Goṣpada Tīrtha he shall perform Gayāśrāddha.

He then should visit the deity Varāha. From there he should go to Harigṛha shrine. There he should take his holy bath in the confluence of Nyañkumati and the ocean and adore the Mothers. Then he should go to the east to the divine hermitage of Agasti remembered as Kṣudhāhara.

It was here that the holy Lord, Sage Agastya, killed Ilvala and Vātāpi and released the Brāhmaṇas from the dangers arising from them. Then he gave them that abode (region).

5. Know that this excellent Agastyāśrama is a favourite of Agasti. It is situated on the charming banks of Nyākumatī destructive of all sins.

The Devī said:

6. What for was Vātāpi killed here by Agasti? What powerful influence did that Brāhmaṇa-slayer Daitya exercise here? Why did the noble-souled Agasti become furious?

Īśvara said:

7. O lady of excellent complexion, there was a leading Daitya named Ilvala formerly in the city of Maṇimati*. Vātāpi was his younger brother.

8. That Daitya used to meet a Brāhmaṇa equipped with the power of penance and tell him, "O holy lord, may your holy self present me with a son on a par with Indra."

9. At that, the Brāhmaṇa did not like to grant him such a son. Therefore, the Daitya became extremely angry with that Brāhmaṇa.

10. That Daitya went to Prabhāsa Kṣetra with evil intentions. Instantly Vātāpi who could assume any guise he chose, took the form of a sheep.

11. He used to cut and consecrate him to feed the Brāhmaṇas he wished to kill. After returning home he used to call orally once again the brother who had vanished.

12. He (Vātāpi) was then visible alive after resuming his physical body. Again this Vātāpi was made a goat and well consecrated. After feeding the Brāhmaṇa, he called him once again.

13. Vātāpi then used to split the sides of the noble-souled Brāhmaṇa and come out of the stomach of the Brāhmaṇa. He used to come out laughing.

14. This became his regular practice, O goddess. He used

* The same as Ilvalapuri or Ellora, Aurangabad Dist., Maharashtra—De 77, 126.

to feed Brāhmaṇas and come out splitting their bellies. Thus he killed many Brāhmaṇas.

15. All the Brāhmaṇas became extremely frightened. They fled to the hermitage of Agasti and reported this to him:

16-19. "O holy Sir, do listen to our words. This is extremely frightening to us. We were invited by Ilvala. There is no doubt that taking his food is our death itself. Hence, O holy lord, save us ; we are dejected and distressed. We are out of our minds due to fright."

The great sage came to Prabhāṣa Kṣetra where the leading Daityas resided. He saw the sinful Daityas engaged in sinful activities.

He noticed that Vātāpi, the great Asura, was to be turned into a goat and cooked. He said, "I am extremely hungry. Give me food."

20. On being told thus they welcomed the sage. (Ilvala) said: "O holy Sir, I shall give you a rich feast. Tell me how much you wish to have for food. I shall get that much cooked."

Agastya said:

21a. O leading Daitya, cook a little rice. I shall feel satisfied.

21b-22a. Then the leading Daitya said: "It is cooked. Please be seated here. Let the food be taken as you please."

22b. On being told thus, the great sage recited the *Aghora Mantra* that would destroy even the Kalpas. He occupied the appropriate seat there.

23. Ilvala prepared a heap of cooked rice a hundred *Hastas* (Hands) high. The leading Daitya laughingly served it to Agastya.

24. Delighted in his mind, Agastya assumed the form and attitude as when he had drunk up the ocean dry and swallowed two mouthfuls.

25. Then he swallowed the entire foodstuffs including Vātāpi. When Agastya concluded his meal, Ilvala gave the call unto him (Vātāpi) to come out.

26. Then he gave to the noble-souled Agastya the food prepared. He finished up that food including the Dānava leaving nothing.

27. In a fist (a fit) of anger (Evidently the word *Muṣṭyā*

is a misprint) the great sage reduced Ilvala to ash. Thereupon, shrieking and howling all those Daityas disappeared from the scene.

28. Then Agastya of great splendour invited the leading Brāhmaṇas and gave unto them that spot of the Daityas filled with Dravyas (cash, valuables etc.).

29. O goddess, the *Kṣudhā* (bunger) of Agastya was dispelled by the Dānavas. Therefore, that spot of the Brāhmaṇas came to be known by the name *Kṣudhāhara*.

30. Not far from that place on the western side is situated the shrine well-known as Gaṅgeśvara. It was installed by Gaṅgā.

31. Earlier after eating Vātāpi, O great goddess, Gaṅgā, the destroyer of sins, was called by the noble-souled Agastya, for dispelling the sin arising from consuming the Daitya.

32. Then, O fair lady, Gaṅgā, the destroyer of sins, came there. She purified the sage and stationed herself in that holy spot.

33. The charming hermitage of Agastya dispels the fear of men from sins. A devotee is rid of the sin of eating forbidden food, as soon as he sees the Gaṅgeśvara deity. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYSIX

Greatness of Bālārka

Īsvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Bālārka that is destructive of sins. O fair lady, it is not very far from Agastya's hermitage. It is stationed to the north.

O my beloved, formerly even as a child Arka (the Sun-god) performed penance. Therefore, the name Bālārka became well-known on the earth.

By viewing the deity on a Sunday, a man can avert leprosy. He will never be a leper. Never will children suffer from affliction due to infant sickness.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYSEVEN

Greatness of Ajāpāleśvarī

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Ajāpāleśvarī established not very far from Agastya Sthāna to the east.

The excellent king Ajāpāla born of the race of Raghu, propitiated the goddess that controls evil diseases. The king took the diseases in the form of goats and made them graze.

There he installed the goddess who destroys sins. The goddess was named after him. A man who worships that goddess devoutly in accordance with the injunctions on the third lunar day, shall acquire strength, intellect, fame, learning and good fortune.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYEIGHT

Greatness of Bālāditya

Īśvara said:

1-5. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine well-known as Bālāditya. It is to the east of Agastya Sthāna at a distance only of two *Gavyūtis* (*Gavyuti* = 3 Kms.).

The holy spot named *Sapātikā* is situated to the south thereof at a distance of a *Gavyūti*, O goddess of Devas. It is well-known as Bālārka (Bālāditya).

It was there that *Vid्या* (learning) was propitiated by the intelligent Viśvāmitra after installing three *Liṅgas* and establishing *Ravi* (Sun-god).

He practised the lores and achieved *Siddhi* from the Sun-god. Therefore, the Lord became famous as Bālāditya.

By viewing that deity Bhāskara (Sun-god), the thief (remover) of sins, a man can avoid incurring poverty throughout his life.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED EIGHTYNINE

Greatness of Liṅgatraya

Īśvara said:

1-3. O fair lady, to the very south thereof within a distance of a *Gavyūti*, is situated the sin-destroying Gaṅgā flowing to Pātāla.

O lady of excellent complexion, she was invoked by Viśvāmitra for holy ablution. By taking holy bath there, O great goddess, one is rid of all sins.

By viewing (the three Liṅgas) Gaṅgeśvara, Visvāmitreśvara and Bāleśvara there, one will acquire all cherished desires.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETY

Greatness of Somanātha Installed by Kubera

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent holy spot of Kubera. It is the place where Kubera became a Siddha and *Dhanada* (Bestower of Wealth).

Formerly, in that holy spot, there was a Brāhmaṇa who lived as a thief. He was made *Dhanada*, thanks to his devotion to me.

The Devī said:

How did he, though born as a Brāhmaṇa, become a base man in the form of a thief ? O Lord of Devas, do tell me how he became *Dhanada*.

Īśvara said:

4. In this context, O great goddess, I shall tell you entirely what happened in Uttama Manvantara. It shows the greatness of Śiva.

5. O fair lady, there was a certain Brāhmaṇa well-known

by the name Devaśarman. He had his abode in Prabhāsa Kṣetra and he lived on the banks of Nyānkumati.

6. He was always busy with the affairs of his sons, farms, wife etc. He practically gave up solely domesticated life as he was deluded by a desire for money and more money. In this connection he roamed all over the earth consisting of villages and cities.

7. His wife of tremulous eyes left her house. Being ever enchanted by the god of Love, she wandered at her sweet will.

8. Once, due to the working of destiny, she bore a child to a Śūdra. He was named Dussaha and hence unbearable (like his name). He was evil-minded and thoroughly unrestrained in behaviour.

9. Engaged for a long time in activities befitting his name, the sinner afflicted by indulgence in vicious habits was abandoned by his kinsmen.

10. In a certain Śiva temple, he happened to see much worship material in the evening (early part of night). Being desirous of carrying it off, he entered the shrine.

11. He found the lamp nearing extinction with the piece of wick rendered very small. So he put a piece of cloth as a wick to help him in the search for articles (to steal).

12. The man employed there for the worship of the deity woke and got up. Saying loudly, "Who is this ? Who is this?" he seized the bolt of the door as a weapon.

13. He fled from the place for fear of his life. The Śūdra begotten as such and a deluded fellow, became extremely miserable and cursed his birth and activity.

14. He was killed by the watchman of the city. On death in the world after some time he became a king of Gāndhāra country. He was named Sudurmukha.

15. He was not at all interested in his royal pursuit. He was enamoured of harlots and indulged in vocal and instrumental music. The foolish one harassed the subjects. He discarded righteous activities of all sorts.

16. But he always worshipped a Linga he got as heritage (from ancestors). He used flowers, garlands, incense, food offerings etc. but did not chant Mantras.

17. He used to offer many lamps in the important temples always. He illuminated them bright with (long) wicks.

18. The powerful king was fond of hunting. Once that powerful king wandered (while hunting). Urged by the impressions of the actions of his previous birth, he came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

19. On the auspicious banks of Nyaṅkumati, he was killed by his enemies in battle. In view of the fact that he had performed the adoration of Śiva all his sins had been dispelled.

20. Thereupon, he was born as the well-known son of Viśravas. He was the same lustrous and powerful king of all the Yakkas.

21. He became the noble-souled personage well-known as Kubera. He was well-equipped with learning and excellent habits. On the eastern side of Nyaṅkumati he installed a Liṅga.

22. To the west of Kubera's Liṅga, there was another Liṅga of Īśāna well-known as Somanātha on the auspicious banks of Nyaṅkumati. With great devotion, he eulogized that deity, the bestower of all desired things, by means of the following prayer:

Prayer of Śiva:

23. This physical form of Maheśvara is very great. It contains within itself hundreds and crores of Brahmāṇḍas grown within him like a creeper of gourd with huge fruits. This Mūrti is the root of all Yajñas. His dimensions neither the grandfather (Brahmā) nor Hari who is stationed within the Cosmos, knows. What to speak of the other Suras? May that Mūrti protect you all for ever.

24. I bow down to the unborn, ancient Lord. He is served by Upendra (Viṣṇu), the younger brother of Indra, the king of Devas. His (three) eyes resemble the Moon, the Sun and fire. His emblem is the great bull. He is the initial cause of Pralaya (utter annihilation).

25. He is the Lord of everything. He has the power of all the three (Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu). He is the sole Kinsman (of the devotees). He could be known only through the path of Yoga. He is the support of the universe. He has unlimited power and is the supporter of miracles. He is known through perfect knowledge. He is superior to others in courage and other qualities.

26. I bow down to Śambhu, the sole Lord of the universe. He wields the Pināka bow, the Pāśa (noose), the Aṅkuśa (goad)

and the trident with his arms. He is Kapardin (having matted hair) and his shout resembles that of cloud. He shines like crystal (though) his throat is dark in colour.

27. I bow down to Kapālin (the Lord with Skull in his hand), the primordial Lord with garlands, the Lord having matted hair who wears terrible serpents as garlands. He has a thousand forms and he makes everything shine. He is the most excellent *Purusa* (Being) with a thousand heads.

28. Good people, saints, call him *Akṣara* (Imperishable), *Nirguṇa* (Attributless), *Aprameya* (Inscrutable), *Sajjyoti* (the self-existent luminary, the sole one). He is far off but can be comprehended (by the chosen few). He is worthy of being bowed to by the uncensured. He dwells in the heart of everyone. He is the greatest and holiest.

29. I bow down to Rudra with a throbbing fierce face. He has the rising crescent moon on the crest. He is lustrous. He is *Kālendhana* (fuel unto the eternal Time) He is *Kāmada* (Bestower of desired things). He is *Astasaṅga* (Unattached). He is stationed in the seat of righteousness. He is stationed in two *Prakṛtis* (gross and subtle).

30. He is the one on whom leading ascetics, those who are conversant with Yoga philosophy, meditate. I bow down to the Lord who is beyond all sense-organs. He is omni-armed. He is *Jitāri* (One who has conquered the enemies). He is beyond the three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. He is *Aja* (Unborn), *Nirīha* (devoid of desires). He is *Tamomaya* (full of Tamas), *Vedamaya* (full of Vedic lores), *Cidamśa* (the portion of the perfect energy). He is the Lord of Prajāpatis (Patriarchs). He is identical with Puruhūta Indra. He is of the form of the sole Dhvani (Om ?) yet to come. He is the primordial one.

31. Getting released from everything, I bow down to you again and again, to the Lord who cuts off the cords of worldly existence.

32. I bow down to the Lord of incomparable countenance, the Lord possessing great power and influence. The nature of the great ancient Being is not known to Viṣṇu, Pitāmaha and others. I bow down to that primordial Vāmadeva, to the incomprehensible one.

33. After propitiating Śiva of fierce form, the holy sage Agastya drank off the ocean. Dilīpa too obtained all desires. I seek refuge in that source of origin of the universe.

34. O Lord, raise me up. O Lord, worthy of being respected by Devendra ! I am helpless, O Śambhu, and indeed you are merciful and compassionate. O Bhava, you are Śaṅkara (conferer of Bliss), the benefactor. I am immersed in the ocean of misery and am a wretched one. Lift me up, O Consort of Umā, O Bhava.

35. Brahmā, Indra and Rudra sport about in heaven. The groups of Devas worship him in heaven. I bow down to that Sarva. I eulogize him. I repeat his name in *Japa*. I seek refuge in him. I salute him, the Lord worthy of being venerated.

36. After eulogizing the Lord thus, he stopped and by that time Lord Rudra of a splendour like that of a thousand Suns granted him three boons. The Lord who is the bestower of boons, the enemy of Andhaka, granted boons to Vaiśravaṇa: *Sakhyā* (friendship with himself), the position of the Lord of the quarters, Dhanādhipatyā (lordship of wealth) and the fourth one, the lordship of the Heaven-dwellers.

37-40. “Here on the auspicious banks of Nyānkumati I have been propitiated by you after duly making a clay image of mine. So, this spot will be known after your name i.e. *Kubera Nagara*, which gives me pleasure.

A Liṅga has been installed by you to the west of this holy spot. It is that of Umānātha and is remembered by the name Somanātha. He who adores it on the Śrī Pañcamī day in accordance with the injunctions, will get fortune and glory up to seven generations.”

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYONE

Greatness of Bhadrakālī

Īśvara said:

1-3. To the north of that holy spot named *Kaubera Sthāna*, O great goddess, is stationed Bhadrakālī, the bestower of desired objects.

At the time of the destruction of Dakṣa’s Yajña this deity

was accompanied by Viśabhadra. The great goddess is the destroyer of Dakṣa's Yajña.

If a devotee adores that goddess on the third lunar day in the month of Caitra, it is as good as nine crores of Cāmuṇḍās well-adored. He will derive conjugal felicity, victory and glory and fortune.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYTWO

Greatness of Bhadrakālī-Bālārka

Īśvara said:

1-4. O great goddess, Bhadrakālī performed elaborate penance at a place which is towards the north of that holy spot named *Kaurava* (? misprint for *Kaubera*) and with great devotion she installed Rāvi (Sun-god).

He who adores him devoutly on a day when Sunday coincides with seventh lunar day by means of red flowers and unguents, shall acquire the merit of performing a crore of Yajñas. He is relieved of all ailments arising from disturbed humours of *Vāta* (Wind) and *Pitta* (Bile) as well as other virulent diseases.

A horse should be gifted there by those who wish to obtain the merit of a perfect pilgrimage.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYTHREE

Greatness of Kubera

Īśvara said:

1-2. O lady of excellent complexion, Kubera himself, the destroyer of all penury, is stationed in the south-western direction of that holy spot named *Vaiśravaṇa Sthāna*.

He is embellished (i.e. fully equipped) with the eight treasures, namely Makara etc. A devotee should worship the deity on fifth lunar day with sweet scents, flowers and unguents.

He will, without any obstacle, obtain unparalleled wealth of hidden treasures.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYFOUR

Greatness of Ajogandheśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the holy spot named Puṣkara situated within five *Gavyūtis* to the east of *Kaubera Sthāna*.

O great goddess, it is the place where a Kaivarta (fisherman) became a great Siddha.

The Devī said:

O Maheśvara, O Lord of Devas, do have the favour of narrating in due details, how he attained Siddhi.

Īśvara said:

O goddess, listen to what happened long ago in Svārocīṣa Manvantara. Once there lived a fisherman, a killer of fishes, of very evil conduct.

4. Once that sinful man went to Puṣkara while wandering here and there. He saw the abode (shrine) of Śaṅkara fully overgrown with creepers and trees.

5. It was the month of Māgha. He was distressed due to cold and was burdened with a wet net. The distressed fellow climbed up the mansion with a desire to bask in the sunshine.

6. He spread the wet net over the flagstaff on the top of the mansion in order to get it dried by the Sun's rays.

7. Then, O goddess, he slipped down from the top of the mansion due to cold. He died instantly, O goddess, in that holy place of Śiva.

8-10. A great deal of time elapsed and the net became tattered and worn out. Since that worn out net did the work of a flag on the top of the auspicious mansion the fish-killer

was born on the earth as a king, thanks to the greatness of the flag. The intelligent king was well-known as Ṛtadhvaja in Saurāṣṭra country. He moved about all over the earth in a chariot with the shining flag fluttering. He was valorous. He ruled the kingdom. Yet he was overwhelmed with a great desire for sensual pleasures. He raised a shining flag, a clean banner of variegated colours, over the abode of Śambhu. Although he was very rich and powerful, he did nothing else.

11-12. The king had the power of remembering past births. He came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra and noticed there the shrine of Lord Ajogandha which he had propitiated formerly. It was fully equipped with clusters of flags and festoons. He built a mansion to the Lord with all the requisites of Śiva, the auspicious one.

13. He adored it everyday. He worshipped the sin-destroying Liṅga devoutly. The noble-minded king ruled over the kingdom for ten thousand years.

14. In due course he passed away and went to heaven, thanks to the power of that Liṅga.

Hence a devotee should try to go there and worship the Liṅga by all means.

15. He should take his holy bath in the *Kuṇḍa* (holy pit) which is to the west. It is Puṣkara, the thief (remover) of sins. It was here that Brahmā formerly performed a Yajña with the full complement of liberal monetary gifts.

16. Aja (Brahmā) invoked all the Tīrthas from Puṣkara, O fair lady, and got them flowing into the *Kuṇḍa* near the sweet scents. He installed the great Liṅga which came to be known by the name Ajogandha.

17-18. O great goddess, in that sin-destroying *Tripuṣkara* a devotee should offer a golden lotus to a leading Brāhmaṇa after duly worshipping the deity with sweet scents, flowers, raw rice grains etc. in accordance with the injunctions. He is rid of all sins committed in the course of seven births.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYFIVE

Greatness of Indreśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. O my beloved, there is the excellent *Indrasthāna* to the north-east thereof (i.e. the shrine of Ajogandheśvara) within five *Gavyūtis*. There is the lake *Candrasaras* there, not very far in the northern direction. O fair lady, the water of this *Candrasaras* is destructive of old age and poverty.

It gets augmented in accordance with the waxing of the moon and it gets decreased as the moon gets waned. Even in this sinful era, this is sometimes visible. O great goddess, even if a thousand sins have been committed, if one takes his holy ablution therein the sins disappear. One need not hesitate to think thus.

5-6. Indra formerly performed a *Yajña* with liberal Dakṣinā there, O fair lady, for a period of thousands of years. He did so after installing the (*Liṅga*) of Śiva called Indreśvara, the Lord who destroys all sins. Indra was chagrined due to the fact that he had been cursed by Gautama. Further Indra had become excessively frightened of the great sin as a result of his affair with Ahalyā.

7. A man who takes his holy bath in the Candraśīrtha, offers libation to the Pitṛs and Devatās and adores Indreśvara gets liberated. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYSIX

Greatness of Ṛṣitoyā Nadī

Īśvara said:

1-3. The holy spot named Devakula is within seven *Gavyūtis* therefrom (i.e. from Indreśvara) in the direction of south-east. It is a conourse where Devas assemble and also where sages and Siddhas gather together. Since this shrine originated when Śiva's *Liṅga* was caused to fall by the sages, it is remembered as Devakula.

The great river Ṛṣitoyā is on the western side thereof. O fair lady, she is a great favourite of sages and is destructive of all sins.

4. A man should take his holy bath there and perform the offering of oblations etc. duly to the Pitṛs. It shall cause satisfaction to the Pitṛs for seventy thousand years.

5-6. Gold, antelope skin and a blanket should be gifted there. Whatever is offered during the new-Moon day in the month of Āṣāḍa, increases certainly gradually to sixteen times when full moon arrives.

7. Gold, antelope skin and blanket should be offered there. The pilgrim is rid of all sins even of those sins committed in the course of seven births.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYSEVEN

Greatness of Ṛṣitoyā

The Devī said:

1-2. O Lord of the universe, O Lord of Devas, O redeemer of devotees taking them across the ocean of worldly existence, do tell me in detail the great rise and origin of Ṛṣitoyā.

How did the name Ṛṣitoyā become well-known over the earth? How did the river come again to the auspicious forest of Devadāru trees?

Īśvara said:

3. O goddess, listen attentively to my words. I shall explain the greatness of Ṛṣitoyā. It is destructive of all sins.

4. O beautiful lady, hundreds and thousands of sages endowed with the power of penance reside in the meritorious Devadāru forest.

5. O my beloved, a great deal of time elapsed while they resided there flourishing with their sons and grandsons. They spread everywhere in the Dāruka forest and established themselves.

6-8. All of them gathered together and deliberated thus: 'The highly meritorious Sarasvatī will carry the Vādava (Submarine fire) on her head and will after a long time go to Prabhāsa Ksetra. Excepting this river that flows into the sea, nothing else such as wells, tanks and lakes, delights our mind while performing our rites of ablution, *Dāna* and *Japa*. We shall go to the abode of Brahmā and request him.'

Īśvara said:

9. After discussing thus all those sages, brilliant on account of their penance, went to the region of Brahmā in order to meet the Lord, the grandfather. They eulogized the lotus-born Brahmā by means of various kinds of prayers.

The sages said:

10. Obeisance to the Lord in the form of Praṇava. Obeisance, obeisance to the creator of the universe. Likewise, we offer obeisance to the supreme soul, the protector of the universe.

11. Also we offer obeisance to the same Lord, the destroyer (of the universe), to the Lord in the form of Brahmā. Obeisance to you, O grandfather. Obeisance to you, O seniormost one among Suras.

12. Obeisance to you, O Four-faced One. Obeisance to you, the Lotus-born One. Obeisance to you, O Virañci. Obeisance to Vedhas, to Lord Vidhi.

13. Obeisance to you, O one of the nature of *Cit* (consciousness) and *Ānanda* (bliss). Obeisance to you, O Hiranyaśarabha. Obeisance to you always, O Lord having Swan as the vehicle. Obeisance to you, O lotus-seated one.

14. Even as those sages who had controlled and sublimated the sense-organs were praying, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, said delightedly:

15. O excellent Brāhmaṇas who have offered this divine prayer, welcome unto you all, O great Brāhmaṇas. I am pleased with this divine prayer of yours. Choose an excellent boon.

The sages said:

16. O Lord, O most excellent one among Suras ! A river destructive of sins is being looked for by us for the purpose of holy ablution. Grant that, as our excellent boon.

Īśvara said:

17. On being requested thus by those sages resplendent with their power of penance, Brahmā looked at all the rivers having personified forms.

18-20. O beautiful lady, the rivers were: Gaṅgā, Yamunā, the divine Sarasvatī, Candrabhāgā, Revā, Sarayū, Gaṇḍakī, Tāpī, the river Godāvarī, Kāverī, Candraputrī, Siprā, Carmaṇvatī etc. O beautiful lady of excellent countenance, there were all the *Nadas* such as Vedikā, Sindhu etc. All those holy rivers, destructive of sins, stood there in their personified forms.

21. On seeing them all eager to go to the earth to the charming Devadāru forest in the excellent Prabhāsa Kṣetra, he directed his vision towards his Kamaṇḍalu (water-pot) and they entered the Kamaṇḍalu.

Brahmā said:

22. All the highly meritorious rivers have entered the Brahma-Kamaṇḍalu and are held there. May they go to the earth with compassion for the sages.

23. O Brāhmaṇas, if I send only one river, the others will be angry with me. Hence I am releasing all those who have accommodated themselves in the Kamaṇḍalu.

Īśvara said:

24. Then Brahmā released the great rivers held therein. After releasing them, Brahmā said to them again and again:

25-26. "These rivers have been released by me on being requested by the sages. Having the form of water flowing rapidly they are hurrying to facilitate their holy ablution. Let the accumulation of rivers be known over the earth by the name R̥ṣitoyā. The divine river will become favourite of sages. She is destructive of all sins"

Īśvara said:

27. It was thus, O fair lady of excellent countenance, that the river highly sacred and well-known as Rṣitoyā came to the Devadāru forest.

28. It (the divine river) was led to the ocean by the sages who had mastered the Vedas. The divine river was led to the ocean with the auspicious sounds of the Vedic chanting and the notes of Turyas and Dundubhīs. In this way the river was taken to the sea by the sages.

29. The divine river is easily accessible everywhere but very rarely accessible at the three holy spots viz. Mahodaya, Mahātīrtha and in the vicinity of Mūla Caṇḍīśa.

30. The place where Rṣitoyā flows to the east and joins the ocean (is the place called Mūla Caṇḍīśa). If in a place Rṣitoyā is accessible, why should another river be sought after there?

31. Those men are always blessed who drink her water. It is the place where the bones (deposited in the river) get dissolved within six months.

32-33. Gaṅgā flows therein at down and Yamunā in the evening. At midday Sarasvatī flows therein along with a thousand rivers. During afternoon Revā flows therein and in the evening the daughter of Sun (i.e. Yamunā).

34. A devotee should be aware of this fact. A clever man should take his holy bath there and perform Śraddha in accordance with the injunctions. He will reap the benefit thereof.

35. Thus the great rise of river Rṣitoyā has been succinctly narrated. It is destructive of all sins of men and it bestows all desired benefits.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYEIGHT

Greatness of Guptaprayāga

Īśvara said:

1-3. Within a distance of a *Gavyūti* to the west of Rṣitoyā,

there is a deity named Saṅgāleśvara who is the destroyer of all sins.

There is Lord Mādhava too there (at the place) named Gupta Prayāga, O lady of excellent countenance, the rivers Jāhnavī, Yamunā, the divine Sarasvatī and many other Tīrthas are also there. By holy ablution, visiting and worship, a devotee shall be rid of all sins.

Pārvatī said:

4-6. Do tell me, O Maheśāna, bowed down to by all the Devas, how is Prayāga the Lord of Tīrthas and Viṣṇu, the eternal god? O Bull-emblemed One, how did Gaṅgā, Yamunā, divine Sarasvatī and many other Tīrthas come to the vicinity of Saṅgāleśvara? How did the deity acquire the name 'Saṅgāleśa'? Do tell me this. This is my curiosity.

Īśvara said:

7-8. O beautiful Sura-lady, when the Liṅga (Phallus) fell, all the Devas gathered together. Tīrtharāja Prayāga with meritorious Tīrthas, three and a half crores in number, approached (me). Prayāga conceals himself covered by crores of Tīrthas.

9-10. Then there came the Vibudhas (Devas) with Brahmā and Viṣṇu as their leaders. With their divine eyes they viewed the Tīrtharāja covered by crores of Tīrthas. It is sacred and destructive of sins. On hearing the fall of the Liṅga, they were overwhelmed with great misery.

11. O fair lady, all the excellent Suras beginning with Brahmā stood by.

12. At the same time the eternal Lord Rudra came there. Devoid of bliss, he spoke these words:

13. "Listen to these words, O Devas with Brahmā and Viṣṇu at the head. My excellent Liṅga fell down due to the curse of the sages. Hence do adore, ye all, the Liṅga for the purpose of achieving all desired objects."

14. After saying thus, O my beloved, Mahādeva stayed there. Three Kuṇḍas (came to be there) namely Brāhma, Vaiṣṇava and Raudra.

15. The fourth Tīrtha was called *Trisangama* where three rivers, Gaṅgā, Sarasvatī and the daughter of the Sun (i.e. Yamunā) had their confluence.

16. One crore of Tirthas became settled in the Brahmakuṇḍa. It is said that a crore of Tīrthas got entrenched likewise in the Vaiṣṇava Kuṇḍa.

17. It has been gloriously mentioned that one and a half crores of Tīrthas abided in Śivakuṇḍa. Brahmakuṇḍa is on the western side and it is remembered that the Vaiṣṇavakuṇḍa is on the east.

18-19. What is situated in the middle is glorified as Rudrakuṇḍa. O lady of excellent countenance, the place where Gaṅgā meets with Yamunā after coming out of the middle Kuṇḍa is called Trisaṅgama. In the subtle interspace of these two is the Gupta Sarasvatī.

20-21. Prayāga the (hidden) leader of the Tīrthas is always present in these. O lady of excellent countenance, a man who comes here in the month of Māgha should take his holy bath in the early morning, O my beloved, when the Sun is in the Makara Zodiac (Capricorn). The Sun may at that time have risen up slightly. Listen to the benefit he derives.

22. A man who is endowed with perfect faith and who has conquered the sense-organs dispels the sins committed mentally, by means of the first holy ablution.

23. By the second ablution, he destroys verbal sins; through the third ablution he dispels physical sins; with the fourth ablution the sin due to the association (with sinners) is destroyed. With the fifth ablution all secret sins are dispelled.

24. He dispels all *Upapātakas* (minor sins) through the sixth ablution.

25. O lady of excellent countenance, through the seven-fold ablution in the Kuṇḍas all great sins are washed off by the persons always.

26. If a person bathes during the whole month in Gupta Prayāga, the benefit thereof cannot be recounted even by Brahmā and others in the course of crores of Kalpas.

27. This Tīrtha that destroys all sins, is more endearing, O beautiful lady, than all the other Tīrthas situated in Prabhāsa.

28. In order to preserve and protect these the Mothers (*Mātarah*) should be worshipped along with me by means of different kinds of splendid food offerings scrupulously.

29-30. O fair lady, there are crores of *Bhūtas* (Spirits) and *Pretas* (Ghosts) who are the attendants of the Mothers. In

order to eradicate fear of them one should worship the Mothers as well as these (*Bhūtas* etc.) on the fourteenth day in the dark half with a mind endowed with faith. A man who bathes in this Tīrtha dispels Brahmatyā.

31-33. An excellent man who devoutly performs Śrāddha with the Pitrṛs in view, shall redeem the family of his father and mother. A bull should be gifted there by those who wish to get the full benefit of the duly performed pilgrimage. He who performs the pilgrimage has infinite benefits. Thus the greatness of Guptaprayāga has been narrated to you. A man who listens to this and approves it shall attain Śaṅkara's abode.

CHAPTER TWO HUNDRED NINETYNINE

Greatness of Mādhava

Īśvara said:

1-4. To the south thereof, not very far, is situated (another shrine). There Mādhava holding conch, discus and mace is well-established.

A pilgrim should observe fast on the eleventh lunar day in bright half and keep his sense-organs under control. He who thus devoutly worships the deity with sweet scents, flowers and unguents attains the greatest region from which there is no return to the world of birth and death.

In this context, there is a *Gāthā* (verse) formerly sung by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds: "A man who bathes in Viṣṇukuṇḍa and worships Mādhava will go to the greatest region where Lord Hari himself is present."

Thus the greatness of the deity Viṣṇu has been entirely narrated to you. It grants all desires of men and destroys all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED

Greatness of Saṅgāleśvara

1-6. On the northern side thereof, rather slightly on the north-west, is the Liṅga named Saṅgāleśvara. It is destructive of all sins.

O my beloved, Brahmā and Viṣṇu were inclined to propitiate the Liṅga there. The highly splendid Lord Śakra worshipped the Liṅga.

So also did Varuṇa, Dhanada (Kubera), Dharmarāja and Pāvaka (Fire-god).

The great Liṅga was propitiated by Ādityas, Vasus, the Guardians of the Quarters all round. After worshipping it, all of them witnessed the excellent greatness of the Liṅga named Saṅgāleśvara.

O fair lady, suddenly they exclaimed in their highest glee: "Since the groups of Devas gathered here and installed this Liṅga, it will become known all over the earth by the name Saṅgāleśvara.

None in the family of the men who adore the deity named Saṅgāleśvara, shall ever be poor and deprived of wealth."

7. By visiting Saṅgāleśvara, one attains that merit which one gets by gifting a thousand cows at Kurukṣetra.

8. A devotee should go there on a New-Moṛṇ day and perform the holy ablution in accordance with the injunctions. Without a vestige of anger, he should perform the Śrāddha unto the Pitṛs. Thereby the Pitṛs are pleased till the time of Pralaya when all living beings get dissolved.

9. That holy spot extends all round to half a *Krośa*. It fulfils all desired objectives and destroys all sins.

10. O great goddess, all living beings of high and middle order, who die here when the time comes, attain the greatest goal.

11. O great goddess, those men who observe fast (unto death) and give up their lives shall certainly merge in the Supreme Lord.

12-14. All these shall certainly attain salvation: Those who are killed by a bull (or cow), or a bird, those who are killed by fanged animals (reptiles) or those who kill themselves, those who die on being bitten by serpents, those who die (naturally) in their beds. Even those devoid of elementary

cleanliness—if they die in this holy spot of great merit, granting the cessation of rebirth—get salvation.

If they perform sixteen Śrāddhas, if the rite of *Vṛṣotsarga* (letting loose a bull) is performed, if Brāhmaṇas are duly fed, they attain salvation.

15-16. After saying thus all the Suras went to heaven. The greatness of Saṅgāleśvara has been succinctly mentioned to you. If it is listened to it dispels sins, miseries and griefs.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED ONE

Greatness of Siddheśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Siddheśvara situated not very far from the same (i.e. Saṅgāleśvara) on the eastern side.

When Devas gathered together hurriedly and installed the Śiva Liṅga called by the name Saṅgāleśvara, very auspicious and destructive of all sins, all the groups of Siddhas too propitiated the Bull-bannered One and installed this Liṅga, the bestower of all Siddhis—miraculous powers.

That Liṅga has the name Siddheśvara and it is destructive of great sins. Then the groups of Siddhas eulogized Śiva with various kinds of prayers.

5. Then the delighted great Lord said, “May an excellent boon be requested for.” Thereupon, all of them bowed down and said to the Moon-crested Lord:

6-7. “A man who comes here, takes his holy bath in accordance with the injunctions, worships Siddhanātha and repeatedly recites the Mantra *Satarudriya*, *Aghora*, *Gāyatrī* or *Tryambakam* mantra, within six months certainly obtains perfection and the *Aiśvaryas* i.e. the spiritual powers of *Anīmā* (Minuteness) etc.”

Īśvara said:

8-9. Hara said, “It will happen so” and vanished. A devotee should be bold and fearless and worship Siddheśvara at

midnight on the fourteenth lunar day in the dark half of the month of Aśvayuj and perform the *Japa* of *Aghora* Mantra. That man shall attain Siddhi.

10. Thus, O goddess, the sin-destroying greatness of the deity, Siddheśvara, has been told. It bestows all desired benefits.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWO

Greatness of Gandharveśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Gandharveśvara situated within a distance of five *Dhanus* to the north thereof (i.e. Siddheśvara).

The Liṅga was installed by Gandharvas. A man should take his holy bath once and worship the Liṅga. He becomes handsome and sweet-voiced like a cuckoo. He obtains all the things he desires.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THREE

Greatness of Uttareśvara

Īśvara said:

1-6. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go north to the shrine of the excellent Lord (Uttareśvara). If he propitiates the deity, he will destroy all great sins.

It is situated within a distance of three Dhanus to the west thereof (i.e. Gandharveśvara). This excellent Liṅga was installed by the leading serpents, the leaders of whom were Śeṣa and others. They were highly endowed with the power of penance. After propitiating the great Lord, they installed the excellent Liṅga.

If a devotee propitiates the Lord formerly adored by Serpents, O my beloved, poison does not seep into his body

throughout the life. Serpents are pleased with him. They never bite him. Hence, by all means a man should adore the Liṅga.

O lady of excellent complexion, there are many Liṅgas installed by sages on the highly meritorious western banks of Gaṅgā. By visiting them and adoring them one is rid of all sins. The man obtains the benefit of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FOUR

Greatness of Gaṅgā

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to Gaṅgā flowing on three paths, to the north-east of Saṅgāleśvara within seven Dhanus.

O my beloved, there are three-eyed aquatic fishes therein always. They are seen even in Kali Age. It is the truth. The truth has been mentioned by me. By taking holy ablution therein, O great goddess, one is rid of the five sins.

Sūta said:

On hearing his words, Satī, the daughter of Mountain, was surprised, O excellent Brāhmaṇas. She spoke to Lord Śiva who has the moving Moon for his crest-jewel:

Pārvatī said:

5. How did Gaṅgā flowing through three paths (viz. heavenly, earthly and nether-worldly) come there? O Śiva, how did the aquatic fishes become three-eyed?

6. O Lord, if I am your beloved, do explain this in detail.

Īśvara said:

7. O my splendid fair lady, since you ask me I shall explain. Do listen. It is my opinion that believers will have their faith enhanced.

8-10. The great Lord Mahādeva was cursed by the sages who were enveloped by the darkness of ignorance. They had been enraged for some reason. They realized that it was Maheśvara who had been cursed. They realized that they had been deprived of bliss and saw that the entire universe had become devoid of bliss. They propitiated Parameśāna (the great Lord) who had assumed the form of an elephant. The Brāhmaṇas brought him to a raised ground and made him pleased.

11. Although Maheśvara was pleased ever since then, they always considered themselves as great malicious offenders of Śiva.

12. All of them hurriedly came to Mahātīrtha from Mahodaya and performed a very severe penance in the vicinity of Saṅgāleśvara.

13-17. All these sages duly worshipped the deity named Saṅgāleśvara: (The sages were) Bhṛgu, Atri, Maṇki, Kaśyapa, Kanva, Gautama, Kauśika, Kuśika of great power of penance, Sūkara, Bharadvāja, the sage of powerful penance, the son of Bhārgava, Jātukarnya, Vasiṣṭha, Sāvarṇi, Parāśara, Sāṇḍilya, Pulastya, Vatsa of great penance and many other great sages. They had come to Prabhāsa, the destroyer of sins. In the vicinity of Saṅgāleśvara they installed Maheśvara and performed penance for ever.

18-20. Even after the lapse of a great deal of time, Maheśvara was not seen. All those leading sages considered penance as their asset. They were firmly established in the performance of penance. By meditating on the Three-eyed Lord, they themselves became three-eyed. They looked at one another with the suspicion that the others were the three-eyed Lord Maheśvara and began to eulogize by means of different kinds of prayers. Thus they acquired the state of three-eyed ones due to their power of meditation.

21. They thus continued to perform very severe penance and adored the Trident-bearing Lord. Even as they were performing the penance, Maheśvara became very compassionate.

22. He spoke to all those excellent sages, "O excellent sages, I am pleased with your penance as well as adoration. Listen, you may choose an excellent boon."

The sages said:

23. O Lord of Devas, O Hara, if you are pleased with us, it behoves you to grant us a boon. Do cause Gaṅgā to come here for our holy ablution.

24. Due to our ignorance, we have caused offence to you. If we take our holy bath in Gaṅgā, we will regain sanctity on the earth.

Īśvara said:

25. Indeed you are persons of sacred actions. You sanctify those who purify (others). In order to gladden your hearts, I shall bring Gaṅgā here.

26. Due to your sanctity, you have assumed the state of having three eyes, O excellent sages.

After saying thus Śambhu kept his eyes motionless in his mental absorption in meditation. Instantly he remembered Gaṅgā full of fishes.

27. On being remembered, Gaṅgā, the divine river of three paths, full of fishes, pierced through the surface of the earth and reached that place.

28. When the splendid Gaṅgā abounding in fishes was seen (by the sages) all the fishes acquired the state of having three eyes.

Īśvara said:

29. O Brāhmaṇas, because they were viewed at by you, they have attained the state of having three eyes. This is a very good example shown to the worlds.

The sages said:

30. O great Lord, with your favour let the progeny of the fish in this Kuṇḍa be three-eyed always in every Yuga.

31-32. A man who comes to this Kuṇḍa, takes his holy bath and offers gold, cows, gingelly seeds and garments to a Brāhmaṇa, particular on a New-Moon day, should become three-eyed.

After saying "It will be so" Hara vanished.

33-34. The Brāhmaṇas became pleased and all of them went to the place Mahodaya. Thus, O fair lady, the excellent

greatness of Gaṅgā has been narrated to you. If it is listened to it suppresses all sins and yields all desired benefits.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIVE

Greatness of Nāradāditya

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine named Nāradāditya stationed to the east thereof (i.e. Saṅgāleśvara). It is destructive of old age and poverty.

In the west it is within a distance of three hundred *Dhanus* from Mūlacaṇḍīśa. O goddess Nārada propitiated Bhāskara, the thief of water, and immediately became one whose body was rid of old age.

The Devī said:

How was the leading sage Nārada afflicted with old age and how did he propitiate Sūrya? O Śaṅkara, do tell me this.

Īśvara said:

4-6. When Nārada, the leading sage, reached Dvārāvatī all the mighty sons of Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) became delighted. They were playing about in the royal palace all together. When they saw Nārada, all of them except Sāṁba paid due obeisance hurriedly. On seeing him rude and impolite, Nārada said:

7. “O Sāṁba, O son of Hari, you are arrogant because of your physical charm. Hence, ere long you will incur a terrible curse.”

Sāṁba said:

8. Of what purpose is the obeisance paid to the sages who have conquered themselves or of what use is their blessing (only which causes) loss of their power of penance?

9. O Nārada, O son of Brahmā, you do not have even the least of the characteristics of sages. What more need be said?

10. You have no wife. You have no sons, grandsons, or great-grandsons. You need not worry about a house and its doorway. You don't have cows or calves.

11. You are a mental son of Brahmā. You have undertaken the vow of celibacy. How is it that you have got a nature which always indulges in improper affairs?

12. You don't seem to be happy without (instigating) a fight nor without causing dispute. You are always fond of arguments of some sort and verbal controversies.

13. In respect to holy ablution, Sandhyā prayers, *Japa*, *Homa* and offerings libations to Pitṛs and deities, Nārada does it in one way and Brāhmaṇas in another way.

14. Since you curse me because you are arrogant due to your youthfulness, O Brāhmaṇa-sage, you will become one afflicted with old age.

15-17. O fair lady, on being cursed thus, Nārada, the leading sage, sat on an excellent seat in a clean, lonely place free from bones and thorns. It was covered with the skin of a black antelope. The great sage installed a beautiful idol of Sūrya on the pleasant banks of R̥ṣitoyā. The idol was one that was destructive of all sorts of poverty. He eulogized Āditya, the dispeller of darkness, by means of different kind of prayers.

Prayer of Nārada:

18. Obeisance to thee, the personified form of R̥ks. Obeisance to thee, O Lord, who have penetrated the splendour of the Sāmans. Obeisance to you (thee) whose body is solely of the form of perfect knowledge, to thee who have dispelled darkness.

19. Obeisance to thee whose form is pure refulgence. Obeisance to one without form, to one whose soul is free from impurities. Obeisance to the omniformed supreme soul, the most excellent, the most elegant.

20. O deity whose form spreads over the entire universe. Obeisance! Obeisance to one of blissful form, to the cause of everything. Obeisance to the permanent foundation of knowledge and minds.

21. Obeisance to you, O Bhāskara. Obeisance to *Dinakṛt* (the cause of day). Obeisance to the Lord, the form of all,

to the Lord in the form of enlightenment, to one who could not be viewed at.

Īśvara said:

22. Even as he eulogized thus mentally, the eternal Sun, the eye of the universe, appeared in front of him, O goddess of Devas. Being highly pleased he spoke to Nārada, the leading sage:

Sūrya said:

23. I am pleased with you, O Brāhmaṇa-sage. Choose your boon, whatever may be in your mind. I shall grant you the same even if it is inaccessible.

Nārada said:

24. O Lord Divākara (Creator of the day), if you are pleased, let me be one in the teen-aged state, though I am now one whose body is afflicted with old age. With your favour, let me be so.

25. O Timirāpaha (Dispeller of darkness), if a man views you on the seventh lunary day coinciding with a Sunday, he should not fear any sort of ailments. Thanks for the favour.

Īśvara said:

26. After saying, "It will be so", Ravi vanished. Thus, O goddess, the entire greatness of Nāradāditya Deva has been spoken to you. It is destructive of all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIX

Greatness of Sāmbāditya

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Sāmbāditya which is destructive of all sins. It is situated to the north thereof (Nāradāditya).

It is the place where Sāmba performed penance and propitiated Divākara (Sun-god). With the favour of the thousand-rayed Sun-god, he attained a beautiful form.

The son of Jāmbavatī was angrily cursed by his father. Therefore, he propitiated the lotus-eyed Viṣṇu.

Sāmba, the son of Jāmbavatī, sought the amelioration of the curse. Thereupon, Viṣṇu's face beamed with pleasure and spoke to him:

5-6a. "Go to the Prābhāsika Kṣetra, on the beautiful bank of Ṛṣitoyā where there is an excellent area called Brahmanabhāga*. It is rendered charming by Brāhmaṇas dwelling there.

O dear son, there in the form of Sun-god I shall grant you boon".

6b. It was thus that Sāmba was advised by the powerful Viṣṇu.

7-8. On the advice of Viṣṇu, O Śivā, Sāmba went to the charming Śivapura, in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra. There he propitiated the great Lord Bhāskara, the thief (evaporator) of waters, and delighted him through eulogies of diverse kinds.

9. Ravi spoke to Sāmba: "I am delighted by your eulogy. O foremost one among men, do go to the auspicious banks of Ṛṣitoyā."

10. On being told thus, he came to the splendid banks of Ṛṣitoyā where the Brāhmaṇa-sage Nārada was engaged in penance.

11. Hari's son went there and spoke to those Brāhmaṇas who permanently resided on the elevated holy spot.

Sāmba said:

12. This is the place called Brahman's Bhāga (portion of

* Brahmanabhāga—The area occupied by Brāhmaṇas.

Brāhmaṇas) in the excellent holy spot of Prabhāsa. Those Brāhmaṇas who are here are remembered as the most excellent ones all over the world.

13. O Brāhmaṇas, at your words (of permission) I shall propitiate Sūrya. Formerly this holy spot was indicated to me by Viṣṇu.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

14a. O Sāmba, you will attain Siddhi. Do propitiate the Sun-god.

14b-15. On being told thus by the Brāhmaṇas, he entered (the holy spot) and propitiated Prabhākara everyday. The son of Jāmbavatī became firmly established in penance. On seeing him firmly established in penance Viṣṇu became highly merciful and thought:

16-19. "As Rudra is the (only) bestower of *Aiśvarya* (lordship and prosperity), as Viṣṇu is the bestower of salvation, as the Lord of Devas is remembered as the bestower of heavenly pleasures when propitiated through Yajñas, as water in conjunction with clay and holy ash is a purifying agent, as Vahni (Fire-god) is one that burns and blazes, as Vighneśvara (Gaṇeśa) is the dispeller of obstacles, as the daughter of Brahmā (Sarasvatī) is competent to grant power of free expression, so also there is no Lord other than Divākara who grants relief from ailments.

If such a pure Lord Bhāskara (Sun-god) does not grant boons despite being propitiated in diverse ways, that must be due to my curse."

20. The lotus-eyed Viṣṇu thought thus. Janārdana became pleased with him and adopted the form of the Sun-god.

21. Divākara in the form of the perceptible Sun and called Aparanārāyaṇa (another Nārāyaṇa) stood very near him. Thereupon, the highly delighted bestower of boons on those who perform meritorious deeds, manifested himself and said thus:

22. "O Sāmba, O son of Hari, why do you perform the strenuous penance? Enough of your exertion and painful ordeal. I am pleased. O devotee of excellent holy vows, choose your boon."

Sāṁba said:

23. O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, O perceptible ornament unto the firmament, may I be free from impurities and one whose body is rid of leprosy. Be always present in the holy spot. Be present in this charming place.

The Sun-god said:

24-25. Now, O Sāṁba, your body will be free from impurities. All devotees should come here on a day when the seventh lunar day coincides with a Sunday. A man who observes fast on that day and keeps awake during the night (will be highly blessed). Eighteen kinds of leprosy and other fell diseases will never occur in the family of that noble-souled man.

26. The man should devoutly have his holy ablution. He must conquer his sense-organs. On Sundays he should worship the highly lustrous Sāṁbāditya. That man becomes free from ailments. He will become rich and blessed with a son.

27-29. On the eastern side thereof, rather a little on the north-east, there is a sin-destroying Kuṇḍa (pit of water) highly meritorious and filled with clean water. A wise devotee must duly bathe therein and perform Śrāddha. He who worships Sāṁbāditya shall feed Brāhmaṇas too. He shall be richly endowed with everything desirable. He is honoured in the world of the Sun.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SEVEN

Greatness of Aparanārāyaṇa

Īśvara said:

1-4. To the east of Sāṁbāditya, rather a little bit to the south-east, there is the shrine of the deity named Aparanārāyaṇa. There is no other deity in the world that can be called superior to this one.

O goddess of Devas, Sūrya who has the form of Viṣṇu too, assumed another form. In the form of Viṣṇu he granted boons

to Sāmba. Therefore, formerly Viṣṇu became famous by the name *Apara*. A devotee should worship Puṇḍarīkākṣa in the form of the Sun-god in accordance with the injunctions on the eleventh lunar day in the bright half of the month of Phālguna. He will be rid of all sins. He will become richly blessed with all desires fulfilled.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED EIGHT

Greatness of the Birth of Mūlacaṇḍīśa

Īśvara said:

1-4. To the east of the shrine of Nārāyaṇa rather a little to the north-east, there is the shrine well-known in all the three worlds by the name of Mūlacaṇḍīśa.

It is the place, O my beloved, where our Liṅga (Phallus) was caused to fall by the sages whose eyes had become reddened due to anger. It took the form of Mūlacaṇḍīśa.

The first Liṅga that originated there, O goddess, was caused to fall due to the anger of the sages, who were left behind in the Devadāru forest.

O great goddess, I went there on another occasion. It was because they were curious to know, O fair lady. Thereupon they became furious. Then, O goddess of Devas, I was cursed. They caused my Liṅga to fall.

Devi said:

5. How did these Brāhmaṇas get furious? How did they allow their own good nature to be spoiled by anger? Do mention this. I am extremely curious.

Īśvara said:

6-10. Formerly, O fair lady, I went to the Dārukavana, in the meritorious penance grove and hermitage of the sages. I was in the guise of a Diṇḍī. In the state of nudity. I went there begging for alms. On seeing him (me) with matted hairs resembling a crown, going about begging with the penis erect,

all the womenfolk of the sages became fully over-powered by Kāma. They forsook their beloved husbands altogether. (The sages said:) "All of our wives have been provoked by this Dīṇḍi. He was begging for alms with the limbs smeared with holy ash. He was like another god of love in appearance. Hence we shall curse him." So said the sages.

The ascetics took up holy water for the purpose of cursing. They meditated thus, "Let his penis which appears to be ever-erect drop down" When this was uttered my Liṅga fell down in the *Devakula* (place of shrine).

11. Those ascetics saw my Liṅga fallen down in the holy spot that became well-known in all the three worlds by the name of *Mūlacaṇḍīśa*. Then they became overwhelmed with anger and they began to hurt me again (They began to hurt the Dīṇḍi).

12. Some of them had the *Bṛsi* (seats) in their hands. Others held their water-pots, O fair lady; others seized their slippers and ran after him (me).

13. This Dīṇḍi vanished and spoke to thee, the slender-waisted one. "Do see these sages with their minds confounded by anger."

14. O fair lady, for this reason, at your instance, I did not bless the furious ascetics, O sinless one.

15. In the meantime, those sages failed to see the Dīṇḍi devoid of bliss. All of them went to Lord Pitāmaha to meet him.

16. On seeing Virañci, the Lord of Devas, free from distress, all the sages bowed down their heads and spoke hurriedly:

17-19. "O Lord, there is an ascetic in the form of a Dīṇḍi. He entered our penance grove to beg for alms, for the destruction (violation of the chastity) of our wives. The evil-mannered one was cursed by us. His penis was caused to fall by us. So too our penises fell down. For that reason he went away. When his penis fell down, we too became devoid of bliss and thus we all stood. Do explain the cause hereof."

Brahmā said:

20. An indecent act has been perpetrated by you all inasmuch as you all jealously attacked Rudra, the extremely charming one.

21-23. Will he try to seek delight from your wives after disregarding the ladies of Asuras, Dānavas, Devas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Vidyādharaś, Gandharvas and of the charming Nāga tribes? O Brāhmaṇas, you all know nothing. His wife is the chief of the three worlds of super-excellent charm and beauty. How can he abandon her and try to delight the wives of the sages? In fact Rudra is requested by her, "Do bless the sages."

24-25. By the words of Pārvatī, he thought of finding out the real truth. He had the desire to know the truth. He is the Lord of the fourteen types of living beings. Such a Lord in the form of a Dīnḍi, the Lord of Karanas (senses) has been cursed by you. By cursing him the entire universe has been cursed because everything has his qualities to rely upon. Devas, brutes and human beings have become devoid of bliss.

26. On account of this curse, a great evil has befallen you. The Liṅga, should be propitiated, otherwise the Liṅga that has dropped down cannot rise up erect.

27. When this was said by the Lord, the Brāhmaṇas asked Pitāmaha, "Where should he be found by us? Do tell us the truth, as it is."

Brahmā said:

28. The Pināka-bearing Lord is present in the hermitage of Kubera in the form of a *Gaja* (an elephant) Go there, approach him and propitiate him.

29. On hearing his words, all of them were delighted in their minds. The ascetics, crores in number, began to go ahead at once.

30. They were thinking about that important spot. They wanted to see the Lord in the form of an elephant. They wanted to see Rudra staying in Kuberāśrama as told by Pitāmaha.

31. Gaurī thought that the sages were thirsty with throats parched due to hunger. Urged by compassion she took up Gorasa (cow's milk and milk products) and stood in front of them.

32. Gaurī holding the cow milk (*Gorasa*) had dark, curly, glossy tresses of great length like a serpent over her head.

33. She said to all those sages: "(See) what I have brought from the mountains. It is Gorasa, comparable to nectar. It has

the flavour of the *Kapittha* fruit juice."

34. On being told thus by her, the Brāhmaṇas spoke to the wide-eyed lady, "We shall take our holy ablution and then drink the Gorasa brought by you."

35. On hearing their words an excellent Titha filled with hot water, a charming Kuṇḍa was created by that goddess for the sake of their holy ablution.

36. All of them had their plunge therein. They were rid of their excessive exhaustion. They performed their routine activities and went over for drinking the *Gorasa*.

37. With the leaves of Arka plant, they made splendid leaf-cups. They sat down in a row and drank *Gorasa*.

38-39. Gaurī repeatedly poured the Gorasa in the leafy cups of the hungry sages to make them contented. They were fully satisfied after drinking it. They were relieved of hunger, thirst and weariness. They stood by as though resuscitated there.

40. When they came back to normal state of mind they realized that this was no lady to be named 'a cowherdess' but Gaurī herself come here to bless them.

41. Bowing down their heads all of them requested the excellent-waisted lady, "O goddess Umā, do tell us where we can see Rudra at least once."

42-43. Those noble-souled ones were told by her: "Look at the great elephant yonder. It is the mighty one (the Lord) who is moving about after assuming the form of an elephant. With true devotion he can be seen easily." Those Brāhmaṇas gathered together at a place on hearing her words.

44. With dedicated inner self, those pure Brāhmaṇas gathered together and stood at a place to see that elephant. That place was formerly famous everywhere by the name 'Saṅgameśvara.' It is a Tīrtha of great prosperity.

45. With their desire to see the great elephant they engaged themselves in readiness on that account after casting off their Kuṇḍikās (water-pots).

46. Where those Kuṇḍikās (water-pots) were cast off, a sin-destroying Tīrtha named after Kuṇḍikā took its origin. It is capable of granting seen and unseen benefits.

47. Then those excellent sages reached the hermitage of Kubera and saw the elephant standing amidst the coconut palms.

48. They were extremely delighted and so began to hold and fondle his trunk with their own hands. The elephant tossed off the ascetics even as they held themselves to the trunk.

49. (He also tossed off) some who held themselves to his limbs fearlessly. All of them behaved like so many mosquitoes.

50-52. Hara in the form of the elephant played about in diverse ways even as he stood in the forest. Rudra then forsook that form of the terrible elephant. He then assumed the handsome form of Diṇḍi very pleasing to the mind. With loud shouts of "Victory to you" and auspicious chanting of Vedic songs, the Liṅga of excessive prosperity was lifted up. That spot, the most excellent one among the holy spots, is called *Unnata* (elevated spot).

53. In the guise of an elephant, the mighty Lord stood on the *Unnata* (elevated spot) in the form of Gaṇeśa, the leader of the herds.

54. Rudra had assumed the form of Diṇḍi and spoke to those ascetics, "Let it be mentioned as to what should be done unto ye all by me."

55-56. On being told thus by the Lord, they (the ascetics) who were engaged in the pursuit of knowledge and holy rites told him: "With your favour, let all the living beings be full of bliss as before. O Lord of Devas, what had been committed by us of confounded minds should be pardoned. O Lord of Suras, let all this be done with your favour. Do be kind to bless us."

57. They were told "It will be so" Thereupon all of them became rid of their feverish-like disturbed state of mind. The sages made a replica of his Liṅga (phallus) and worshipped it. Without the feelings of rivalry and jealousy all the sages eulogized:

58. "O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, do forbear and bless us. Do get merged into this Liṅga to be named Mūlacaṇḍīśa. O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, your Kalā (Digit:one-sixteenth part) should be deposited here by you in all the three holy occasions (dawn, midday and dusk)."

Īśvara said:

59-62. The goddess is called Caṇḍī. I am remembered as

her Lord (Īśa). The root (Mūla) thereof is the Liṅga. Since it had fallen here, the Liṅga will become famous as Mūlacaṇḍīśa.

By viewing that Liṅga that benefit is obtained which accrues when hundreds of large tanks, wells and lakes are dug.

By viewing the Mūlacaṇḍīśa of the Devī, one obtains that meritorious benefit which one may expect to attain by gifting away the entire Brahmāṇḍa (Cosmic Egg). All the sixteen types of holy gifts should be made there by excellent men.

63. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, everything will occur in the manner mentioned by me. O ascetics, O Brāhmaṇas, go to the Dāruvāna (forest). You have been enjoined by us, O Brāhmaṇas, to go to Dāruvana.

64. Thereupon, O great goddess, on hearing my eight words conducive to great prosperity all the sages became delighted. After going to the Dāruvana the ascetics resumed their excellent penance.

65. For this reason, O goddess, the Liṅga named Mūlacaṇḍīśa bedecked by the crescent moon is destructive of sins.

66. When the sages were excessively thirsty, their weariness was dispelled by you in an excellent manner by offering milk. That milk current became a Kunḍa well-known all over the earth by the name Taptodaka.

67. A devotee who takes his holy bath in the waters of Rṣitoyā and worships Caṇḍīśa shall become a powerful over-lord of all the worlds.

68. O goddess, thus the greatness of Mūlacaṇḍīśa Deva has been succinctly glorified. On being listened to, it is destructive of all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED NINE

Greatness of Four-Faced Vināyaka

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should go to the excellent shrine of Vināyaka well-known as *Caturmukha Vināyaka* situated to the north of Caṇḍīśa rather within a distance of four *Dhanus*, a little to the north-east.

By worshipping that deity strenuously, one gets rid of all obstacles. By worshipping the *Caturmukha* (four-faced) Lord on a fourth lunar day by means of sweet scents, flowers, different kinds of edibles along with sweetmeats the devotee shall attain Siddhi.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TEN

Greatness of Kalambeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. The shrine of the deity named Kalambeśvara is situated within two *Dhanus* to the north-west thereof (i.e. *Caturmukha Vināyaka*). It is destructive of all sins. By viewing and worshiping that deity one shall get rid of all sins.

On a New-Moon day coinciding with a Monday (doing worship) in that shrine is conducive to much merit. Brāhmaṇas should be fed by those who seek to get the benefit of all merits.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED ELEVEN

Greatness of Gopālasvāmī Hari

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Gopālasvāmī Hari situated within twenty *Dhanus* to the east of *Caṇḍīśa*.

It destroys all sins and dispels all sorts of difficulties due to poverty. The devotee should view the deity and do worship particularly in the month of Māgha and keep awake after concluding the worship of that place. He shall attain the greatest region.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWELVE

Greatness of Bakulasvāmī

Īśvara said:

1-2. The Sun-god named Bakulasvāmī is situated within a distance of eight *Dhanus*, O my beloved, to the north thereof.

A devotee should view that grief-destroying deity on a Sunday coinciding with a seventh lunar day. The man should keep awake at night. He attains all desired things. He is honoured in the world of the Sun.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

Greatness of Uttarārka

Īśvara said:

1. The deity named Uttarārka is stationed within a distance of sixteen *Dhanus* to the north-west thereof. It instantly creates credence and conviction (in the minds of devotees). After performing the rite of Niṁba Saptamī a devotee gets rid of all ailments.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

Greatness of the Confluence of Rṣitīrtha

Īśvara said:

1-4. The charming and excellent Rṣitīrtha is situated on the shore of the sea within a *Gavyūti* to the south-east of Devakula.

O goddess, in this mortal world, even today, sages are seen well-established in rock icons. They are destroyers of all sins.

The New-Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha is never available to base men there (they will not get an opportunity to go there on that day).

Offering rice-balls and taking special holy baths should be done by those who have faith.

Holy ablution and Śrāddha in the confluence of Rṣitoyā is very rare. Those leading sages there highly recommend gifting a cow. A devotee should offer food to the Brāhmaṇas in accordance with one's capacity.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Greatness of Marudāryā Devī

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the highly lustrous Marudāryā. It is situated within half a *Krośa* from there (i.e. Rṣitīrtha) on the western side.

A man should strenuously worship the goddess who has already been worshipped by Maruts. She is the bestower of all desired benefits.

A devotee should worship her during the Mahānavamī festival and also the preceding seventh lunar day. For an easy fulfilment of all desires he should do the worship with sweet scents, flowers etc. in accordance with the injunctions.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Greatness of Kṣemāditya

Īśvara said:

1-3. The shrine of the well-known deity Kṣemāditya is situated within a distance of only five *Gavyūtis* to the east of Devakula in the middle of Śāmbara Sthāna which is a holy spot.

If worshipped, the deity is the bestower of all desires. A man who views that deity, O goddess, on a seventh lunar day coinciding with a Sunday, should become the possessor and

preserver of all objects of welfare. Thus the situation of the Tīrtha in the holy spot of Devakula has been told.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Greatness of Kanṭakaśoṣanī

Īśvara said:

1-6. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of the goddess Kanṭakaśoṣanī situated to the north of Devakula and to the south of *Unnata* (Raised Mound).

I shall describe the origin thereof, O my beloved. Listen with attentive mind. The following excellent Brāhmaṇas began their Yajña on the southern side of *Unnata* (Raised Mound).

They were: Bhṛgu, Atri, Marīci, Bharadvāja, Kaśyapa, Kanva, Maṇki, Sāvarṇi, Jātūkarnya, Vatsa, Vasiṣṭha, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Manu, Yama, Aṅgiras, Viṣṇu, Sātātapa, Parāśara, Śāṇḍilya, Kauśika, Gautama, Gārgya, Dālbhya, Saunaka, Śākalya, Gālava, Jābāli, Mudgala, Rṣyaśringa, Vibhāṇḍaka, Viśvāmitra, Śatānanda, Jahnu and Viśvāvasu.

7. These and other sages, O splendid lady, built the *Yajña-Vāṭa* on the excellent banks of Rṣitoyā and performed the worship by means of different kinds of sacrifices.

8-9. The whole atmosphere was rapturous with the notes of flutes and lutes, dances of Devas and Gandharvas, loud chanting of the Vedas, the sweet, fragrant smokes of Yajñas, *Homas*, *Agnihotras* and the flavour of the sacrificial ghee. It was given additional glory by the divine sages and excellent Brāhmaṇas belonging to all the Vedic Śākhās (Branches).

10. On seeing such a place, highly powerful Daityas came from the middle of the ocean for destroying the Yajñas.

11. The Daityas of huge bodies, large bellies, dark colour, hanging beards and eyebrows, protruding tips of noses, red eyes, red hairs etc., were adepts in the employment of *Māyā* (illusory tactics, black magic jugglery etc.)

12-14. O lady of excellent countenance, all the Daityas entered the place of Yajña. On seeing these people of terrible forms and features, some of the sages fell down. Others entered Patniśālā and Havirdhāna. The Ṛtviks stood stunned in the centre of the chamber completely tongue-tied.

15-16. O goddess, when this happened to the noble-souled sages, the *Adhvaryu* of great splendour and refulgence was courageous enough to perform *Agnihotra* respectfully. Being a knower of suitable Mantras he kindled the sacrificial fire and performed Homa therein for the sake of destroying the Rākṣasas.

17. O goddess of Lords, when the *Havis* was poured the holy fire, goddess Śakti instantly rose up armed with Śakti and trident. The highly resplendent deity held a leathern shield in her hand.

18. Those Daityas who had come to destroy the Yajña were killed by her. Then the sages eulogized her by means of different kinds of hymns and prayers.

19. Excessively pleased with them, the goddess spoke to those sages, "O sages, do choose your boons. I shall grant you excellent boons."

The sages said:

20-21. O goddess, O suppressor of Asuras, all our tasks have been accomplished. Our Yajñas were saved by you. If at all any boon is to be given, do stay here in this holy spot with a desire for the welfare of the sages. The thorns, in the form of the Daityas, have been squeezed dry. Hence, O goddess, this 'Kaṇṭaka-Śoṣanī' (the destroyer of thorns) shall be your permanent name from now onwards.

Īśvara said:

22-23. After saying "It shall be so", the goddess vanished then. If a man worships her on eighth or ninth lunar day, he will not have fear from Rākṣasas and Piśācas. The man will acquire the greatest Siddhi. There is no doubt about it.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN

Greatness of Brahmeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. There is a Linga of great efficacy situated not far

from there (i.e. Goddess Kāntakaśoṣanī) in the eastern direction. It is destructive of all sins.

Its name is Brahmeśvara and it was installed by Brāhmaṇas. If any one takes his holy bath in the waters of Rṣitoyā and worships the Liṅga he shall become a Brāhmaṇa fully conver-sant with the Vedas and devoid of dullness.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED NINETEEN

Greatness of Unnata Sthāna

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of the holy spot, namely *Unnata Sthāna* situated on the splendid banks of Rṣitoyā to the north thereof (i.e. Brahmeśvara).

O great goddess, I handed over this holy spot to Brāhmaṇas. I had to make use of pressure in making them accept this. It had all its boundaries well-protected by the groups of Caṇḍis.

The Devī said:

3-4. O most excellent one among Suras, how did it come to have the name *Unnata Sthāna*? How was it that you had to press them (Brāhmaṇas) to accept it ? What is the extent of its boundary? Describe all this succinctly, not very elaborately.

Īśvara said:

5. Listen, O goddess, I shall narrate the sin-destroying story, on hearing which a man is rid of all sins.

6. All this pertaining to the details of the holy spot was narrated before during the succinct description of the creation in the third Kundā (holy pit) of Brahmā.

7. Still, O Pārvatī, I shall describe it succinctly. Listen.

8. That is a holy spot, the most excellent one among holy spots. It is called *Unnata* because it was there where the Liṅga

(Penis) was lifted up once again, causing great prosperity to the whole place.

9. Or the spot is called *Unnata*, the most excellent one among holy spots, because it is raised in eastern-entrance to the Prābhāsika Kṣetra.

10. It is the place where the great sages are pre-eminent, thanks to the learning and the power of penance. So this most excellent one among holy spots is called *Unnata Sthāna*.

11-12. When the Brāhmaṇas came once again to Mahodaya (the spot of great prosperity) after propitiating Mahādeva called Mūlacaṇḍīśa at Devakula, those great sages performed penance for sixty thousand years. They meditated on the great Maheśāna devoid of beginning or end.

13. While they were performing (they were crores in number) in their crores, O fair lady Pārvatī, on the charming banks of Rṣitoyā, the destroyer of sins, I went there assuming the guise of a mendicant.

14. O lady of excellent countenance, I was spotted out by those sages who could visualise things and events of all time (past, present and future) and who were devoid of passions and other defects.

15. Immediately after he was found out Maheśvara stopped. "O lord, where do you go? You have been found out," saying so, those Brāhmaṇas followed him.

16-17. While the sages came rushing on calling out "Īśa, īśa "(O Lord, O Lord), they lightened all the ten directions by means of the power of their penance. They stared at the Liṅga alone and did not even glance at Maheśvara.

18. All those sages who viewed the Liṅga named Mūlacaṇḍīśa went to heaven with their physical body itself.

19-20. The Lord of hundred Yajñas (i.e. Indra) observed that the heavenly world was overcrowded by the sages and that other sages resplendent through their penance continued to arrive. He made use of an opportunity to come down to the earth. Śatakratu (Indra) covered up the Liṅga by means of his *Vajra* (thunderbolt).

21. Eighteen thousand sages of sublimated sexual potency stayed behind but could not see the excellent Liṅga.

22. Suddenly Śakra was visible wielding the *Vajra* (thunderbolt). By the time they could find words to curse Indra, he went out of their sight.

23. On seeing the sage furious, the Lord, the destroyer of the three Puras appeased them with sweet words and spoke to the sages:

24. "O excellent Brāhmaṇas, all along you have been adhering to the path of peace. How is it that you have become grief-stricken? Be cheerful and listen to my words:

25. "Svarga is a place where a few persons are called Vasus and another set of people the Ādityas. How is such a place honoured much by Your Holiness endowed with perfect knowledge?

26. A few are named Rudra. Two others are called Aśvins. These have a single overlord glorified as Indra.

27. Men gain access to this place through their own merits. Yet they do slip down therefrom. Being vitiated by sorrow this Svarga is never sought after by sensible persons.

28. For this reason, O Brāhmaṇas, carry out my suggestion. For the purpose of residence, do accept a charming city of great splendour.

29. May the holy rites of *Agnihotra* be performed. Let the Devatās be worshipped by means of different kinds of *Yāgas*. O Brāhmaṇas, may the adoration of Pitṛs be carried out.

30. Let hospitality be offered to guests everyday and also regular study of the Vedas be performed.

31. O leading Brāhmaṇas, if you continue to do this everyday, you will attain salvation towards the end of your life with my favour. There is no necessity for storing up knowledge."

The sages said:

32. We are ascetics and we have acquired mastery over the need to take food, and we wish to acquire devotion to you. What shall we do with a city, inasmuch as we are incapable of protecting it?

Īśvara said:

33. Carry out my suggestions. Accept the charming city. You will attain perpetual devotion to the Supreme Lord.

34. After saying thus, the Lord slightly closed his eyes and remembered Viśvakarman, the most excellent one among all artisans.

35. Immediately on being remembered Viśvakarman stood before him with palms joined together in veneration. "May the Lord command. I shall do according to your direction."

Īśvara said:

36. O Tvaṣṭṛ, let a beautiful, splendid city be built for the Brāhmaṇas.

37. On being told thus, Viśvakarman surveyed the ground all round. After bowing down he said to Śaṅkara, the benefactor of the worlds:

38. "The ground has been surveyed by me. It is not proper to have a city here. Here is Devakula (a temple). It is the place where the Liṅga fell down directly."

39. Ascetics should stay here. This does not suit householders.

40. Householders should stay in a Tīrtha (a sacred place) in the company of their wives and sons for three nights, five nights, or seven nights, O Maheśvara. They may also stay for a fortnight, a month, a season and utmost for an Ayana (six month's period).

41. If a householder stays in a Tīrtha for more than six months, contempt creeps into his mind due to fickleness (of mind). It is then that all householders deviate from righteous path."

42. On being told thus, by Viśvakarman, Lord Śiva approved of his words and said to him again:

43. "I too do not wish that Brāhmaṇa householders should stay here. O Tvaṣṭṛ, O most excellent one among artisans, build a city on the splendid banks of Rṣitoyā where the Liṅga was lifted up."

44-45. On hearing his words, O beautiful lady of Suras, Viśvakarman hurriedly went there accompanied by crores of artisans and built a city which became famous by the name *Unnata*. On seeing the city, Śiva became delighted in mind. He called all the Brāhmaṇas together and said with his shoulders slightly stooping down:

46. "This spot is most excellent and charming. It has been created by Viśvakarman. It is said that it contains thousands of villages in all directions.

47. This land Nagnahara is remembered as more meritorious than the city entirely. In length and width it extends to eight Yojanas.

48. People called that highly meritorious land *Nagnahara* because it was that land where Hara roamed about freely as he pleased in the state of nudity.

49. In the east is the noble Śāṅkarī. In the west is Nyārikumātī. In the north is Kanakanandā. In the south it extends upto the sea. The land surrounded by these is remembered as Nagnahara.

50. The length and width measure eight Yojanas each. This entire land is called by me as being on an equal footing with *Unnata*.

51. O excellent Brāhmaṇas, be pleased. Let this excellent city be accepted. Here you will have *Bhukti* (enjoyment of pleasures) and *Mukti* (salvation). There is no doubt about it."

52. On being told thus, all those Brāhmaṇas said to Maheśvara:

The Brāhmaṇas said:

53-54. The behest of Īśvara (Lord), the Supreme Soul, cannot be rendered futile. Who shall be our saviour in the terrible era of Kali, the saviour of us the Brāhmaṇas regularly studying the Vedas and steadily performing penance and *Agnihotra*? Who shall be a liberal donor? Who shall be the bestower of perfect health and absence of ailments ? Who will grant salvation?

Īśvara said:

55. I shall stay in Mohodaya Tirtha in the form of Mahākāla. On being perfectly propitiated, I shall destroy your enemies.

56. *Unnata Vighnarāja* (the deity in the holy spot Unnata) shall be the destroyer of the obstacles. He is in the form of the leader of Gaṇas. Dhanada is the Lord of the treasures.

57. On being properly propitiated he will grant you wealth. Durgāditya will be the bestower of health always.

58. The holy spot Mahodaya will grant you great delight. On being perfectly propitiated in every rite always, Brahmā will grant you all desires and salvation too unto you.

The Brāhmaṇas said:

59-60. O Maheśvara, O most excellent one among Suras,

you have to stay in the Saṅgāleśvara Tīrtha and the auspicious Devakula. If all the Tīrthas remain there even in the extremely terrible Kali Age, for purifying us then, we shall accept (the charming centre) but not otherwise.

61. Promising "It shall be so" he granted them the excellent city well-adorned with mansions resembling the moon and standing seven storeys. The city had a number of villages (as its feeders or suburbans). It has a decent boundary in all sides.

Sūta said:

62. After granting the city to them, Lord Maheśvara glanced at Viśvakarman who was standing before him with palms joined in reverence.

Viśvakarman said:

63. O great holy Lord, may the city comparable to the (best of) cities and built (by me), with your favour, be viewed after climbing on to the *Sauvarṇa Sthala* (golden mount).

64. On hearing the words of Viśvakarman, Lord Tripurāntaka mounted the *Sthalaka* along with the great sages.

65. He viewed the charming city adorned with ramparts. All the sages eulogized Tripurāntaka established there. Mahādeva spoke to them, "Choose an excellent boon".

The sages said:

66. O Mahādeva, if you are pleased, do bear the name *Sthalakesvara*. O Hara, do stay here in the Sthala, viewing the city for ever.

67-68. On being told thus by them, the Lord remained for ever in this *Sthalaka*. O goddess, the deity is full of jewels in Kṛtayuga. In Tretā, it is full of gold (golden). In Dvāpara it is full of silver (silvery). In Kali this *Sthala* is said to be full of stones (rocks). Thus the Lord stayed there in the name of *Sthalakesvara*.

69-70. Mahādeva is to be worshipped always by the residents of *Unnata Sthāna* on the fourteenth lunar day in the

month of Māgha. A special feature is keeping awake on that night. Thus, O goddess, the great prosperity of Unnata has been told. If listened to it destroys sins of men. It yields all the desired benefits.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTY

Greatness of Liṅgadvaya

Īśvara said:

1. To the eastern direction thereof (i.e. Unnata), a little to the south-east, is the pair of Liṅgas of excessive merit installed by Viśvakarman.
2. When Tvaṣṭṛ came there with the purpose of building a city, he first installed Mahādeva and thereafter built the city.
3. After creating (building) the city of great charm, thanks to the power of this Liṅga, another Liṅga was installed by Viśvakarman himself.
4. At the beginning and at the conclusion of every rite such as a pilgrimage, marriage, house-building etc., one should worship both the Liṅgas. Instantly he achieves perfection.
5. Hence, O goddess, one should adore the pair of Lingas with all effort by means of various kinds of sweet scents, nectarine juices and food offerings.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYONE

Greatness of Brahmā

Īśvara said:

- 1-2. Henceforth, I shall glorify the excellent secret holy spot of the excellent deity Brahmā of unmanifest origin unto you. It is destructive of all sins of the residents of Unnata Sthāna. The deity stationed in the *Unnata Sthāna* is in the form of a boy whose vision alone rids people of all sins.

The Devī said:

3-4. It has been mentioned by you that Brahmā is in the form of a boy. How is it said that it is *Unnata* (lofty)? The Pitāmaha (grandfather) is in the form of an aged person in other holy spots. In which spot is he stationed there? What for did he go there? How is he to be adored by leading Brāhmaṇas? On which lunar day? Do tell everything in the proper order.

Īśvara said:

5. To the west of Rṣitoyā and to the north-east of Sthalakeśvara is the great holy spot of Brahmā. It is like another Brahmaloka.

6. Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra are worthy of being worshipped always in the Prābhāsika Kṣetra. Brahmā is stationed in the *Brahmabhāga* (Portion of Brahmā) on the splendid banks of Rṣitoyā.

7. Rudra is to be worshipped in the Rudra-portion and Agnitirtha. Hari, Dāmodara, is to be worshipped on the charming Raivataka mountain.

8. On being requested by Soma (Moon-god) Pitāmaha came to the excellent holy spot of *Unnata*, when he was eight years old and had the form of a boy.

9. On seeing the excellent Brāhmaṇas in that holy spot, Lord Brahmā stayed there itself.

10. There is no Lord on par with Brahmā. There is no preceptor on a par with Brahmā. There is no knowledge on a par with that of Brahman. There is no penance on a par with that of Brahmā.

11. People wander in the worldly cycle overwhelmed with grief, sorrow and fear as long as they do not remain loyal and devout to Pitāmaha, *Sura-Jyeṣṭha* (the seniormost of the Suras).

12. Who does not get relieved from bondage (of Saṁsāra) if the mind of the creature is dedicated to Brahmā in the same way as it is attached to worldly affairs?

13. Brahmā is remembered as one with *Paramāyu* (full span of life—one hundred years). *Parārdha* (half of the full) had elapsed even as he was established in *Unnata Sthāna*. Now the second half is yet to be covered.

14. When this Pitāmaha came to the *Unnata Sthāna* he was eight years old and was called *Bālarūpin* (one in the form of a boy).

15. In the other holy spots, Pitāmaha appears in the form of an aged person to the Brāhmaṇas. That *Unnata Sthāna* is proper and it is always a favourite of Brahmā.

16. An excellent man should at the outset take his holy bath duly and then worship Brahmā in the form of a boy by means of flowers, incense and other things.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYTWO

Greatness of Durgāditya

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine that dispels all sins. It is called Durgāditya and is situated to the south thereof (i.e. shrine of Brahmā).

When Durgā, the destroyer of miseries, herself met with grief she propitiated Sūrya in order to dispel grief.

Thereupon, after a great deal of time, Divākara (the Sun-god) was pleased with her. The Lord spoke these sweet words to the highly resplendent Durgā, "O goddess, of Devas, choose your boon. I am pleased with you."

Durgā said:

4. O *Divānātha* (Lord of the day), if you are pleased, destroy the series of miseries.

Sūrya said:

5. Ere long, Lord *Tripurāntaka* will come over to the excellent Liṅga in the excellent holy spot Unnata.

6-7. O goddess, my name will find a place here in the form Durgāditya.

O great goddess, after saying this Ravi vanished there itself.

A devotee should worship Durgāditya on a seventh lunar day coinciding with a Sunday.

O goddess of Devas, by worshipping Durgāditya all miseries and different kinds of leprosy perish in his case.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYTHREE

Greatness of Kṣemeśvara

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a devotee should view the deity well-known as Kṣemeśvara. It is stationed to the south thereof (i.e. of Durgāditya), on the banks of Rṣitoyā. Formerly, the name of this deity was glorified as Bhūtiśvara. O goddess, in Kali Age it is glorified as Kṣemeśa. By viewing that deity and by worshipping it, one will get rid of all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYFOUR

Greatness of Gaṇanātha

Īśvara said:

1-3. A devotee should view Vināyaka, the bestower of all Siddhis. He is stationed to the north, rather a little to the north-west thereof (i.e. of Kṣemeśvara).

O goddess, he is the same friend of mine, Dhanada glorified by me to you earlier as the protector of treasures in the form of Gaṇanātha ('Leader of the groups').

O my beloved, he is stationed in this holy spot for the sake of granting *Siddhi* unto all the worlds.

O goddess, on a fourth lunar day coinciding with Tuesday, a devotee should worship the deity by means of foodstuffs and edibles along with sweetmeats in the manner laid down. Certainly he will achieve *Siddhi* (perfection).

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYFIVE

Greatness of Unnata Svāmī

Īśvara said:

1-4. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the excellent shrine of Vināyaka on the charming banks of Rṣitoyā. It is destroyer of all obstacles.

Tripurāntaka is the direct presiding deity of the groups of Devas. He assumed the form of an elephant and stationed himself on a high ground in the great holy spot of Prābhāsika. He is accompanied by crores of his Gaṇas.

Hence by all efforts, Gananātha should be propitiated for the sake of freedom from obstacles to pilgrimage. He should be adored with flowers, incense and other things.

For the sake of accomplishing the welfare of the nation, a great gala festival should be celebrated there by all the inhabitants of the city on every fourth lunar day.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYSIX

Greatness of Mahākāla

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, O great goddess, a pilgrim should go to the shrine of Lord Mahākaleśvara stationed to the north thereof (i.e. Unnatasvāmī)

The deity is the great protector of all. The presiding deity of this city is Bhairava possessing the form of Rudra. A devotee should perform the great worship on the *Darśa* and *Paurnamāsa* days.

A man who takes his holy bath at Mahodaya and views Mahākāla becomes very rich in the world for the duration of seven thousand births.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYSEVEN

Greatness of Mahodaya

Īśvara said:

1-3. Thereafter, a pilgrim should go to the holy spot Mahodaya situated to the north-east thereof (i.e. Mahākāla.).

The devotee should take his holy bath there in accordance with the injunctions and perform the rites of libation to the Pitṛs and Devatās.

He need not be afraid of the defects (sins) due to the acceptance of gifts. Mahodaya is that holy spot that gives great delight to the Brāhmaṇas devoted to acceptance of gifts. It bestows salvation on those attached to worldly pleasures too. Hence it is well-known as Mahodaya.

4. O great goddess, for the purpose of according protection to it, the Mothers have been posted. They are stationed to the north of Mahākāla. A man should have his holy bath there and worship the Mothers at the outset.

5. Thus, O goddess, the great prosperity of Mahodaya has been spoken by me. It is destructive of all the sins of men. It grants salvation to one who performs holy bath therein.

6. That holy spot is circular all round to the extent of half a Krośa. The centre thereof is of great importance. It is a favourite of sages always.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYEIGHT

Greatness of Saṅgameśvara

Īśvara said:

1-4. A sin-destroying holy spot and shrine named Saṅgameśvara is situated in the north-western direction therof (i.e. Mahodaya). Sages used to assemble here.

To the east thereof is the sin-destroying Kuṇḍikā where Sarasvatī flowed in along with the Baḍavānala (submarine fire). A man should bathe in the Kuṇḍikā and worship

Saṅgameśvara. O great goddess, he will never be separated from Lakṣmī (prosperity, fortune) in the course of thousands of births along with sons and grandsons.

He will get rid of all sins committed ever since his birth till death.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED TWENTYNINE

Greatness of Unnata-Vināyaka

Īśvara said:

1. To the north of Devakula, at a distance of a Gavyūti, there is what is famous on the earth as Uttama-Sthāna.
2. To its northern direction, within (the distance of) twelve *Dhanus*, there is Unnata-Vighnarāja who destroys all impediments.
3. If, on the fourth lunar day, he is properly worshipped with scents, fruits and *Modakas* (a particular circular sweet-meat), he grants all coveted desires. (And the devotee) becomes victorious in the three worlds.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTY

Greatness of Talasvāmī

Īśvara said:

1. From that *Unnata-sthala* (elevated place) at three Yojanas to the north, there is Taptodaka-svāmī where Tala was formerly killed.
2. O goddess, by powerful Viṣṇu a battle was fought for a hundred years with the king of Daityas and then he became Talasvāmī.
3. After taking bath in the *Tapta-Kuṇḍa* (hot water spring) a man should worship Talasvāmī. After offering rice-balls, one gets the benefit of performing ten million *Yātrās* (pilgrimages).

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYONE

Greatness of Kālamegha

Īśvara said:

1-2. O great goddess, then one should go to the famous Kālamegha.. Thence to the eastern part is the protector of the Kṣetra in the form of a Liṅga. He is to be adorned by offering *Bali* on the eighth or fourteenth lunar day. In Kali age, he is the wish-yielding tree who completely grants the objects desired (by a worshipper).

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYTWO

Greatness of Rukmiṇī

Īśvara said:

1. Towards its (i.e. of Kālamegha) southern quarter, at a distance of five *Dhanus*, O my dear, there are, even today, *Kuṇḍas* of hot water, O lady of beautiful countenance.

2. On the eastern side of the *Kuṇḍas*, within a distance of twenty-five *Dhanus* there stands Goddess Rukmiṇī, the destroyer of all sins.

3. After taking a bath in the *Kuṇḍa* of hot water, destructive of ten million killings (murders), one should worship Goddess Rukmiṇī, the donor of gold. There is no break in the family for seven births in the case of women.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYTHREE

Greatness of Piṅgeśvara Bhadrā

Īśvara said:

1-5. To the east of Balabhadra, there was (is) an excellent river. There is installed a powerful Liṅga by name Durvāseśvara

which, if visited quells all sins and is conducive to all happiness.

He who, after taking bath on a New-Moon day, offers rice-balls (to *Pitṛs*), will convey satisfaction to the *Pitṛs* during more than one hundred crore Kalpas.

Thereafter, adoring (the Liṅga) called Durvāseśvara according to injunctions, he not only gets the benefit of (performance of) ten million Yajñas but also obtains all desires. There innumerable Liṅgas have been installed by sages. After viewing, touching and adoring them, one becomes rid of all sins.

Thus, O goddess, the first of Kṣetras in due order has been described.

6. From the west of Bhadrā to the east, the description in due order, from the beginning, if heard, it quells sins and confers the benefit of ten million Yajñas.

7. The surrounding boundary of the Kṣetra is Madhumatī. On its south-western side is the spot called Khaṇḍaghaṭa.

8. There, near the seashore, is god Piṅgēśvara. There is a group of seven wells wherein the hands of *Pitṛs* are seen even today, on every *Parva* day, O chief of Devas.

9. If, on a New-Moon day coinciding with Monday, a man performs a Śrāddha there, he gets ten-million-fold of the benefit from a Śrāddha performed at Gayā. There is no doubt about it.

10. Not far from there is the confluence of Bhadrā. The eastern confluence is more meritorious than the western one.

11. The merit that one derives from the eastern and western confluence of Gaṅgā and the sea, that merit one derives from the confluence of Bhadrā.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYFOUR

Greatness of Talasvāmī

Devī said:

1. O Lord, O Lord of the gods of gods, O redeemer from the ocean of Saṁsāra, out of some curiosity and out of devotion unto you, I ask you again.

2. You have described the greatness of Talasvāmī. What is the reason, O Lord, that Tala was felled there (by Viṣṇu).

3. Tell me who was that so-called Tala? What was his heroic deed and which god he worshipped? From what place was he created? How was he born?

Īśvara said:

4. Listen, O ye goddess, I shall convey to you a secret that is destructive of sins. I shall tell you completely what I have never divulged to anyone else.

5-6. Even gods do not know the cause of the creation of Tala. O goddess, formerly in Kṛta Age, he was famous as Govinda. In Tretā Yuga, (he was known) as Vāmanasvāmī. In the third (Dvāpara) Yuga (He was called) Stutisvāmī. O great goddess, it is in the Kali Age that he is glorified as Talasvāmī.

7. So also, his other name is *Taptodakasvāmī*, my dear. Now I shall explain to you, my dear, the creation (birth) of Tala.

8. There was a Dānava named Mahendra, having a terrible form. Formerly, O my dear, he performed a penance for a period of ten million years.

9. Endowed with the power of penance he defeated Devas along with Vāsava (Indra). Having conquered all Devas, he approached Kāla or the god of Death.

10. He requested me for a very terrible battle with him. Then a great battle causing annihilation of the world, ensued.

11. O lady of excellent countenance, in that great war, through my wrath, a flame of fire burst forth from my body. In that he became *Tala* (flat like a surface).

12. Mahendra roaring loudly from his stronghold of a mountain cave was seen by him.

13. "Why are you shouting, O fool? Have a fight with me." When this was said by Tala, there broke out a battle.

14-15. In the battle that ensued between Mahendra and Tala, Mahendra was felled down completely in the wrestling bout by the powerful Tala of energetic activity, for he was endowed with the might of Rudra.

16. Seeing him fallen down, Tala became surprised. Thinking him to be dead he began to dance with excessive joy.

17. O lady of excellent handsome features, when he began to dance (wildly) all the world consisting of mobiles and immobiles began to tremble by his powerful valour.

18. Then the earth, being troubled by Tala, became overburdened with weight. Along with Devas, Asuras and human beings, she was extremely terrified.

19-20. As a consequence of Tala's dance, mountains trembled and crumbled, oceans overflowed (beyond their limits), trees met with destruction, rivers abandoned their beds, the Sun and other heavenly luminaries lost their brilliance and did not shine. The three worlds became bewildered.

21. Then all the categories of Devas came to Rudra to seek shelter. The whole incident was factually reported. Then Rudra spoke to them:

22-24. "O Devas, Tala being accepted and ordained as (my) son, does not deserve death from me." After saying this, he directed them to Hṛṣīkeśa residing in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra and having '*Stutisvāmin*' as his name. He stands in front of Durvāsas. He is installed in the eastern part in the vicinity of Prabhāsa Kṣetra near the Kuṇḍa of hot waters. O Suras, go there. In every Kalpa that Dānava (Tala) has been killed by him (Viṣṇu)."

25. When spoken thus, Devas came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra. There the gods went to the place where was the chief (presiding deity) of the (Kuṇḍa of) hot waters.

26. Seeing Nārāyaṇa there, the Devas endowed with faith, praised Janārdana, the god of gods, with intense devotion.

27. (Devas prayed:) "O Vaikuṇṭha, save us. We have been uprooted (from our posts) by Tala born of the lustre of Rudra, provoked by Mahendra's anger.

28. We have reported to Rudra everything that should be done. Then we all have been sent to your presence by the supreme deity Rudra. O great god ! Be our shelter."

29. On hearing their prayer, Janārdana, the god of gods, the mighty-armed Lord to whom Prabhāsa Kṣetra was dear, made efforts to kill the Dānava and to protect the Devas.

30. Thereupon, he challenged the Daitya at a central place in Prabhāsa. Then, O goddess, he gave a fight causing (as if) the annihilation of the universe.

31. Then all the Devas surrounded by their army engaged

the Daitya in a great battle that caused the hair (of the body) to stand on their ends.

32. Noticing the highly powerful Daitya, big like a mountain, Garuḍa-vehicled Viṣṇu of quick side-glances addressed (the Daitya):

33. “O mighty-armed Daitya, offer me a wrestling bout. Seeing your pair of arms, fighting (with weapons) is not desired by me.”

34. Hearing the words of Nārāyaṇa, he raised his arm. The Daitya, resembling in brilliance the god of Death, rushed at him (Viṣṇu).

35-36. Then ensued the fight between the two, both desirous of victory over the other. (They fought) by obstructing feet by means of calves, curbing down arms with the arms, obstructing neck with neck and belly with belly. (These must have been special obstructive movements in wrestling.) In the meanwhile, Devas became terrified.

37. Thereupon, Viṣṇu, overcome with trouble, remembered Hara. Instantly, that very moment, came Rudra and asked, “O highly mighty one, what should I do (for you)?”

Viṣṇu said:

38-39. O Śaṅkara, O god of Devas, I am fatigued while wrestling. Hence just now prepare hot water to relieve the fatigue. Thereafter, I shall kill Tala, the terrible one, in a moment.

Īśvara said:

40-41. O Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) at the beginning of Kṛta Age, hot water was created by Umā for dispelling the fatigue of sages. But due to the pressure of the sins of the Daitya, it has become cold. Then it was made hot again (its hotness) lasting to the end of the Kalpa.

42. After saying this, god Maheśvara cast a glance with his third eye beautified with a garland of flames.

43. By the mass of flames, the *Kuṇḍa* was enveloped in four directions (on all sides) so it became famous all over the earth as Hot (water) Kuṇḍa.

44. Then his excellent body was washed by Nārāyaṇa here. By that wash the fatigue of that god became dispelled.

45-46. Then the god became satisfied in his mind. He remembered ten *Koti* (a hundred million) Tirthas. He deposited them in it (Kundā) and took his bath as per injunctions. Then he engaged in a very terrible fight with Tala. He delivered a blow of his fist on Tala's head.

47-48. While the tumultuous battle continued, all worlds including the earth were quaking. Devas were overcome with fright. Quarters did not shine. The whole world being enveloped in darkness swooned. Siddhas persisted. O chief (Queen) of Devas, groups of great sages said: "May Hari, the destroyer of evils, verily restore peace. O (Hari) save us." The living beings who were terrified prayed similarly.

49. Then, the Dānava who was felled down on the ground in the wrestling-fight was tortured (by Viṣṇu) with a sword, after pressing his foot on the (Dānava's) throat.

50-51. The Daitya whose neck was forcibly pressed down by Viṣṇu, burst out into a laughter. To him the lotus-eyed Viṣṇu asked the reason for his laughter. He said: "There is a couplet (saying) sung by the world (people) that a man delights in prosperity but becomes miserable in adversity. But yours is a case to the contrary, O Daitya."

52-54. When enquired thus, the Daitya replied to Janārdana: "The supreme region which is achieved by performing sacrifices like Agniṣṭoma etc, by various ways of the study of the Vedas, by permanent observance of fasts and other (religious) regulations and by performance of holy ablutions, religious gifts and *Japa* (muttering of Mantras) and by sinless persons engaged in Yoga, that supreme foot (region) of Viṣṇu has been gained by me though of wicked disposition."

As soon as he (Daitya) uttered this, Lord Viṣṇu became inclined to grant him boons.

55. He spoke excellent words to the supreme leader of Daityas: "Seek a boon, O ruler of Daityas, whatever is cherished in your mind."

56-57. Hearing the words of Viṣṇu, the Dānava prayed: "O supporter of the earth (in the incarnation of the Divine Boar), do that which will perpetuate my reputation in the world. May the sin of the person who views you with devotion

and concentrated attention, on the eleventh day in the bright half of Mārgasīrṣa, get annihilated."

58-59. After saying: "So it will happen" the god felt extreme joy. Various Dundubhi drums were sounded. A shower of flowers fell on Viṣṇu's head. O highly fortunate one, people became composed and contented. All groups (categories) of Devas elated with joy, danced, being overcome with extreme delight. Those devotees of Nārāyaṇa spoke:

60-61. "This Tīrtha is a great Tīrtha destructive of all sins. It is the remover of Viṣṇu's fatigue and purifier of sins such as the killing of a Brāhmaṇa. There Nārāyaṇa has settled. (Śaṅkara is the Bhairava there.) He is famous (by the) name Kālamegha and is of the form of the protector of the Kṣetra."

62. I shall now explain the procedure of his Yātrā (pilgrimage):

O great goddess, a pure person, after going (to that Kṣetra) should remember Viṣṇu who is heard (famous) as Talavāmī.

63. O great goddess, one should eulogize Viṣṇu with the Viṣṇu-rc "sahasraśīrṣa"; one should perform Tarpaṇa.

64-66. After taking bath as per injunctions and after giving Arghya to Janārdana, he (the pilgrim) should worship him with scents, flowers (or fragrant flowers), garments, unguents with flowers, honey and sugarcane juice. (He should) smear (Viṣṇu) with saffron mixed with camphor, Khus accompanied with musk. Thereafter, he should dress (the god) with clothes and offer excellent food as Naivedya. Thereafter, a vigil should be observed at night listening to religious stories.

67. A bull should be offered as a (religious) gift. Gold with a pair of clothes should be given to a learned Brāhmaṇa endowed with Vedic lore.

68. O brilliant lady, on that day, fast should be observed. After paying obeisance to Janārdana, he should visit Rukmiṇī.

69. After doing this, with devotion, a man gets the fruit of being born (as a man). He gets the benefit (of performance) of all sacrifices and giving (all kinds of religious) gifts.

70. He gets the benefit of (pilgrimage to) all Tīrthas and of (the observance of all) Vratas. He will redeem all Pitṛs (male ancestors) and Mātṛs (female ancestors).

71-72. There will be destruction of all his sins committed since birth. Neither misery nor poverty nor ill-luck befalls him.

All these accrue to one for seven births by viewing Talasvāmī.

O goddess, the fruit one obtains by offering a thousand pieces of gold as a religious gift to a Brāhmaṇa, expert in Vedas, is gained by having a bath in that Kuṇḍa.

73. Thus, the excellent account (of the acts) of Talasvāmī was formerly heard by Siddhas and great sages. After hearing his prowess in the vicinity of Taladeva, one gets whatever is cherished by the mind.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYFIVE

Greatness of Śaṅkhāvarta Tīrtha

Īśvara said:

1. Thence one should go to the West to the auspicious banks of Nyaṅkumatī. There, situated to its southern direction is that highly glorious Tīrtha.

2. That Tīrtha is famous by the name Śaṅkhāvarta. There is a natural rock, which is red within and has beautiful figures on it.

3. When it (the rock) is cut (say, with a chisel) the beautiful red colour is seen therein even today. It is a sacred place special to Viṣṇu as the demon Śaṅkha was killed at this spot formerly.

4. The sacred Tīrtha Śaṅkhodaka was created by powerful Viṣṇu after killing the demon Śaṅkha who stole away the Vedas. Thence it (the Tīrtha) is seen to have the shape of a conch.

5. O goddess, after taking a bath therein, a man is absolved of the sin of Brāhmaṇa-slaughter. And the status of Brāhmaṇahood for seven births is obtained even in the case of a Śūdra.

6. At first, by going there (to Śaṅkhodaka) one should proceed to Rudra-Gayā. Thereafter, a cow should be gifted there by persons desirous of the benefit of perfect performance of the pilgrimage.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYSIX

Importance of Gospada Tirtha

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the excellent Tirtha (known as) *Gospada*. By performing Śrāddha here, one gets sevenfold benefit of a Śrāddha (performed) at Gayā, if the faith of the performer be firm. There is no doubt about this matter.

2. After performing Śrāddha there, (King) Pṛthu redeemed his father named Vena, a powerful king, from sinful state of birth, O great goddess.

The Devī enquired:

3. At which place is the Tirtha situated ? How did it come into being? How was King Vena uplifted from a sinful womb?

4. How does merit, sevenfold that of the Śrāddha performed at Gayā, accrue (to a performer of a Śrāddha here)? What is the procedure of the Śrāddha? What are the *Mantras* recited therein? Who are the Brāhmaṇas eligible to perform the Śrāddha? This is my curiosity. O Lord, it behoves you to narrate it exactly.

Īśvara said:

5. O sovereign of Devas, what has been enquired by you is a secret. My dear, the (location of) this Tirtha is not to be revealed in this sinful age.

6-7. It is, however, out of my affection to you, O sovereign of Devas, that I shall be explaining it. This should not be told to a sinner or to one indulging in sophistry. Nor should it be communicated to an atheist or to a person other than that of a good caste.

O goddess, there is a highly divine, meritorious river Nyānkumati.

8-9. I have brought it here for delimiting this Kṣetra, O great goddess. The sin-quelling river is situated (flowing) to the south of Parṇāditya. It is established not far from the shrine of Nārāyaṇa, O gentle-natured lady. On that river is that Tirtha famous in all the three worlds.

10-11. It is well-known by the name Gospada. It eradicates (even) ten million sins of a man.

In the vicinity of Goṣṭapa, not very far from it, is the self-born king of Nāgas called Ananta, on the surface of the earth. He is appointed by Viṣṇu for the protection of that Tīrtha.

12. Ancestors (Pitṛs) afraid of the hell called *Put*, desire for a son who will go to Goṣṭapa Tīrtha and will be their redeemer. On seeing the son in Goṣṭapa Tīrtha, there is a joyful expectation.

13. "Will there be a son in our family who, taking birth in our family, and after arriving at Prabhāsa Kṣetra, will give libations of water to us in the excellent Goṣṭapa Tīrtha, after touching the water (of Goṣṭapa) with his two feet?"

14. "Will there be a son in our family who will assiduously perform, once at least, a Śrāddha served with the flesh of a rhinoceros or Kāla-Śākas?"

15. "Will there be a son in our family who has given (will give) a lamp in the Goṣṭapa Tīrtha? Thereby there will be a beacon unto us up to the end of the Kalpa."

16. He who is a giver of food at Goṣṭapa renders his pitṛs really blessed with a son. By staying even for one day there, he sanctifies seven generations of his family.

17. O excellent-faced lady, one should offer libation of (a ball) even of *Pinyāka* (oil-cake or a plant of that name) and *Inguda* for Pitṛs and others and even for one's own self by himself. He becomes released (from Saṁsāra) thereby.

18. If one goes to Goṣṭapa, what (propriety is there) of the knowledge of Brahman, or of (practice of Yoga) or of death while fighting to prevent capture of cows, or of stay in Kurukṣetra ?

19. It is very difficult (even) once to have the opportunity of visiting the Tīrtha or offering of *Pindas* (at this place) even once. (It is much *more* so) to have permanent residence at this Tīrtha!

20. The Tīrtha extends to half a *Krośa* (i.e. one Mile). Half of its half is very rare to be seen. The merit accruing by performance of Śrāddha therein is sevenfold greater than that from a Śrāddha at Gayā.

21. The performer of a Śrāddha at Gospada is (automatically) completely free from his indebtedness to his Pitṛs. Especially in Gospada, he will uplift a hundred families.

22. Immediately starting from home to go to Goṣṭapa at every step it is like (going up) a staircase to Svarga to the Pitṛs.

23. For *Pindadāna Pindas* are prepared with boiled rice mixed with sugar or honey or barley (bread) or cake of flour or rice boiled with milk and butter etc.

24. A person who offers *Pindas* of the size of a leaf of Šamī or prepared with bulbous roots, roots, fruit and the like at Goṣpada or Gopracāra takes his pitṛs to heaven.

25. It is not possible for me to describe even in hundreds of billions of Kalpas, the benefit that one gets by offering *Pindas* at Goṣpada.

26. Henceforth, I shall explain in detail the auspicious procedure of performing the pilgrimage. Listen with perfect faith to the procedure of (performance) of the Yātrā.

27. Should an intelligent person wish to go to the Tīrtha with the desire of gaining the fruit of a Śrāddha at Gayā, he should perform the Yātrā with that particular procedure.

28. The intelligent person should be celibate, pure, of controlled movements of hands and feet, endowed with faith and a believer in the Vedas.

29. The man should not come in contact with a non-believer at the Tīrtha. He should be equipped with all provisions, money and materials proper for a Śrāddha. Thinking about Gayā in his mind, he accompanied by good people, should go to the Tīrtha.

30. In this manner, a Brāhmaṇa who goes without accepting gifts from others, undoubtedly gets the benefit of a horse-sacrifice at every step.

31-32. There (he should) take a bath in the Nyañkumatī for achieving *Siddhi* and the release of the Pitṛs. After the ablution he should perform the Tarpaṇa rite as per due procedure, (saying,) "May all my ancestors from god Brahmā to a blade of grass, divine sages, Manus and human ones and all the grandfathers etc. of the mother be satisfied."

33. After properly satisfying them and after performing Homa and other rituals as per procedure, one should perform Śrāddha along with *Pinda*-offering, as prescribed in his own special *Tantra* (i.e. laid down in his *Grhya-sūtras*).

34. After inviting blameless Brāhmaṇas expert in Śāstras, he should perform these rituals there. Then he should recite the following Mantra:

35-36. "May highly fortunate ones, Fire-god the conveyor

of Kavya, Soma, Yama, Aryaman as well as Pitṛs-gods of the categories of Agniśvāttas. Barhiṣads and Somapas come again (to us) who are protected by you here.

O my Pitṛs and blood relations upto seven generations born in my family, O grandfathers, I the offerer of Piṇḍas, have come here to this (Kṣetra)."

37. After saying this, O great goddess, he should utter this *Mantra*:

38-39. "Piṇḍa has been offered by me to my father, grandfather, and great-grandfathers, as well as to mother's paternal grandmother and great-grandmother, mother's father's grandfather and great-grandfather may it be endless (eternal).

40. Obeisance to the Sun-god, the sustainer in the form of lotus, Maṅgala (Mars) and Soma. "After paying obeisance and performing worship, the following prayer should be said:

41. There near Goṣpada, Piṇḍas of well-cooked *Caru* should be offered to Pitṛs and heirless ones with (following) Mantras.

42. "Those who, born in our family, died but have no redemption and who have gone to hells called Raurava, Andhatāmisra and Kālasūtra, for the sake of lifting them up (from the hells) I give this *Piṇḍa*."

43. "I offer this *Piṇḍa* for the redemption of those who have gone to the *Preta*-world and are undergoing innumerable sufferings."

44. "I offer this *Piṇḍa* to those Pitṛs who have gone to the species of brutes and those who have attained the form of insects and reptiles or who exist in the form of trees."

45. "I give this *Piṇḍa* for the uplift of those Pitṛs who have been subjected to innumerable tortures by the servants of Yama."

46. "May all distantly related relatives and those who were relatives in other births meet with complete satisfaction forever by the offer of this *Piṇḍa*."

47. "If certain Pitṛs of mine are living in the form of a *Preta*, may they become permanently satiated by the offer of this *Piṇḍa*."

48. "May this *Piṇḍa* be for the redemption of those Pitṛs and relatives who dwell in heaven, earth and in the intervening space and who died but received no obsequies or purificatory funeral rites."

49-51. "May the *Pinda* offered by me give eternal satisfaction to those dead relatives belonging to my paternal and maternal families or those of my preceptor, father-in-law or brother; to those person born in my family who being bereft of wife and sons ceased to receive a *Pinda*, to those about whom ritualistic acts have been discontinued, those who are born blind or were lame, of evil appearance or died as embryos, those who have been known or unknown (but belong to my family)."

52-53. "May my Pitṛs be released forever from Pretahood. Whatever (small) quantity of cow's milk mixed with honey, ghee and *Pāyasa* (rice with sugar boiled in milk) is given (to Pitṛs) in this Goṣpada Tīrtha stands (satisfies) without an end eternally."

Recitation of the Vedas and of all Purāṇas should be done.

54. The following should be recited (at the time of Śrāddha): Various eulogies of gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Arka (Sun) and Rudra and Vedic Sūktas about Indra, Soma, Pavamāna according to one's ability.

55-56. (The following also should be recited:) Br̥hatsāma, Rathantara, Jyeṣṭha-sāma along with various parts of Sāmaveda. Similarly the chapter of Śānti Mantras and Madhu Brāhmaṇa, Maṇḍala Brāhmaṇa or what is pleasant and satisfying to Brāhmaṇas and to oneself—all these should be recited.

57. In this way, after offering the *Pindas* in the excellent Tīrtha of Goṣpada in the river Nyaṅkumāti as per prescribed procedure the following Mantra should be recited:

58. "May Devas beginning with Brahmā and leading sages stand witness to the fact that after coming to this Tīrtha, the ritual (of offering *Pindas* etc.) has been performed by me."

59. "O excellent Suras, I have come here to this Tīrtha for carrying out the duties (Śrāddha etc.) pertaining to Pitṛs. May all of you bear witness to this that I have been freed from the three types of indebtedness."

60. In this manner, the excellent Goṣpada Tīrtha should be circumambulated. Then after paying the Dakṣinā (fee for performance of the religious tasks) to Brāhmaṇas, the *Pindas* should be cast off in the river.

61. A cow and the hide of a black antelope should be gifted there, my dear, on Aṣṭakā days, in Vṛddhi-Śrāddha and death anniversary at Gaya.

62. Here a separate Śrāddha for the mother is to be performed. In other places it is performed along with that of her husband. At Gayā Vṛddhi-Śrāddha, and Pitṛ-Śrāddha is to precede that of the mother.

63. As at Gayā, here too, Śrāddha is to be performed again by excellent men. It is for this reason that this (Kṣetra) has been declared as *Gupta-Gayā* (hidden Gayā) by Viṣṇu.

64. By gift of scents one acquires fragrance, *Saubhāgya* (matrimonial felicity) by gift of flowers, kingship by gift of incense and brilliance by offering a lamp.

65. Destruction of sins (results) by gift of a flag. The performer of the Yatrā (pilgrimage) resides in the region of god Brahmā. Viṣṇu himself will take the Pitṛs of the performer of a Śrāddha (here) to Viṣṇuloka (region of Viṣṇu).

66. He who feeds one Brāhmaṇa of praiseworthy vows there at the great Tīrtha called Gopracāra becomes the donor of food to ten million Brāhmaṇas.

67-68. Thus far the procedure of Śrāddha-performance was succinctly told. Now I shall narrate to you an ancient historical legend—the life of King Vena and that of the noble-souled Pṛthu: how the redemption from Cāṇḍāla-hood took place. O goddess, of Devas, listen to it completely endowed with perfect faith.

69. This sacred episode should never be narrated to a treacherous person, a sinner, one who is not one's disciple, an enemy or a non-observer of vows.

70. This secret, Veda-like episode, conducive to heaven, conferring glory and longevity, has been described by sages. It should be heard by one who is not jealous.

71. The man who after bowing down to Brāhmaṇas, recounts the story of the birth of Pṛthu, the son of Vena, will not come to grief for good or evil acts done by him.

72. There was a patriarch called Aṅga who was born in the family of Atri and was brilliant like Atri. That king shone (acted brilliantly) as a protector of religion.

73. Vena was his son. He was not much religious. That king (patriarch) was born of Sunīthā, the daughter of Mṛtyu (god of Death).

74. Due to the defect (evil nature) of his maternal grandfather, he, with a Kāla-like appearance, relegated Dharma backwards and became of evil disposition.

75. He overturned the ancient religious order. Transgressing Śāstras, he indulged in anti-religious acts.

76-78. While he (Vena) ruled, the subjects desisted from Vedic studies and utterance of *Vaṣat* (religious and sacrificial acts).

In his own country, the king declared by the beating of drums his cruel order foreboding impending destruction: "While I am ruling the kingdom there should be no offering of gift (Dāna) or performance of sacrifice. I am to be praised and worshipped in all the sacrifices by excellent Brāhmaṇas. Sacrifices are to be performed in (with reference to) me and oblations should be offered unto me."

79. Then great sages, of whom Marīci was the chief, got enraged. They told the king who had transgressed his limit (of duties) and was engaged to tyrannizing the subjects:

80-81a. "O Vena ! Do not perpetrate irreligious acts. This is not the eternal Dharma. Born as you are in the lineage of Atri, you are undoubtedly a patriarch. Formerly at the time of coronation you have taken an oath to the effect that you shall protect the subjects."

81b. He then replied to all Brāhmaṇa-sages who spoke thus (as above).

82-85a. The wicked-minded Vena, expert in making speech, laughed loudly and said: "Who else (other than I) is the creator and promulgator of Dharma? To whose advice should I listen to? Who else in the world is equal to me in valour, learning, penance and truth? O noble-souled ones, verily you do not know me in reality. I am the origin of people, especially of all religions. I shall create and destroy this earth as it is with my will-power or by performance of a Yajña. No doubt be entertained in this manner."

85b-86. When it was not possible to persuade King Vena who, due to stubbornness, was arrogant and deluded, the great sages got enraged and killed that highly mighty king with Mantras from *Atharva Veda*.

87-88. Being highly enraged they churned the left hand of Vena. It is reported that at first, while the hand was being churned, an extremely dwarfish, black-complexioned man emerged, my dear. Then he, being terrified, stood before them with hands folded in reverence. O my dear.

89. Seeing him distressed and agitated in mind, they said, "Sit down". On account of the command "Sit down" (*niṣida*) the highly valourous person came to be known as Niṣāda, who became the founder of a community (called Niṣādas*).

90-92. He created fishermen also born of the sins of Vena, and others like Tumbara and Khasa having Vindhya mountain for their habitat. They having been brought up on the sins of Vena were interested in irreligious acts.

The great sages got enraged and began to churn the right hand of Vena in the fashion of rubbing the *Araṇī* for creating fire by attrition. From that hand was born Pṛthu like fire in brilliance.

93. As he was born of a broad (*Pṛthu*) palm, he was (called) Pṛthu. Like a veritable blazing fire, he was of a brilliant body.

94. He held a bow called Ājagava and arrows comparable to serpents. He wielded his sword for the protection (of subjects) and highly shining armour.

95. O great goddess, when he (Pṛthu) was born all living beings became highly elated with joy. And Vena went to heaven.

96. Then rivers and seas took with them all (kinds of) precious stones. All of them approached the king (with a request to be used) for the coronation ceremony.

97-98. Along with sages and immortals (Devas) and accompanied by mobile and immobile beings Lord Brahmā (the Grandfather) came there. He inaugurated the coronation by sprinkling (sacred) water. The highly brilliant Pṛthu was consecrated (as king) by Devas, Aṅgiras and others as the head of the kingdom.

99. The highly fortunate and valorous Pṛthu, the son of Vena, ruled and conciliated his subjects who were not so governed in a conciliatory manner by his father.

100. Hence, out of affection (of his subjects for him) he came to be designated as *Rājā*. While he travelled (to the sea), waters stood still.

101. Mountains crumbled and there was no brushing against the flag of his chariot. The earth produced food-grains without

* A popular etymology to explain the name of an Ādivāsi tribe.

being ploughed. By mere thinking foodstuffs were cooked (readily). Cows yielded whatever was desired. Honey was in every (leafy) cup.

102. At that very time, while Sāma-singers were singing, from the vessel containing (sacrificial) ladles pertaining to Viśvedevas, Māgadha was born again.

103-105. He is called Māgadha because he was born among Sāma-singers. When Bṛhaspati also oblated the Havis (oblation) special to Indra after duly sprinkling it, there occurred a mistake. As an expiation in rituals, the *Havis* sprinkled with remaining materials, the *Havis* of *Guru* (Bṛhaspati) (was offered with Mantras) uttered in a promiscuous accentuation (of the *Udātta*, *Anudātta* and *Svarita*) accents and *Varṇa Vikṛtis* (wrong pronunciation of the syllables) arose.

106. The Yajña took place in that Brāhmaṇa lady from the Kṣatriya (? obscure !) As there was similarity with the former, similar *Dharma*s (duties) were declared.

107. In times of emergency the profession of a Kṣatriya is the middle (type of) Dharma. Tending of horses, elephants and chariots is considered as mean and lowest.

108-109. Both (Sūta and Māgadha) were invited there by great sages. Thus all the great sages said, "May the king be praised, as this Lord of the earth is worthy and suitable by his acts." Then both Sūta and Māgadha spoke to all sages.

110-111. "We please by praising Devas as well as sages with (songs of) their (great) deeds. We do not know his acts (achievements) nor his characteristic glory wherewith we can compose a eulogy of this brilliant king, O Brāhmaṇa." They were directed by the sages to praise by mentioning his future achievements.

112. Songs of whatever great deeds the highly mighty Pr̥thu performed (in future) were composed by the eulogizing Sūtas and Māgadhas.

113. Pr̥thu, the Lord of subjects, who heard the meaningful songs was extremely pleased with them. He gave Anūpadeśa (south Malwa, Madhya Pradeśa) to Sūtas and the country called Magadha (a part of Bihar) to Māgadhas.

114. Since then, the early kings were being eulogized by Sūtas and Māgadhas. They (kings) are glorified with blessings by Sūtas, Māgadhas and Bandīs.

115. Seeing him, the subjects were greatly delighted and said, "O great sages, this Vainya (Vena's son, Pr̥thu) who is giver of means of sustenance has been appointed a ruler (of men)."

116. Then the subjects rushed to the highly fortunate Pr̥thu saying, "From what the great sages say you are the assigner of our means of livelihood."

117. Spoken thus by his subjects and with a desire to work for the welfare of the subjects, he took up his bow and arrows and he agitated and troubled the Earth.

118. Being terrified by the fear of Pr̥thu the Earth became (assumed the form of) a cow and fled away. For catching her, Pr̥thu pursued the Earth which was fleeing away.

119. Then out of fear of Vainya, she went to regions beginning with Brahma-loka. While running she saw Vainya with his bow held up in his hand.

120. The noble-souled great Yigin (Pr̥thu) who was difficult to be assailed even by immortals, was equipped with sharp, blazing, resplendent arrows.

121. The goddess (Earth) who is always worshipped by the three worlds did not get protection (from anyone). With her palms folded in reverence, she approached Vainya (Pr̥thu) himself.

122. She spoke to him: "Don't you see that killing a woman is against religion? How are you going to hold and protect the people without me?"

123. O King, people are established on me. The whole world is upheld by me. O king, understand that without me all your subjects shall perish.

124. If at all you are desirous of (achieving) the welfare of subjects you should not kill me. O protector of the Earth, you listen to these words of mine.

125. All undertakings if begun with proper means become successful. By killing me, you will be incapable of protecting the subjects.

126. I shall be favourable to you. Eschew your anger, O highly brilliant one. They say that females, even if they have gone to the state of non-human beings, do not deserve to be killed.

127. If one perpetrator of cruel deeds, the greatest sinner, dies, it results in the welfare of many. In this case, killing him

contributes to the merit (of the killer). This being the case, O protector of the Earth, you should not give up (Dharma) and stray away from the path of religion."

128. Hearing this speech of hers, the highly powerful king controlled his anger. The pious-souled one spoke to the Earth:

129. "If one kills for the sake of one (individual), whether of himself or of others, or one who deliberately kills one or many (for one individual) that is a sin.

130. If many people become prosperous and happy by the death of one, no sin accrues to one who kills him.

131. Hence, O Earth, I shall kill you for the sake of (my) subjects if today you do not implement my words conducive to the welfare of the world.

132. After killing you who disobey my order, with an arrow today, I shall support all my subjects by making myself stronger (Pr̥thu) sufficiently.

133. O excellent one among the observers of Dharma, you carry out my orders and always sustain my subjects (with food etc.). There is no doubt that you are capable of doing so.

134. O (Earth), accept my daughterhood. So I take back this terrible-looking arrow of mine that was intended for killing you."

Then the great chaste lady who was addressed thus by Vainya replied:

135. "O king, there is no doubt that I shall carry out everything. Employ a calf for me, so that out of maternal affection, I shall ooze out milk.

136. O best among all kings, make me level everywhere, so that by giving out overflow of milk, I shall saturate (the world)."

Īśvara said:

137. Then Vainya, with the tip of his bow, removed heaps of stones whereby mountains became bigger and higher.

Īśvara said:

138. The earth was so (uneven) in the past Manvantaras and uneven (hilly) parts (of ground) developed naturally.

139. In previous creation, verily the surface of the earth

was not uneven. There exists (existed) division of cities and villages.

140. There were no crops, food-grains, dairy farming (lit. cow-pens), no agriculture, nor trade routes.

141-143. (It is reported that) such was the state formerly before Cākṣuṣa Manvantara. There was the creation of (all) this in the present Vaivasvata Manvantara. In whatever part of the earth there was level ground (plains) in those places all people lived. It is reported that the diet of the subjects consisted of fruits and roots. We have heard the traditional report that, (diet) was (available) with difficulty. It was from Vainya that there was the creation of all this.

144-145. Making Lord Cākṣuṣa Manu the calf, Pṛthu milked Pṛthivī (Earth) and got crops (foodgrains) in (with) his own hand.

146. With that food then all the subjects sustained themselves ever since. It is heard that the Earth was again milked by sages.

147. The calf (selected by) them was Soma and Bṛhaspati, the milker. And all *Chandas* (metres) beginning with Gāyatri formed the pot.

148-149. Penance, the eternal Brahman, was their milk then.

It is heard that the Earth was milked by the group of Devas of whom Purandara (Indra) was the head in a golden pot. Maghavā (Indra) was the calf and the Sun became the milker.

150-152a. The milk was the honey of power. Deities sustain themselves with it. It is reported that, again the Earth was milked by Pitṛs taking a silver pot. (They milked) *Svadhā* for eternal satisfaction. Their calf was the valorous Vaivasvata Yama. The powerful Lord Antaka (god of Death) was the milker.

152b-154. It is heard that the Earth was milked again powerfully by Asuras, taking with them an iron pot. The valiant Virocana, the son of Prahlāda was their calf. Dvimūrdhā (two-headed), son of Diti, was the Rtvik. He milked the milk in the form of Māyā. It caused satisfaction to Daityas.

155. By that Māyā, all the Asuras are still experts in Māyā. Those great valorous ones maintain themselves thereby. It (Māyā) is their great power.

156-157. It is reported that after making Takṣaka the calf

and taking the bottle-gourd as the pot, the Earth was milked by Nāgas (serpents) extracting poison profusely as milk.

158. The milker of the cobras and all serpents was the famous Vāsuki, the son of Kadrū. Sustaining themselves with that (poison), those terrible, huge-bodied serpents possess ample poison. It is their means of subsistence, of valour and final destination.

159. Making Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera) the calf, the Earth was again invisibly milked in an unannealed pot, by Yakṣas and Punyajanas.

160. Rajatanāga who was the mobile (wearer of) Philosopher's Stone was the milker. He was self-controlled, highly brilliant. Endowed with rich penance and knowledge he was the ruler of Yakṣas.

161-162. Thereby they (Yakṣas) sustain themselves. By powerful Vasus, Rākṣasas and goblins, the Earth was milked again. Brahmopendra from Kubera was their milker. The mighty Sumati was the Calf and blood was the milk.

163. In a skull-pot, she was invisibly milked. With that 'milk' (blood) all Rākṣasas maintain themselves.

164. Making Caitraratha the calf, the groups of Gandharvas and celestial damsels milked her in a pot of lotus-leaves, the milk being pure sweet fragrance.

165-166. There the calf was Ruci and the milker was the auspicious son of Muni. O goddess, it is reported that the Earth was milked again by Mountains. The calf was Himālaya and milker the great mountain Meru.*

He milked medicinal herbs and various kinds of precious stones.

167a. Their pot was made of stone. Mountains are well-established thereby.

167b-168. O glorious lady, it is heard that by trees and creepers, taking a pot of leaves of Palāśa tree which is cut, burnt and (still) sprouts, and making Plakṣa tree as the calf, the Śāla tree with full blossoms as the milker, the Earth, the supporter of beings, yielded all desired objects.

169. It has been heard by us that such Earth, the bearer and creator (of the world) and treasure of wealth, was milked by Pṛthu for the benefit of the people.

*Kālidāsa mentions this in the beginning of *Kumāra-sambhava*:
yam̄ sarva-śailāḥ parikalpya vatsam̄ merau sthite dogdhari doha-dakṣeḥ॥

170-171. The Earth, bordered by the sea, was the source as well as the support of the world of mobiles and immobiles. It is reported that she is well-known as *Medinī* as she was swamped with suet and flesh of (demons) Madhu and Kaiṭabha formerly. She is glorified as *Vasudhā* as she contains wealth.

172. Then she got the daughterhood of the intelligent king Pṛthu, the son of Vena and hence is called 'Pṛthivī'.

173. The famous, beautiful, treasure of wealth, endowed with a garland of towns and mines was milked with great effort by Pṛthu.

174-175. Pṛthu, the son of Vena, the excellent one among kings, was a monarch of such powers. Then he delighted the Earth by pious rule. Hence the word *rājan* was derived from his happy rule over the earth.

After getting the kingdom, Vainya (Pṛthu) began to ponder:

176. 'My father was greatly irreligious, the exterminator of sacrifices. To what place has he gone? How can that place be known to me?

177. How are his obsequies to be performed as he has been killed by Brāhmaṇas? What position will be get by the strength and efficacy of sacrifice and religious gifts?'

178. While he was pondering thus, Nārada came to him. He (the king) offered him (Nārada) seat, paid obeisance to him and asked:

179. "O Lord, you know both auspicious and inauspicious (events) in the world. My father was of bad conduct, a slanderer of Devas and Brāhmaṇas.

180. On account of his (mis)deeds he was killed by Brāhmaṇas and went to the other world. To what place has the father gone to, heaven or hell, in a hellish or hell-like womb?"

181. Comprehending it by his divine eye, Nārada spoke: "Listen, O mighty-armed king, as to where your father stays (now).

182-183. Here, on this earth, there is a country called Maru which is devoid of water and trees. O excellent one among men, in that terrible country your father is born among Mlecchas. Cosnsumptive and affected with leprosy, he eats the remnants of food left over by the Mlecchas. He has festering wounds full of worms."

184. Hearing those words of the noble-souled Nārada, the king cried out 'Alas ! Alas !' and fell down in a swoon.

185-186. Distressed with anguish, he pondered "What remedy should be done by me?" While he was deliberating thus, a thought occurred to the noble-souled one: 'He is called a (real) son in this world who saves his father. How will my father be freed from sins by me?'

After thinking thus, he asked Nārada:

187. "Holy Sir, all doings of my father have been told (by you). O excellent Brāhmaṇa, by what act will his emancipation take place? Tell me whether (it can be achieved) by observance of vows, religious gifts, by penance or by pilgrimage to holy places?" ,

Nārada said:

188. O king, go to prominent sacred places. Bring your father from that desert place to those sacred places, O Lord of men.

189-190. Go to those places, O great king, where gods are powerful and the Tīrthas are pure. O Lord, undertake pilgrimage. Know that in this way the emancipation of your father will take place.

After hearing the words of the noble-souled Nārada, he entrusted the responsibility of the kingdom to his minister and went on pilgrimage.

191-192. He went to the Maru-land. He saw him (Vena) infested with leprosy and suffering from severe tuberculosis among Mlecchas. For a *Gavyūti* (two Krośas) it was desolate there, devoid of human beings. Seeing this he got enraged and spoke the following words:

193. "O Mleccha, I shall take this diseased man to my house. If you consent I shall make him free from disease there."

194-195. Knowing that the person (Pṛthu) was merciful, all the Mlecchas who had prostrated themselves (before him) said: "O Lord of the world, do take him away. It is due to our good luck that you have arrived here. O Lord, people who were stinking with bad odour were made happy by you." Then persons capable of bearing a palanquin were brought.

196. After hearing the merciful words of the king, they visited many millions of sacred places like Kedāra and others.

197. Wherever Vainya (Pṛthu) accompanied with Vena went, there loud wailing of the Tirthas was heard.

198. They cried: "Alas ! O fate, the enemy is coming with the object of destruction. Now where shall (can) we go?" This was the constant worry and anxiety.

199. At his very sight, they shouted "Hā, Hā ! (Alas ! Alas!). The (presiding deities of the) Tirthas took to flight and Devas instantaneously disappeared.

200. In this manner, the king performed pilgrimage for three years. His (Vena's) redemption was not in sight. He (Pṛthu) grieved very deeply.

201. Then the servants (palanquin-bearers) were directed to highly glorious Kurukṣetra (to see) if redemption from sin could be achieved there again (by the second visit).

202. O dear one, they carried the palanquin on their shoulders and went to Kurukṣetra. They carried it to Sthāṇu Tīrtha. There they laid it down and departed.

203. At midday the king with deep respect (for the Tīrtha) was desirous of taking his own bath as well as that of his father and offer sixteen (types of) religious gifts.

204. The faithful king prompted with devotion was desirous of giving gifts. Then the Wind-god uttered these words from the intermediate space between heaven and earth:

205. "Do not, O Dear, do a rash act. Protect the holy place with great effort. This (Vena) is surrounded on all sides by terrible sins.

206-207. He used to (practice) slandering of the Vedas and is associated with hundreds of murders of Brāhmaṇas. Such a sinner of evil behaviour will lead the Tīrtha to destruction. Do not destroy, O king, the Tīrtha. It will be a great sin." Having heard this statement of the Wind-god, he was distressed with great sorrow. Being afflicted at his father's painful condition, and tormented with grief, he spoke:

208-209. "With his arms raised up, he cried again and again. "Alas ! O fate. If it is not possible even for this Tīrtha to purify him as he is extremely beset with terrible sins, I shall undoubtedly perform expiation for the sake of father."

210. Having heard his speech and taking great pity on

him, the sky-walkers (gods) again uttered words from the space between earth and sky:

211. "O king, O greatest monarch, give up your grief. Listen to what we say. Hereby the great (total) destruction of the sins of this father of yours will take place.

212. There is a highly efficacious sacred place well-known as Prabhāsa. It quells all sins and is destructive of great sins.

213. The essence of gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and the third Rudra, abides in that very great Kṣetra Prabhāsa which is dear to Śaṅkara.

214. It is remembered as the excellent Kṣetra pertaining to Śakti, Candra (the Moon-god), the Sun-god, Sarasvatī, Agni (the Fire-god) and Varuṇa.

215. Whatever Tirthas and sacred places there were formerly (in pre-Kali period) shall come to Prabhāsa with the advent of Kali Age.

216. Eight thousand *Koṭis* (Koti = ten million) and eight hundred Koṭi Gaṇas of Śaṅkara protect Prabhāsa by staying there.

217. This sacred (river) Sarasvatī is found everywhere here. In Prabhāsa, the five-channelled (five-streamed) Sarasvatī is difficult of access even to Devas.

218. In between its fifth current and the banks of Nyaṅkumatī (river) is situated the famous Tīrtha called Goṣpada.

219. In the middle of it is a rock called 'Pretasilā' which affords emancipation to *Pretas* (from the state of goblinhood). Formerly twenty Koṭi (Koti =ten million) *Pretas* were released (from Preta-hood).

220. The Tīrtha gives release to sinners. It is remembered as the first *Rudragayā*. Therein is the Tīrtha called *Goṣpada*, famous all over the earth in Kali Age.

221. When the Mothers of the world (Loka-Mātarah) emerged from churning of the Milk-Ocean, they came in the vicinity of the Tīrtha along with Devas.

222-223. The foot of (the cow) Nandā submerged on the surface of the slab-like rock. Seeing the slab marked with the print of the hoof and of a part of shoulder, all gods were wonder-struck. They asked the cow, Nandinī: "O goddess, what footprint is seen on the rocky slab called *Preta*? How is it that depression is caused amongst us? What is the flaw?"

Nandinī said:

224. O Devas, this is my foot-print which shines imprinted on the stone-slab like another disc of the Moon on the courtyard in the form of the sky.

225. O Devas, from today onwards, in all the three worlds consisting of mobiles and immobiles, it will be famous all over the world by the famous name Goṣṭapa.

226. O Devas, a man who on coming here, performs ablution and Śrāddha, will attain the benefit seven times more than at Gayā.

227. There is no (specific) day, constellation or period as suitable for such performance. Whenever the Tīrtha is seen, there are a thousand *Parvan* (days suitable for these religious rites).

228-232a. O Pārvatī ! If there is a desire for (knowing) the Parvan days listen. (They are) two *Ayanas*, equinoxes, ordinary transit of the Sun from one Zodiac to another, the New-Moon day and Aṣṭakā days, especially in the dark half of a month, on Ādrā, Maghā and Rohiṇī asterism when money and Brāhmaṇas are available, *Gajacchāyā Parva*, *Vyatīpāta*, *Vaidhṛti* the third day in Vaiśākha and the ninth in Kārttika, fifteenth day in Māgha, the thirteenth day in Nabhasya (Bhādrapada), the first day of every Yuga. On these occasions or on the first day of Manvantaras, Śrāddha should be performed by a wise man.

232b-235. Religious gift becomes of imperishable benefit if donated on the ninth day in the bright half of Āśvina, twelfth day in Kārttika, third day in the month of Caitra as well as of Bhādrapada, but specially on the New-Moon day of Phālguna and eleventh lunar day of Pauṣa, tenth lunar day of Āṣāḍha and the seventh day (probably of the bright half of) Māgha, the eighth day in the dark half of Śrāvaṇa and the Full-Moon day in the months of Kārttika, Phālguna and Jyeṣṭha and the first day of Manvantaras.

236-238a. Satisfaction upto the end of Kalpa (is derived by Pitṛs) if the Śrāddha is performed on the first days of the Kalpa namely, on the third day of Vaiśākha and the third day in the dark half of Phālguna, the fifth day of Caitra as well as the last day of the same, the thirteen day in the bright half of Māgha, and the seventh lunar day in Kārttika, the ninth

day of Mārgaśīrṣa, these seven days being the first days of Kalpas.

238bc. After speaking to Devas, Nandinī (cow) immediately vanished like a lamp extinguished by wind.

239. After seeing this miracle, Devas along with Vāsava (Indra), Brāhmaṇical and divine sages sang this ancient verse:

240. "Oh, how wonderful is the greatness of this Tīrtha! Wonderful indeed is the power of Nandā's (cow's) penance. By offering only one Śrāddha (here) the benefit is seven times that (of a Śrāddha performance) at Gayā."

241. Then, after saying this, the Devas performed religious rites beginning with Śrāddha. They got the benefit as was formerly declared by Nandinī.

242. Thus, O chief among kings, go immediately to the Goṣpada Tīrtha. After the performance of Śrāddha and other rites, you will get the desired fruit.

243. This, your father, is remembered as the worst among sinners. It is not possible to redeem him by hundreds of other Tīrthas except by Goṣpada Tīrtha.

244. Hence, O great king, go immediately. Do not delay" On hearing it, the king came to Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

245. Keeping ahead Brāhmaṇas who know the greatness of the Tīrtha and were residents thereof that great king went to river Nyāṅkumatī.

246. The sacred footprint on the Pretaśilā was shown to the king by them. Seeing that pure translucent Tīrtha the king's eyes were (as if) bloomed with wonder. For the sake of performing sacrifice, he got prepared Kuṇḍas (fire-places), altars and pandals.

247. Then the sacrifice with very liberal monetary gifts was begun as per prescribed procedure. His forefathers of fiery brilliance became manifest.

248. Those Pitṛs with faith established by Śrāddha-sacrifice became satisfied and spoke to the excellent king:

249. "O King, you are blessed, you are meritorious. On account of you we have been rendered more blessed still. We have been redeemed by you by the performance of Śrāddha at this place."

250. Then, after saying this, all Pitṛs along with Vena

seated in an excellent aerial chariot, went to heaven.

251-253. While going, Vena spoke to that most excellent King: "For four other (previous) births I who was a leprous sinner eating the leftovers of the food of Cāṇḍālas that I, being completely free from sins, am going to heaven. O highly fortunate one, go and enjoy the kingdom for a long period. You have carried out all the duties that are to be performed by a son."

254. Hearing this, the king along with his relatives became delighted. He made the Brāhmaṇas delighted by the gifts of earth (plots of land), gold and other things.

255. Seeing the efficacy of the Tīrtha, resulting in the direct vision of Pitṛs, there was nothing in the world that was not given by the king.

256. After finishing it thus, the king returned to his place (i.e. capital). After enjoying the entire earth, he attained heaven after death.

257. The sin-destroying sacred place Prabhāsa is of such efficacy and power; millions of Tīrthas come there and Devas too abide there.

258. He who, after coming to Prabhāsa Kṣetra, intends to go to another Tīrtha, is like a person, who, throwing away (an eatable) in hand, tries to lick his elbow.

259. Pitṛs sang this ancient couplet, my dear: "If the son is anyhow unable to go to Gayā, he should assiduously try to go to the excellent Gośpada Tīrtha."

260. Such a son born in our family should offer Śrāddha with bulbous roots, roots, fruits, a special plant called Piṇyāka or even with water.

261. Taking a bath there, he should, with effort, invite Brāhmaṇas who are excellent knowers of the Vedas. As per procedure, they should be fed assiduously in the Śrāddha. Then he should offer Piṇḍas to Pitṛs who are desirous of being satisfied.

262. There is no need to consider (whether it is the proper) *Tithi*, *Nakṣatra*, *Parva* or the beginning of a month (and such other details). One should always visit that Tīrtha with a heart full of faith.

263. There is no restrictions of time as its very vision is authoritative. It is very difficult to go there on the Akṣaya-tritīyā

(third lunar day in bright half of Vaiśākha) my dear.

264-265. On the Kārttikī (Full-Moon) day or the seventh day of Māgha or on the Parva day *Padmaka*, gift of gold, cow, of cloth, silver (pot), ghee, gingelly seeds should be made there as per procedure by one desirous of (security of) the satisfaction of Pitṛs.

266. In this way, O goddess, the secret of the Tīrtha leading to prosperity has been narrated to you. It should not be told to wicked-minded sinners of cruel hearts.

267. It should be given (told) to a person endowed with faith, who is interested in devotion to Pitṛs. It should always be recited devoutly to Brāhmaṇas by a knower of Purāṇas.

268. Thereby satisfaction for a period of twelve years accrues to Pitṛs. It should always be heard assiduously by men who are afraid of hells. It should always devoutly be recited before Brāhmaṇas while they take (their) meals.

269. Pitṛs speak out the secret: A man who assiduously offers water mixed with gingelly seeds to Pitṛs, has (the benefit of having) performed a Śrāddha for a hundred years.

270. This secret is the treasure of success and glory. It is very dear to Pitṛs. It is Amṛta (nectar) in the Vedas forever. It is always destructive of great sins of men.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYSEVEN

Greatness of Nārāyaṇa-Gṛha

Īśvara said:

1-3a. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the excellent shrine of Nārāyaṇa. It is to the south of Gospada on the auspicious shore of the sea. It is in the vicinity of the river Nyañkumati, the destroyer of all sins. Keśava himself dwells there since another, previous, Kalpa for the redemption of Pitṛs in this terrible Kali Age.

3b-4. When Lord Hari brings about the destruction of Daityas, he always stays in this house for taking rest. Hence, it became well-known all over the world as 'Nārāyaṇa-gṛha' (Home of Nārāyaṇa).

5. He is known as Janārdana in Kṛta Age, Madhusūdana in Tretā Yuga, Puṇḍarīkākṣa in Dvāpara. He is remembered as Nārāyaṇa in Kali Age.

6. When the new group of four Yugas begins, he, the subduer of enemies, establishes religious order again and again and comes to this place (for rest).

7. He who, on the Ekādaśī (eleventh lunar) day observes complete fast and visits that God, sees (attains) after death the eternal, limitless region of Hari.

8. By persons desirous of the complete benefit of the performance of *Yatrā* (pilgrimage), yellow garments should be given to an excellent Brāhmaṇa. Proper ablutions and Śrāddha should also be performed.

9. Thus is related to you the great efficacy of the house named after Hari. An intelligent person who assiduously listens to or reads it, attains the greatest goal.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYEIGHT

Greatness of Jāleśvara

Īśvara said:

1. O great goddess, thereafter one should go to (the shrine) known as Jāleśvara situated on the bank of Devikā. It (Jāleśvara) is bowed to by Suras and Asuras.

2-3. In Cākṣuṣa Manvantara, when there was the advent of Dvāpara Yuga, the Liṅga called Jāleśvara, situated on the banks of Devikā (river), was worshipped by Nāga girls. Human beings could not see it.

It comprised precious stones of very great refulgence. It has brilliance like the disc of the Moon. By its very remembrance, the (sin of) Brāhmaṇa-killing perishes.

Devi said:

4. Why is it (the Liṅga) named Jāleśvara? In what period did it come into existence?

5. What good qualities resulting from association with the

good and saintly are glorified? Which regions and what merits are gained? O Lord, tell me everything.

Īśvara said:

6. In this context, they relate this ancient episode: a dialogue between (king) Nābhāga and (sage) Āpastam̄ba, the treasure of penance.

7. Formerly there lived the great sage Āpastam̄ba of self-dependent will power, the leader of the twice-born ones (Brāhmaṇas). The holy Lord was engaged in good deeds.

8. He always eschewed anger, avarice, delusion and hostility. He entered the waters of the river Devikā.

9. O beloved of Śiva, knowing that the holy place Prabhāsa was pleasant, he lived there for a big period of time.

10. While he stayed therein in a pillar-like stable posture practising the supreme Yoga of meditation, one day fishermen came to that place.

11. Spreading out their extremely wide net, the Niṣādas (fishermen), proud of their strength, powerfully dragged out that great fish (the sage).

12. Out of the water, they pulled the son of Brahmā. Seeing him blazing with penance, the fishermen were overwhelmed with fear. Bowing down their heads in obeisance, they spoke these words loudly:

Niṣādas said:

13. It behoves you to forgive us who have committed a sin unknowingly, O sage of good vows. Order us what pleasant task should be done for you.

14. The sage saw the great slaughter of fishes. Deeply grieved and overcome with great pity, he spoke to the fishermen:

15. "What remedy can I have? Alas ! All are deeply engaged in their self-interest. Even the mind of those knowers is busy only in the interest of the self.

16. When persons endowed with (spiritual) knowledge are engaged in meditation depending on (i.e. for the sake of) their own objectives, where can grief-stricken miserable beings go for happiness?

17-19. Persons desirous of liberation praise a person who desires to experience griefs and miseries only—one worse than the previous one. Persons desirous of *Mokṣa* say: ‘What means can I have, whereby I, entering into all beings, can get an experience of miseries of all and become one possessing a miserable self? Whatever is auspicious merit of mine should go to them. Whatever evil deeds be perpetrated by them may entirely come to me.’

20. It is my opinion that he is a demon in whom mercy does not arise on seeing the blind, the miserable, the disabled, the helpless and the diseased.

21. Though capable of doing so, if one does not save beings in the danger of death and the beings overwhelmed with fear, he eats the fruit of (suffers the consequences of) sin.

22. They say that (the happiness in) heaven and liberation (from *Saṁsāra*) does not deserve to be even one-sixteenth fraction of the happiness that comes to distressed persons (when relieved).

23. I shall not go a single step abandoning these poor, extremely distressed fishes. What to say of going to the region of Devas !”

Īśvara said:

24. On hearing the statement of that sage, those fishermen got confused. They reported to King Nābhāga everything as it took place.

25. On hearing it, even Nābhāga accompanied by his ministers and family priest quickly hastened to see the son of Brahmā.

26. After worshipping properly the Deva-like sage, the king requested, “O Lord, tell me what should be done at your bidding?”

Āpastamba said:

27. These fishermen lead a miserable life and are greatly overwhelmed with fatigue. Pay them whatever you think proper as the price of mine.

Nābhāga said:

28. As you, the son of god Brahmā say, I shall pay one hundred thousand (coins) as the remuneration for drawing you out.

Āpastamīa said:

29. O king, I should not be fixed with a hundred thousand as my worth. Adequate price should be given. Consult your ministers.

Nābhāga said:

30. O excellent Brāhmaṇa, ten million (coins) be given to the fishermen if this be your price. If it be more, it will be given.

Āpastamīa said:

31. O king, my price is not merely hundred thousand or more. Deserving price be paid after consulting Brāhmaṇas.

Nābhāga said:

32. Half of the kingdom or the whole of the kingdom be given to the fishermen. I regard this as the (proper) price. What else do you think, O Brāhmaṇa?

Āpastamīa said:

33. O king, I am not to be valued by half of the kingdom or the entire kingdom. Consult with some sages and a suitable value should be given.

34. On hearing the words of the great sage, Nābhāga, along with his ministers and family, felt dejected.

35. Then a certain sage Lomaśa of great penance assured Nābhāga: "Do not be afraid, I shall satisfy the sage."

Nābhāga said:

36. Tell me the value of the great sage, O highly fortunate one. Protect me along with my clan, and family relatives from this (sage).

37. Lord Rudra will burn down the three worlds along with the mobiles and immobiles. What then of the weakling of a man extremely indulging in sensual pleasures?

Lomaśa said:

38. O great king, the excellent Brāhmaṇa worthy of being worshipped by the world, should be eulogized by you. Cows are divine. Hence, cows being his proper price, should be given to him.

39. On hearing that statement the king along with his ministers and family priest was overwhelmed with excessive joy. He spoke to the sage:

40. "Get up, get up, O holy Sir, (you are) purchased undoubtedly. This is the most deserving price for your honourable self, O excellent sage."

Āpastamba said:

41. Being highly pleased I stand here as I am bought at the proper price, O king. I do not see any excellent, pure value higher than cows in this world, O king.

42. Cows are always to be worshipped and circumambulated. These goddesses (cows) are the receptacle of auspiciousness. These have been created by the self-born god (Brahmā).

43. The hall of fire-worship and the temples of gods become purified with cowdung. What purer thing could have been created?

44. Urine of a cow, cowdung, (cow's) milk, curds and ghee (prepared from cow's milk)— all these five (pure) products from cow purify the whole world.

45. "Cows be always in front of me and cows be at my rear. Cows are in my heart. I always stay among cows."

46. If a self-controlled pure person mutters this Mantra three times (morning, noon and evening) a day, he is absolved of all sins and goes to heaven.

47. Everyday with devotion cows must mainly be fed on grass. A person taking his meal without feeding cows, incurs misfortune.

48. He who gives daily fodder (and other services) to cows, has offered oblations into fire, has properly satisfied the Pitṛs and performed worship of Devas.

49. Mantra: "The daughter of (the divine cow) Surabhī (i.e. a cow) deserves to be worshipped by the world. The goddess dwells in Viṣṇu's region. May she accept all that has been given by me and be fully satisfied."

50. By protecting the male calves of cows and by easing the itching of cows and by protecting the weak and suffering cows, a man is praised in heaven.

51. Cows are proclaimed to be the beginning, middle and end of mortal beings. They protect (sustain) milk, ghee and nectar of all Devas.

52. Hence, cows always deserve to be worshipped and gifted. They are created like a staircase for easy passage to heaven.

53. Hearing the excellent greatness of cows, the Niṣādas (fishermen) prostrated themselves before the noble-souled Āpastam̍ba and spoke:

Niṣādas said:

54. It is heard (by us) that conversation, viewing, touch, glorification, remembrance of saintly persons are sanctifying.

55. Viewing us and conversation with us has been done by you. Render a favour unto us and accept this cow.

Āpastam̍ba said:

56. I accept this cow. You are now absolved of your sins. O fishermen, go to heaven along with the fish taken out of water by you.

57. If I see hell by creating affinity with living beings even by censurable means, I shall stay therein as if it is veritable heaven.

58. If I have done some slight merit by my mind, speech and actions, may all miserable beings go to auspicious goal (heaven).

59. Then by the grace of the great sage of sanctified soul, the fishermen along with the fish went to heaven at his words.

60. Looking at the fishermen going to heaven along with the fish, the king along with the ministers and servants was struck with wonder and he spoke:

61. "Saintly persons are like water in (a sacred) Tīrtha. They should be served by persons intent on securing welfare. Rendering services to them even for a moment does not become fruitless.

62. One should always sit with good people. Pious stories or conversation should be carried on with good people. One should behave as per vows of the good. One should not do anything with evil persons.

63. These fishermen along with the fish went to heaven due to their association with the good. I like persons who practice virtuous deeds."

64. Then sage Āpastam̍ba and the noble-hearted Lomaśa blessed the king with various desired boons.

65. Then he (the king) selected the boon of having a virtuous mind which is so very difficult to get. Saying "So be it" with great affection, both of them praised the king.

66. "O chief of kings, how blessed you are that your mind is attached to virtue! *Dharma* (Piety) is very difficult to obtain, especially so in the case of kings."

67. What man in the world can be more powerful than a king who puffed up with pride, does not abandon his own duties !

68. Always the birth (life) of a king is certainly prone to delusion. From delusion hell is a certainty. Hence wise men censure kingship.

69. Persons addicted to sensual pleasure think highly of a kingdom. Wise men, however, look upon it as comparable to hell.

70. Hence, O great king, do you desire to secure eternal position (*Mokṣa*) to yourself? Pride, the destroyer of both the worlds should not be entertained by you."

Īśvara said:

71. After speaking thus, those two noble-souled ones went to their respective hermitages. Having got the boon, Nābhāga who was highly delighted, entered his capital.

72. As the most excellent sage was caught in the net of fishermen, it became well-known in the world as Jāleśvara.

73-76. O great goddess, after bathing there and worshiping Jāleśvara, Āpastam̍ba, Nābhāga and the Niṣādas who live

by fish (catching) went to heaven along with the fish due to the efficacy of Devikā. *Pindā* should be offered to Pitṛs on the thirteenth day in the bright half of Caitra. There is no end to his merits.

Therein (in that Tīrtha) the religious gift of a cow to a Brāhmaṇa expert in the Vedas should be performed. The greatness (of Jāleśvara) should be heard and Jāleśvara should be visited.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED THIRTYNINE

Greatness of Humkāra Kūpa

Īśvara said:

1-2a. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the well, renowned in all the three worlds, on the beautiful bank of Devikā. It is filled with the sound ‘*Hum*’. Then, O beautiful woman, the water again goes down there.

2b-4. O great goddess, it is reported that formerly there was (a sage) called Taṇḍi who resided on the bank of Devikā. He was a great devotee of Śiva, who performed penance.

O lady of excellent countenance, while he was thus performing penance in that part of country, there came an old deer blind in eyes. He fell in a fathomless deep ditch devoid of water.

5. Seeing him the sage was moved with compassion. But having adopted (the vow of) silence, he repeatedly uttered the *Hum* sound, O beautiful lady.

6. Then by the sound ‘*Hum*’ of the sage, the ditch was overfilled (with water) and the deer came out with difficulty from the water.

7-9a. Assuming human form, he (the deer) who was extremely surprised, asked the sage about the attainment of the desired fruit from the act of falling (in the ditch) in the form of deer and emergence by becoming transformed into a man.

The excellent Brāhmaṇa told him that (it was) the efficacy of that water. “It is thereby that I attained the status of man. There is no other reason.”

9b-10. Then the water again entered underground. Urged by curiosity, the sage uttered the sound '*Hum*'. The well was filled again with water as before.

11. Considering it (the well) to be a prominent Tīrtha, he took his bath and gave oblations to satisfy Pitṛs. Thence he attained the highest goal.

12-13a. Even today, if the sound *Hum* is uttered it is flooded with water.

Even if a man be a confirmed sinner, if he goes there with devotion, he does not get the birth of a man on the surface of the earth.

13b-14. If a person sanctifies himself by taking a bath there and performs Śrāddha, he is absolved of all sins and is prai. ca in the world of Pitṛs. He redeems seven generations preceding him and seven following him.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTY

Greatness of Caṇḍīśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the great Liṅga Caṇḍīśvara which destroys all sins. It is situated at that very place.

2. O beautiful lady, there, on the fourteenth day of the bright half of the month of Kārttika, if one observes fast and remains awake at night, he goes to the highest place where dwells god Maheśvara.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYONE

Greatness of God Vighnarāja of Āśāpūra

Īśvara said:

1. One should then go to the blemishless (sacred) Āśāpūra (granter of desires) Gaṇeśa (Vighnarāja—the Lord, controller of obstacles), the Moon-crested Lord. He is situated on the

north-west. He fulfills hopes and desires and hence is remembered as *Āśāpūraka*.

2. O goddess, cherished desires were obtained by Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa after propitiating the controller of obstacles (Gaṇeśa) there.

3. There, by propitiating the Lord of Gaṇas, complete healing of leprosy as desired by him, formerly, was attained by the Moon-god.

4-6. On the fourth day in the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada, one should properly worship the Lord of Devas (Gaṇeśa) and feed Brāhmaṇas with *Modakas* (a special sweet dish). The person obtains his cherished accomplishment.

For the protection of this Kṣetra, O great goddess, the Destroyer of Obstacles was appointed by me, for the pilgrims.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYTWO

Greatness of Candreśvara-Kalā Kuṇḍa

Īśvara said:

1. Not far from it, to the south-southeast direction, is situated a sin-destroying Liṅga installed by Soma himself.

2-4. There is a Kuṇḍa of nectar remembered as Kalā Kuṇḍa. A man who, after taking his bath therein, worships Candreśa, attains the fruit of practising penance for one thousand years. There is a lake created there by the Moon-god, O goddess. It is sixteen Dhanus in extent (east-west) from Candreśa. It has been described to you formerly along with Mukti-dāna (granting of liberation etc.).

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYTHREE

Importance of (Observing the Vow of) Kapilā-Śaṣṭhī

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the excellent (Liṅga) Kapileśvara. It is to the east of Śāśibhūṣaṇa and to the west of Koṭi Tīrtha.

2. The Kṣetra pertaining to Kapila extends to the south of Jaradgaveśa and to the north of the sea. It is not (reached) by men devoid of merit.

3. Installing Maheśvara in front of him, an intense penance was performed there by Kapila for ten thousand years.

4. There, the great river, goddess Kapiladhārā, was invoked there. She is clearly seen today in the middle of the sea by meritorious people.

5-6. O great goddess, taking bath there especially on the *Kapilā Śaṣṭhī* day, one should gift away a tawny-coloured cow, which is equal to gifting ten million cows. This is remembered as the expiation of all sins.

After properly worshipping Kapileśvara, one gets the benefit of (giving in marriage) ten million girls.

Devi said:

7. O Lord of Devas, it appears miraculous to me. I desire to listen to the procedure beginning with Dāna (religious gifts), Mantras etc. pertaining to Kapilā Śaṣṭhī.

Īśvara said:

8. Even if one (Kapilā) Śaṣṭhī along with all its astrological associations, is obtained within the span of one's life by men, what more (propitious) can I say?

9. The sixth lunar day in the dark half of Bhādrapada occurring on Tuesday and coinciding with Rohiṇī as the asterism and also with Vyatipāta as Yoga is remembered as Kapilā Śaṣṭhī.

10-11. Then a man should take his bath in a Kṣetra or an auspicious place pertaining to the Sun-god. After performing ablution with mud, white gingelly seeds on the auspicious confluence of Kapilā, he should perform *Japa*. Then he should offer *Arghya* to the Sun-god with water mixed with red sandalpaste with Karavīra (flowers) added to it. Taking upon his head a pot containing the *Arghya*, he should gift it uttering this Mantra:

12. “Obeisance to you, the Lord of the three worlds, who have illuminated the three worlds. O *Veda-rayed* one, accept the *Arghya*. My obeisance to you.”

13-16. Circumambulating the Sun-god and having worshipped Kapileśvara, he should place an uncracked earthen pot on an auspicious place besmeared (with cowdung) and decorated with flowers and raw rice-grains.

The pot should be filled with water mixed with sandalpaste, with five jewels placed in it. It should have in it *Dūrvā* grass, flowers and raw rice-grains. It should be covered with a pair of red cloths and with a copper pot placed on the chariot of gold should be drawn (obscure!).

Picture of the icon of the Sun-god should be made of a *Pala* of gold. The idol (of the Sun-god) should be placed on the (earthen) pot and one should worship it with fragrant flowers.

17. In the vicinity of Kapileśvara, in a pandal sanctified by (performance of) Homa, the Sun-god should be worshipped by (reciting) his epithets as stated (below):

18. “O Āditya, Bhāskara, Ravi, Bhānu, Prabhākara, O maker of the day, I bow down to you; uplift me from Samsāra.

19. As you are the donor of enjoyment of pleasures here and liberation hereafter, give unto us peace and tranquility.

20. Obeisance, Obeisance to you, O bestower of boons, O Lord of the Rk, Sāman and Yajurveda. Obeisance to you, O one having the universe as your form, O receptacle of the universe.

21. O goddess (Kapīlā), your milk is sanctifying, nutritious nectar here. It is through your grace that men get absolved from all sins.

22. O goddess, created by god Brahmā from sacrificial pit, O Kapilā of great fulgence, salute to you, O meritorious (goddess) bowed to by all Devas.

23. O goddess, comprising all Devas and all Tirthas, O auspicious one, take me, yourself, your donor who worships you, to Brahma-Loka.”

24. After properly adoring the Kapilā (tawny-coloured) cow, the divine one and Sun-god who is installed on the pot, both of them should be gifted to a Brāhmaṇa, a knower of the Vedas.

25-26. They should be given to Vyāsa, the devotee of the Sun-god with (i.e. uttering) this Mantra: “O God of resplendent form, O eye of the world, O soul of the twelve, O maker of

the day, accompanied with the Kapilā cow give unto me liberation (from Samsra).

27. O Kapilā, inasmuch as you, the meritorious one, the sanctifier of the whole world, have been gifted along with the Sun-god, be a conferor unto me of liberation."

28. Dakṣinā should be offered in the form of a *Pala* or half or one-fourth (of a *Pala* gold). The cow should be gifted with some Dakṣinā within one's capacity.

29. A man who follows this procedure of the Şaṣṭhī (the sixth lunar day) designated as Kapilā (i.e. the Yoga called Kapilā-Shaṣṭhī) gets the benefit of performing one thousand horse-sacrifices.

30. He who observes Kapilā Shaṣṭhī (by this procedure) gets entirely all the benefits that accrue from (pilgrimage to) all Tirthas and (offering) all (kinds of) religious gifts.

31. Thousands of crores of Kapilās, hundreds of crores of Kapilās, whatever is given on this specific day of the Sun-god, the benefit of it becomes ten-million-fold.

32. O lady of excellent complexion, he who performs the Kapilā Shaṣṭhī observance resides in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on the body of one crore cows.

33. Sage Kapila said that all the sins committed previously knowingly or unknowingly get annihilated (by the observance of Kapilā Shaṣṭhī).

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYFOUR

Greatness of Jaradgaveśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the great sin-destroying Liṅga situated to the north of north-eastern direction.

2. It is called Jaradgaveśvara as it is installed by sage Jaradgava. There is no doubt that it is the destroyer of sins like killing of a Brāhmaṇa etc.

3. O goddess, there is the divine river Amṛumatī. After taking a bath therein, one should offer Piṇḍas as per procedure.

4. It brings satisfaction unto the Pitrs for a period of more than ten million years. A bull should be given to a Brāhmaṇa expert in the Vedas.

5-6. Thereafter, one should worship god Jaradgava with *Pañcāmyra* (mixture of milk, sour milk, butter, honey and sugar), flowers as well as *guggula*-fumigation, with eulogy, prostrations and circumambulations day and night.

One should feed Brāhmaṇas there, with various eatables and delicacies. By feeding one, (the merit) becomes ten-million-fold.

7. That Tīrtha was known as *Siddhodaka* in Kṛta Age. In Kali Age it is glorified as *Jaradgaveśvara*.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYFIVE

Greatness of Naleśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the Liṅga Hāṭakeśvara situated at a distance of one hundred eighty *Dhanus* to the east of Jaradgaveśvara.

2. Knowing that it is an excellent Kṣetra, a Liṅga called Naleśvara was installed by Nala along with Damayantī.

3. Visiting it and by worshipping it as per procedure, O goddess, a being (man) is freed from Kali and becomes victorious in gambling.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYSIX

Greatness of Karkoṭārka

Īśvara said:

1. In the south-east region thereof, is situated the Sun-god called Karkoṭaka, O great goddess. In the previous Kalpa, it was remembered as associated with Karkoṭaka.

2. By merely visiting it, all deities become pleased. He who worships it with proper procedure by smearing it with fragrant substances and fumigate it with incense, is absolved of all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYSEVEN

Greatness of Hāṭakeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thenafter, O great goddess, one should go to the Liṅga called Hāṭakeśvara at a distance of two hundred *Dhanus* to the east of Naleśvara.

2. There, on the north-east, to the east of Cintāmaṇi, at a distance of three hundred *Dhanus*, there is situated a mango-park called Agastya. There formerly penance was performed by the great noble-souled Agastya.

Devī said:

3. O great god, tell me in detail in what period (he did so).

Īśvara said:

4. O lady of excellent complexion, formerly terrible groups of Daityas known as Kālakeya came into existence. They were the exterminators of the three worlds.

5. All of them were killed by powerful Viṣṇu called Daityasūdana who was a resident of Prabhāsa Kṣetra.

6. He assumed the form of a tiger named Cakramukhin. They were killed by that form. Thereby he became known as Daityasūdana.

7. The remaining (demons) overwhelmed with fear entered the sea. Then they held consultations as to how Devas could be harassed:

8. "Those religious people who exist on the earth and are engaged in penance and Vedic studies and in performing sacrifices and making charitable gifts should be killed."

9. O dear one, after taking such a decision they used to come out of the sea at night and kill the ascetics who were engaged in performance of sacrifice and charity.

10-11. O great goddess, in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra of twelve Yojanas (in extent) in the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, they ate up seventy-five thousand noble-souled sages. (They devoured) five hundred sages in the hermitage of Raibhya and sixteen hundred in that of Viśvāmitra.

12. By those wicked-souled ones, seven hundred sages in the hermitage of Cyavana, two hundred sages in the hermitage of Jābāli, and six hundred in the holy hermitage of Vālakhilyas (were killed).

13. If any sacrifice perchance was performed at a place, after nightfall, they devoured the sacrificial priests employed for (performance of) the sacrifice and religious gifts.

14. Then all over the world, all were distressed with terror. Nobody knew these deeds of the Daityas.

15. Sages occupied cosy beds and slept at night. At dawn only their heaps of bones were found in the places of sacrifice.

16. Thereafter, on the surface of the earth, all religious acts were abandoned by all men. The whole world became devoid of Svādhyāya and the utterance of Vaṣat.

17-21. Then some other ascetics equipped with weapons stood united at night. Thus when religious acts stopped, the residents of Svarga (Devas) became harassed. They sought refuge in god Brahmā, asking: "What is it (going on)? O Lord, all the ascetics as well as those possessing knowledge are devoured by someone at night and they meet death. O Great-grandfather, all religious acts have become extinct on the earth. He who abides by religious duties during the day meets death at night. In the entire world there is no Svādhyāya or utterance of Vaṣat. Due to the stoppage of religious acts, all of us have found ourselves in doubtful (precarious) position." After hearing their speech, the Grandfather (Brahmā) meditated (for a while) and spoke to all the Devas who were enmeshed in deep uncertainty:

22-26. "Dānavas known as Kāleyas are terrible in action. They resort to the sea (by day) and eat up the sages (at night). For you, they cannot be killed by you. Try to destroy them, otherwise there will be annihilation. Quickly go down to the

earth where, in the excellent Prabhāṣa Kṣetra, Agastya always resides engaged in observance of vows. Born of gods Mitra and Varuṇa, he is capable of drinking up the ocean. He should be persuaded by you: 'O excellent one, drink up the sea.' When he has accomplished that, all the Dānavas will thus be killed by you, O Devas."

27. When addressed thus by god Brahmā, the creator of the world, all the Devas came to the holy place of Prabhāṣa and sought refuge in him (Agastya).

Devas said:

28. O, greatest one among Brāhmaṇas, please do protect us. The group of the three worlds is in an embarrassing position. It has been devastated by Kālakeyas who take refuge in the sea.

29. O great Brāhmaṇa, dry it (the sea) up for the welfare of the Devas. O mighty one, no other man is capable of achieving such a feat.

Īśvara said:

30. When addressed thus by groups of Suras, Agastya, the eminent sage, became elated (with joy) and went to the sea along with Devas.

31. While being sung by Gandharvas, eulogized by Kinnaras and praised by Vibudhas (Devas), he spoke the (following) words:

32. "O Devas, do behold the miraculous act. For the protection of the three world, here I dry up the vast ocean along with its fishes and crocodiles."

33. After saying this, the venerable sage Agastya, the greatest of Brāhmaṇas, gulped the entire Ocean, the Lord of rivers (holding him up in his hollow palms of hands.).

34. When the great Ocean was drunk up by the noble-souled Agastya, Dānavas became panick-stricken and ran helter-skelter.

35. While they were being killed by Suras with sharp weapons, some others took to flight into a jungle.

36. When most of the Daityas were killed some quickly split up the earth and entered the nether world, smeared with blood.

37. Then the Devas who were delighted spoke to the most excellent sage Agastya: "Our desired objective has been completely achieved. Now fill up the sea again."

Agastya said:

38-40. O Devas, the water that is consumed by me has been reduced to an impure condition.

In the family of Raghu a most excellent king well-known as Bhagiratha will be born. That eminent one among the bearers of arms will bring Gaṅgā, the greatest river, from the region of Brahmā, for the sake of his clan. It will be then filled up by her."

After saying thus, the sage went to his abode along with Suras.

41-42. When he reached his hermitage, Devas spoke to him: "O sage, we are completely satisfied, O Brāhmaṇa. Speak out what desired object of yours we should do (grant) even if it be very difficult to obtain."

Agastya said:

43. Let me be a celestial being (a star) in the southern (region of the) firmament for the duration of twenty-five hundred crores of Brahmās.

44-49. A man who comes here to the auspicious region of my hermitage near Hāṭakeśvara in this excellent holy place of Prabhāsa and takes an ablution properly, will go to the excellent region.

He who elaborately worships Maheśvara in the form of a Liṅga which has emerged from the nether worlds and has been installed by me by the prowess of my penance shall definitely derive everyday the fruit of having gifted a hundred cows. May a man who duly worships me in the company of Lopāmudrā and offers me Arghya as per procedure with Kāśa flowers when the autumnal season arrives, reach the excellent goal (Heaven).

May he who worships me in the company of Lopāmudrā and along with Hāṭakeśvara in the summer solstice, get the benefit of (the gift of) a hundred thousand cows. O excellent one, may the entire fruit of Gayā-Śrāddha accrue to the Brāhmaṇa

who performs a Srāddha here during the northern transit of the Sun."

Īśvara said:

50. Saying "Definitely so (it will happen)," all Devas along with Vāsava (Indra) with their minds highly delighted went to their own abodes.

51. Therefore, putting in all efforts a man should go to the hermitage of Agastya when the autumnal season arrives and should elaborately adore Hāṭakeśa.

52. He who listens to the action of the sage and to the Kalpa-Liṅga called Agastyeśvara so dear to Devas, is instantly absolved of the sin committed during that day and night.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYEIGHT

Greatness of Nāradeśvarī

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the west to Nāradeśvarī in the vicinity of Nāradeśvara. She destroys all (effects of) ill luck (especially widowhood).

2. If a woman, with concentration, worships the goddess on the third lunar day, no woman in her family shall be affected by ill luck (widowhood).

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FORTYNINE

Greatness of Mantra-vibhūṣaṇā Gaurī

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the goddess Mantra-vibhūṣaṇā (Gaurī) in the vicinity of Bhīmeśvara. She was formerly propitiated by Soma.

2. A woman who duly worships her on the third lunar day in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa is relieved of all miseries.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTY

Greatness of Durga-Kūṭa Gaṇapati

Īśvara said:

1. O great goddess, one should thereafter go to Gaṇeśa (Vighneāsa master-controller of obstacles) called Durgakūṭa. (He is) to the east of Bhalla Tīrtha and to the south of Yoginīcakra.

2-3. He was worshipped by Bhīmasena and became the granter of all desires. On the fourth day in the bright half of Phālguna, he who worships him (the god) as per proper procedure, with fragrant paste and flowers along with (the Naivedya of) *Modakas* (a sweet dish) gets one year undoubtedly free from all obstacles.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYONE

Greatness of Kauraveśvarī

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, from thence one should go to Kauraveśvarī who was propitiated by Kuru himself, after whom Kurukṣetra is named.

2. She was propitiated by Bhīma after protecting the holy place (Kṣetra). A man who assiduously worships her on Mahānavamī (ninth day in the bright half of Āśvina), the auspicious deity protects him like her son. There is no doubt about it.

3. Meals should be served to couples there with heavenly eatables and excellent delicious food. There is no doubt that when eulogized she gets pleased.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYTWO

Greatness of Suparṇelā

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the

Bhairavī called Suparnelā, to the south of Durga-Kūṭa (Gaṇapati) at a distance of five hundred *Dhanus*.

2. Formerly, while the Nāgas (serpents) were watching, Nectar (*Amṛta*) was taken away by Suparṇa and was kept there (at a spot in Prabhāsa).

3. Seeing that *Amṛta* was protected by her by the side of Nāgas, she therefore became famous in the world as *Suparnelā*.

4. The earth is called Ilā'. That spot was established by Suparṇa. Hence that sin-destroying spot came to be known by the name 'Suparnelā'.

5. A man should worship her after taking a bath in Suparṇa Kuṇḍa. He should feed Brāhmaṇas. He does not die in miseries. The woman has all her children alive. She is (as if) decorated by her children.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYTHREE

Greatness of Bhalla Tīrtha

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the excellent Bhalla Tīrtha on the western side of Suparnelā where stands the four-armed Viṣṇu.

2-3. His own body was abandoned by the powerful Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa). There in the beautiful *Mitra-vana* extending to one-fourth of a Yojana, the death of Viṣṇu takes place in every Yuga in (all the) Kalpas and Manvantaras, O great goddess. He has no liking for any other (place).

4-5a. Learned people know it to be the first *Vaiṣṇava Kṣetra* (sacred place pertaining to Viṣṇu) in all the Kṣetras.

Three and half crores of prominent Tīrthas which exist in heaven, earth and the intermediate space, abide therein only.

5b-6a. There Gaṅgā herself in her personal form stays for the ablution of Viṣṇu and for the welfare of beings.

6b-7. Abandoning sacred places like Gaṅgā, Gayā, Naimiṣā

forest, Puṣkara lake and the city of Dvārāvatī, Hari stays (dies) at this very place. O goddess, I perform his obsequies in every Yuga.*

8-9a. In the month of Bhādrapada on the twelfth day, I personally go there. I perform those (obsequies) as per procedure with prominent Brāhmaṇas and offer *Dāna* as per procedure to the knowers of the Vedas.

9b-10a. At that very place, on the twelfth lunar day, one should take bath as per procedure, and by devoutly gratifying the Pitṛs one is absolved of all sins, O dear.

10b-11. By worshipping Viṣṇu there and keeping awake at night (in the service of god Viṣṇu) and making gifts like those of lamps etc. one becomes one who has performed every (prescribed) act worth doing.

12a-14. O my dear, now I relate what happened there formerly. After eliminating all Yādavas, powerful Vāsudeva whose body had become as impregnable as Vajra by the *Pāyasa* wherewith he was smeared by Durvāsas^{**} that all-prevading Janārdana went to the shore of the sea. He controlled all the sense-organs, concentrated his individual self on the higher self and became absorbed in Samādhi.

15. In the meanwhile there came an extremely dark-complexioned, sinful fisherman named Jara, son of a Dāsa, with an arrow in his hand.

16. Then from a distance that son of Niṣāda saw the foot (sole) of Viṣṇu. Thinking it to be a deer, he shot his arrow (at it).

17-19. Thereafter, when he approached him (Kṛṣṇa) he saw a huge-bodied person with four arms holding a conch, discus and mace. His complexion was like a blue cloud and eyes like lotuses.

Seeing him, he got terrified. Trembling (with fear) and with folded hands, he spoke: "I did not know, O Lord, that it was you, the divine-bodied one. O excellent Sura, (it was) out of ignorance that you were hit in the sole of your foot. It behoves you, O Lord, to pardon me and not to be angry with me."

* According to Mbh, *Mausala* 7. 31, Arjuna performed the cremation of Kṛṣṇa.

** See Mbh, *Anuśāsana* 159. 37-48.

Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) said:

20. By hitting me with an arrow, you have put an end to my curse. Therefore, through my grace, go to heaven, O highly resplendent one.

21. Those other excellent men who come here and view me will go to the great region where I permanently reside.

22. Inasmuch as I have been hit by you with a *Bhalla* (a kind of arrow), this place will become famous as ‘*Bhalla Tīrtha*’.

23. Formerly in *Svāyambhuva Manvantara* it was spoken of as *Harikṣetra*.

Īśvara said:

24. After saying this, *Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa)* disappeared*. The hunter too went to heaven. Those who perform ablution here endowed with deep devotion, will go to *Viṣṇuloka* out of love, through my grace.

25. Those who are intent in their devotion to *Pitṛs* and perform *Śrāddha* here, their *Pitṛs* so gratified, attain satisfaction.

26. Hence, putting in all efforts, one should go to that excellent *Kṣetra*. After taking bath in the *Bhallaka*, the Four-armed God should be visited.

27. People who, being extremely proud of the power of their devotion to me, do not pay obeisance to *Vāsudeva* so dear to me, should not be regarded as my devotees. They are sinners.

28. Worship of my *Liṅga* should not be performed by that man of evil intellect who even being my devotee, takes meals on the eleventh lunar day.

29. The lunar day which is dear to *Viṣṇu* is also dear to me. He who does not observe fast on that day is the greatest sinner.

30. Similarly one who, on the twelfth lunar day, devoutly worships me in the vicinity of *Bhalla Tīrtha*, whether one be a man or a woman, has no break (bereavement) at home in thousands of births.

* According to Mbh., *Mausala* 7. 21 *Kṛṣṇa* did not disappear but his body was cremated by Arjuna.

31. Thus has been narrated, O goddess, the greatness of Bhalla Tīrtha of Viṣṇu which is destructive of all sins.

32. There, in the vicinity of Viṣṇu, in the north-west, is an excellent *Kumbha* (this word should be *Kundā* as there is no pitcher but a pool of water there). It is famous as Bhalla Tīrtha as Hari was killed with a Bhalla type of arrow.

33. There cloths and cows should be given as per procedure to prominent Brāhmaṇas by persons desirous of securing the fruit of (proper performance of) the Yātrā.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYFOUR

Greatness of Kardamāla

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the excellent Tīrtha *Kardamāla* famous in all the three worlds as destroyer of all sins.

2-3. In that terrible expanse of one ocean everywhere, the mobiles and immobiles got destroyed. The Moon, the Sun and fire disappeared and all heavenly luminaries became extinct. God Janārdana saw that the Earth has submerged in Rasātala. He assumed the form of a (divine) Boar and lifted up the Earth with the tip of his tusk and with his head he placed the Earth in her original position.

4. After lifting her up, Lord Viṣṇu spoke these words:

5. “O goddess, by staying at this very place you were lifted up by me. Hence, my permanent residence shall be here forever.

6. Those who propitiate their Pitṛs in Kardamālāya, O lady of excellent face, their Pitṛs get satisfied for a period of a Kalpa. There is no doubt about it.

7. Performing Śrāddha with greens, roots and fruits here is as good as the Śrāddha performed in all the Tīrthas, O auspicious lady.

8. A man who after taking bath in this Tīrtha, views me and even insects, birds and men who die here, go to heaven with this merit like Brāhmaṇas (with their meritorious acts.)

9-10. Then they are born in (different) continents in excellent, affluent families. A man who takes his bath in the water that comes out of your body pierced by the tusk, will never be born in non-human species, O goddess!"

Īśvara said:

11. Listen, O goddess, to the factual account of the miracles that happened there formerly. A group of deer extremely harrassed by hunters entered the Kardamāla Tīrtha and was transformed into human beings.

12. The hunters witnessed this with their eyes blooming with wonder and became embarrassed. They asked those mortal beings, O excellent lady:

13-14. "Which way has the group of deer which arrived here escaped?" They replied: "We who had the form of deer have obtained human form. We did not know the efficacy of this Tīrtha for ourselves."

Then the hunters abandoned their bows and arrows, took bath therein and became absolved of all sins, O highly fortunate lady.

Pārvatī said:

15. O Lord, tell me in detail the extent, greatness, its creation, the boundaries of the Kṣetra Kardamāla and the procedures to be followed.

Īśvara said:

16. O goddess, listen to the esoteric importance of the creation of Kardamāla. It is mysterious, and in exclusive possession of Brāhmaṇa-sages. It should not be given to anybody by you.

17-18. Formerly it was a terrible (one) expanse of water (sea) only, where mobiles and immobiles were destroyed. Then the Moon, Sun and Wind disappeared and heavenly luminaries merged (became destroyed). God Brahmā saw that the whole world had become one expanse of water and the Earth sank down and reached the bottom of Pātāla.

(The Boar form of Viṣṇu is identified with sacrifice. The sacrifice in the form of a Boar extricated the Earth out of Pātāla.)

19. Then that Boar transformed his body as sacrifice and lifted up the entire Earth with the tip of his (protruding) tusk, O lady of excellent countenance.

(*Sacrifice-Boar Identification*)

20. He had the (four) Vedas as the feet; the sacrificial post was the (protruding) tusk; the *Kratu* was his teeth, the mouth was the ladle (for offering oblations); the fire was his tongue and the Darbha grass the hair (on its body); his head was Brahmā of great penance.

21. Day and night were the vigilant eyes (of the Boar); Vedāṅgas were ear-ornaments; clarified butter for oblations was his nose; *Sruva* (a kind of spoon in sacrifice) was his mouth; his voice was the loud chanting of Sāmaveda.

22. *Prāg-vamśa** was his body. The lustrous one was covered with *Mātrā-dikṣā*. Daksīṇā (sacrificial fee) was his heart. The great Yogī has the refulgence of a great sacrifice (extending over a long duration).

23. *Upākarma* (commencement of sacrifice by reading the Vedas) was the golden ornament and *Praavargya* (a ceremony introductory to a *Soma* sacrifice) was an ornament of jewels. His path of going consisted of various *Chandas* (Vedic metres) and his course (of going) was as spoken (laid down by Brahmā).

24. After becoming Yajña-Varāha (sacrifice in the form of a boar) he lifted the Earth. While he was extricating the Earth upwards a tip of his teeth fell out.

25. That tip of the tooth smeared with mud fell in the Prābhāsika Kṣetra. Hence, O Devī, it is remembered as Kardamāla.

26. *Danḍodbheda* is a great Kuṇḍa where the fangs are securely deposited. The water that is brought upwards by that fang is like ten million Gaṅgā rivers (for ablutions).

27. There the ancient Viṣṇu Kṣetra is of the extent of a *Gavyūti*. Those who have gone to another country but die in *Danḍodbheda* go to the region of Viṣṇu for a period of a thousand Kalpas.

28. O great goddess, he who sees the Boar (Viṣṇu) in Kardamāla attains the supreme region although he may be burdened with ten million *Himsās* (injury to living beings).

* *Prāg-vamśa*—The room in which the family of the sacrificer assemble
MW 704.ii

29a. O dear one, by his very sight, sins committed during ten births perish.

29b-30a. Whatever sins have been perpetrated during a thousand previous births get instantly perished as soon as the Boar (Viṣṇu) is viewed.

30b-31a. The merit that accrues by gifting thousands of crores of gold (coins) and by gifting away hundred of crores of cows, is obtained by viewing the Boar but once only.

31bc. No salvation can be obtained in this very terrible Kali Age anywhere except at this Kṣetra of Varāha.

32. O goddess, this brief statement (of the greatness of the Kṣetra) which destroys all sins is made for your sake.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYFIVE

Greatness of Gupteśvara

Īśvara said:

1. O great goddess, thereafter, one should go to Lord Gupteśvara to the west of the north-west (of Kardamāla) where Soma performed a great penance.

2. He became invisible. He stayed hanging his head down out of shame for the disease of leprosy (afflicting him). In the excellent holy place of Prabhāsa (he performed penance) for one thousand years of Devas.

3. Then Śiva, the Lord of all Devas, appeared to him. He became satisfied and healed pulmonary consumption of the Moon-god.

4. Then the Deer-marked One (the Moon-god) became completely free from the disease of pulmonary consumption. He installed a great Liṅga bowed to by Suras and Asuras.

5. He is remembered as Gupteśvara as he performed the penance in concealment. The god removes leprosy of all sorts when viewed and touched (by a devotee).

6. He who worships that Liṅga especially on Mondays, no leper is born in his family at any time.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYSIX

Greatness of Bahusuvarṇakeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to god Bahusuvarṇaka in the place called Bahusuvarṇaka to the east of Hirāṇī.
2. There a very difficult sacrifice was performed by Dharmaputra after installing a very resplendent Liṅga called Bahusuvarṇa.
3. It grants the benefits of all *Kratus*. It is known by the name Sarveśvara. There itself is situated a Liṅga filled (bathed) with the waters of Sarasvatī.
4. O beautiful lady, he who takes his bath and offers rice-balls there, redeems ten million members of his family and is praised in the region of Rudra.
5. Sadāśiva has declared that he who devoutly worships it (the Liṅga) with fragrant paste and flowers as per procedure, gets the benefit of (performance of) ten million worships.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYSEVEN

Greatness of Śrīgeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the excellent Śrīgeśvara in the vicinity of Śukra-Sthāna. It is destructive of all sins.
2. After taking bath there, a man should worship Śrīgeśa as per procedure. He becomes absolved of all sins as in the case of Rṣyaśrīṅga formerly.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED FIFTYEIGHT

Greatness of Koṭīśvara

Īśvara said:

1. In the north-eastern region (a place called) *Koṭinagara* is remembered to be on the southern side thereof. At a distance of a Yojana is situated a great Liṅga called Koṭīśvara which grants the benefit of ten million sacrifices.

2. He who, after taking his bath there, worships the Liṅga with due elaborate procedures becomes absolved of all sins and gets the benefit of one crore sacrifices.

CHAPTER THREES HUNDRED FIFTYNINE

Greatness of Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the Tīrtha called Nārāyaṇa. In the north-eastern region is a well well-known as Śāṇḍilya (Tīrtha).

2. After taking bath therein, one should worship as per procedure Śāṇḍilya on the Ṛṣipāñcamī day. Also a chaste woman who worships it (on that day) is definitely absolved of the sin resulting from the violation of restrictions pertaining to menstruation, whether touching it or not.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTY

Greatness of Śṛṅgāreśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to the place called Śṛṅgasaras.

2. A god called Śrīgārēśvara is installed there. There Hari along with a Gopi (a cowherd lass) performed Śrīgāra as per procedure.

3. He is thereby (known as) Śrīgārēśvara. He destroys floods of sins. He who worships with due procedure, Bhava (Śiva) who is situated at that place, shall never be affected by miseries and poverty in Saṁsāra.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTYONE

Greatness of Mārkandēśvara

Īśvara said:

1-2. Thereafter, O goddess, one should go to *Ghaṭikāsthāna* situated on the bank of Hiranya. There formerly a sage (Mṛkanda) became *Siddha* within one *Ghaṭi* (24 minutes) by his Yoga of concentration.

He installed the Liṅga. It is Mārkandēśvara by name. By viewing and worshipping it quells all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTYTWO

Koṭihrada-Maṇḍūkeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to Maṇḍūkeśvara. A Liṅga called Māṇḍukyāyana was installed there.

2. There is a pool called Koṭihrada, O goddess; there Śiva is Koṭiśvara. There the group of Mātṛs who grant desired objects is settled.

3. He who, after taking bath in Koṭi Tīrtha, elaborately worships the Liṅga and adores the Mātṛs there, becomes relieved of misery and affliction.

4. O Deveśī, to the east of it, at a distance of a *Yojana*, there is a well of translucent waters known as Trita. It destroys all sins. There is the residence of all Tīrthas therein.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTYTHREE

Greatness of Ekādaśa-Rudra-Liṅga

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to what is known as Valāya situated to the north of Gos̄pada at a distance of two Gavyūtis.
2. There are the *Sthāna-liṅgas* of eleven Rudras. They are named Ajaikapāda, Ahirbudhnya etc. Those should be worshipped as per procedure. Thereby one is absolved of all sins.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTYFOUR

Greatness of Gharghara-Hrada and Kandeśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the place called Tuṇḍapura situated on the banks of Hiranyā. There is the pool (*Hrada*) called *Gharghara*.
2. There is god Kandeśvara, where I tied up my matted hair.

He, who, taking his bath properly, worships that god becomes absolved of terrible sins and attains the auspicious order (protection) of Śiva.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTYFIVE

Greatness of Saṁvarteśvara

Īśvara said:

1. Then, O great goddess, one should go to Saṁvarteśvara to the west of Indreśvara and to the east of Arka-Bhāskara.
2. After taking bath in the waters of the well and viewing Mahādeva, a man gets the benefit of (performing) ten horse-sacrifices.

CHAPTER THREE HUNDRED SIXTYSIX

Greatness of Miscellaneous Sthāna-Liṅgas

Īśvara said:

1. Thereafter, O great goddess, one should go to the north of Hiranya to the celestial place granting *Siddhis* (miraculous powers) where *Siddhas* are great sages.

2. There are innumerable Liṅgas which are impossible to describe (or count). Out of them there are some more than hundred Liṅgas which are remembered as very excellent.

3. On the bank of Vajriṇī there are nineteen Liṅgas. On the bank of Nyānkumatī there are one thousand two hundred Liṅgas.

4. O beautiful lady, in the Svāyambhuva Manvantara there were mainly sixty excellent Liṅgas on the bank of Kapilā.

5. The number of Liṅgas on the bank of Sarasvatī cannot be told (counted). Thus the garland of Liṅgas of five faces has been adorned.

6. It is stated that river Sarasvatī is of five channels in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra. By her, the Kṣetra extending to twelve Yojanas is divided.

7. The water that comes up in the wells (big and small) there is the water of Sarasvatī. Blessed are those who drink it.

8. Wherever one takes bath devoutly (in that region) one gets the benefit of having ablutions in Sarasvatī. There is no doubt about it.

9. What is called *Sparśa-Liṅga* (a Liṅga to be touched by hand) is well-known as Someśa. The digit of the Liṅgas in the Prabhāsa Kṣetra pertains to Śaṅkara.

10. If at any place a Liṅga at the centre of the Kṣetra is worshipped knowing (or in the belief) that it is Someśa, Lord Someśa becomes worshipped.

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