

to the compassionate and the bestower of the good fruits of penance.

9. O great lord, fond of eulogy, I know not how to eulogise you. O lord of all, be pleased. Save me who have sought refuge in you."

*Sanatkumāra said:—*

10. On hearing this eulogy of Maya, O excellent brahmin, lord Śiva, was delighted and he spoke to Maya eagerly.

*Śiva said:—*

11. O Maya, I am delighted. O excellent Asura speak out the boon you wish to have. There is no doubt. I shall grant you what you desire.

*Sanatkumāra said:—*

12. On hearing the auspicious words of Śiva, Maya the foremost among the Asuras spoke after bowing to the lord with stooping shoulders and palms joined in reverence.

*Maya said:—*

13. "O great lord, lord of the Gods, if you are delighted and if I deserve the grant of a boon please grant me permanent devotion to you.

14. O supreme lord, grant me comradeship with your devotees for ever, compassion towards the distressed and indifference towards the wicked living beings.

15. O lord Śiva, let there be no demoniac instinct in me at any time. O lord, let me be fearless for ever engrossed in your auspicious worship."

*Sanatkumāra said:—*

16. On being thus requested, Śiva the great lord, who is favourably disposed to his devotees and was in a delightful mood replied to Maya.

*Lord Śiva said :—*

17. O excellent Asuras you are my devotees and are