

fruitful. You will become the venerable person of the most venerable in the universe. There is no doubt about it.

*Brahmā said :—*

3. O great sage, on hearing these words of the seven sages, the lord of the mountains bowed to them with joined palms and spoke thus.

*Himavat said :—*

4. O ye seven sages of great enlightenment, what you have just now said has been already cherished by me by the will of Śiva.

5. Now, a certain brahmin professing Vaiṣṇava cult came here and spoke very critically about Śiva.

6. Ever since, the mother Pārvatī has gone out of sense. Hence she does not wish her daughter's marriage with Śiva.

7. She has entered the chamber of anger. She is aggrieved and her clothes have become dirty. O brahmins, her obduracy is so great that she does not pay heed to any advice.

8. I too am, you can say, out of sense. I am telling you the truth. I do not wish to give my daughter to Śiva who is apparently a mendicant.

*Brahmā said:—*

9. O sage, after saying these words, the king of mountains deluded by Śiva's magic became silent and sat amidst the sages.

10. The seven celestial sages praised the magic of Śiva and sent Arundhati<sup>55</sup> to Menakā.

11. Then at the bidding of her husband Arundhati, the bestower of knowledge, went quickly to the place where Menā and Pārvatī were sitting.

12. After going in she saw Menā lying in her grief. The chaste lady spoke to her these carefully selected sweet and wholesome words :—

55. She is the wife of Vasiṣṭha, one of the seven sages. In Hindu Mythology she is regarded as the highest pattern of conjugal excellence and wifely devotion.