

delighted lord Himācala said—"So be it" and worshipped them with respect.

24. After instructing him in the method to be followed with great devotion they approached Umā, the consort of Śiva.

25. They stationed themselves in a good place and remembered the mother of the universe, and bowing to her repeatedly eulogised her with devotion.

*The gods said:—*

26. O goddess Umā, mother of the universe, resident of Śivaloka, favourite of Śiva, O great goddess, O Durgā, we bow to you,

27. With great devotion we bow to the illustrious Energy, the holy, the tranquil, the holy nourishment and the one with the forms of Mahat and the Avyakta.

28. We worship you, Śiva the cause of welfare, the pure, the gross, the subtle, the great goal and the one delighted with the inner and good learning.

29. You are faith, fortitude and prosperity. You alone have control over everything; you are the splendour and energy of the sun illuminating your own universe.

30. We bow to her who promotes robustness in all the beings of the universe from Brahmā to a blade of grass in the whole Cosmos.

31. You are Gāyatrī, the mother of the Vedas, Sāvitrī, Sarasvatī, the sustenance of all the universe; you are the triad of the Vedas having Dharma for its form.

32. You are sleep in all living beings; you are hunger, satiety, thirst, splendour, brilliance and contentment. You are the delighter of every one for ever.

33. To those who perform meritorious actions you are the goddess of fortune. To the sinners you are the eldest sister, the deity of Ignominy; you are peace for the universe, and the mother sustaining lives.

34. You are the essential feature of five elements. You are Justice in those who uphold justice. You are endeavour personified.

35. Of the Ṛgveda you are the invocation; of the Yajurveda you are the blending knot of the mantras; of