

delighted everyone. Then Viṣṇu and other devas, the sages and the Siddhas celebrated the coronation of Śiva.

40. With various kinds of presents in their hands they approached him. With very great festivities they performed the rite of waving lights in adoration.

41. O sage, there was an auspicious shower of flowers. The delighted celestial damsels sang and danced in joy.

42. Everywhere loud shouts of "victory ; victory", "obeisance, obeisance" were raised. Every one's enthusiasm was great. Everyone's happiness was boundless.

43. Seated in His throne, Śiva then shone all the more. He was duly served by everyone, Lord Viṣṇu and others.

44. All the devas eulogised Śiva, the benefactor of the world, with words pleasing of nature and pregnant with meaning.

45. On hearing their hymns of praise Śiva was highly delighted and granted their wishes. He, the lord of all, lovingly fulfilled their cherished desires.

46-47. O sage, at the bidding of Śiva they returned to their abodes. They were highly delighted since their desires were fulfilled. Then lord Śiva asked me and Viṣṇu to sit down. Then He lovingly blessed us and said :—

*Śiva said* :—

48. "Dear Sons, O Viṣṇu, Brahmā, you are great favourites of mine, entrusted with the work of creation and sustenance of the three worlds. You are the best of the Devas.

49. Go back to your abodes without any fear. I shall always provide you with happiness. I shall particularly look after you both".

50. On hearing the words of Śiva, Viṣṇu and I duly bowed to him and though not delighted (in leaving him) returned to our abodes.

51. At the same time Śiva delightfully made the lord of treasures sit down and holding his hands with his own said the auspicious words.

52. Dear friend, I am charmed by your love. I have become your friend. Go to your place fearlessly. O sincere friend, I shall always assist you.