

11. Resolving to kill the Asura, the great lord, son of Śiva got down from the aerial chariot and stood on the ground.

12. Running on foot, seizing his lustrous spear blazing like a meteor, the powerful warrior Kumāra born of Śiva shone well.

13. On seeing the incomprehensible six-headed deity coming forward, fierce and unagitated, the Asura spoke to the gods derisively—"O this child indeed will slay the enemies !"

14. I will fight with him single-handed. I will kill the soldiers, the Gaṇas and the guardians of the quarters led by Viṣṇu.

15. Saying thus, the powerful Asura rushed at Kumāra to fight with him. Tāraka seized his wonderful spear and spoke to the gods.

*Tāraka said :—*

16. "How is it that you all kept Kumāra face to face with me? You gods are shameless especially Indra and Viṣṇu.

17. Formerly, both of them had acted in violation of the Vedic path. Listen. I shall describe the same.

18. Viṣṇu is deceptive, defective and indiscreet. It was by him that Bali<sup>147</sup> was formerly bound by taking recourse to deception with sinful intention.

19. The Asuras Madhu and Kaiṭabha<sup>148</sup> were beheaded by his roguishness. He forsook the Vedic path.

20. When the gods and Asuras sat for drinking the nectar it was he who violated the sanctity of the vows when he assumed the form of an enchantress.<sup>149</sup> Thus he slighted the Vedic path.

<sup>147</sup>. Bali, the son of Virocana, was an Asura-chief. He was deceived by Viṣṇu in the form of a dwarfish Brahmin. The latter asked Bali to grant him three steps of ground and Bali consenting, the dwarf stepped and covered heaven and earth in two strides. However he desisted from taking the third step and left the nether region for Bali's sake.

<sup>148</sup>. Madhu and Kaiṭabha were the two demons sprung from the ear of Viṣṇu while he was asleep at the end of a Kalpa. They were about to kill Brahmā but were treacherously killed by Viṣṇu and thrown into the sea.

<sup>149</sup>. In the guise of an enchantress, Viṣṇu deprived Asuras of their right of drinking nectar produced from churning the ocean.