

CHAPTER NINE

(The Proclamation of Śiva as Maheśvara)

Nandikeśvara said :—

1. In the mean time Brahmā and Viṣṇu had been standing silently on either side of the lord with the palms joined in reverence.

2. Then they installed the lord with all the members of His family on a splendid seat and worshipped Him with all holy personal things.

3—6. The personal things constitute those natural things of long and short duration such as necklaces, anklets, bracelets coronets, ear-rings, sacrificial threads, upper cloth of lace border, garlands, silk cloth chokers, rings, flowers, betel leaves, camphor, sandal paste, Aguru unguents, incense, lamps, white umbrella, fans, banners, chowries and other divine offerings whose greatness cannot be expressed or even thought of. Both of them adored the lord with all these things worthy of the lord and inaccessible to Paśu (the animal *i.e.* the individual soul). All excellent things are worthy of the lord, O brahmin.*

7. In order to set up a precedence the delighted lord handed over all those articles to the attendants assembled according to the order of priority.

8-10. The bustle of those who came to receive them was too much. It was there that Brahmā and Viṣṇu adored Śaṅkara at first. When they stood there humbly, the gratified lord spoke smilingly heightening their devotion.

Īśvara said :—

Dear children, I am delighted at your worship on this holy day. Henceforth this day will be famous as “Śivarātrī” the holiest of holy days pleasing to me.

11. He who performs the worship of my phallic emblem and the embodied image on this day will be competent to perform the task of creation and the maintenance etc. of the universe.

12. The devotee shall observe fast on Śivarātrī, both during the day and the night. He shall perfectly restrain his

*The reading adopted here is हि तद् द्विज