

stitute the greatest of the means. Maheśvara is to be heard, glorified and meditated upon.

23. Thus Śruti<sup>34</sup> is our authority. Resorting solely to this great means, all of you attain the Achievable.

24. Regarding visible things people see with their eyes and begin their activity. Concerning the invisible everywhere, they know through the ears and activise themselves.

25. Hence Śravaṇa (listening) is the first rite. The intelligent scholar must listen to the oral explanation of the preceptor and then practise the other rites.—Kīrtana (glorifying) and Manana (deliberation).

26—27. When all the means upto Manana are well exercised, Śivayoga (unification with Śiva) results gradually through Sālokya etc. All the ailments of the body are nullified and supreme bliss is realised. Painful indeed is the process but later on everything becomes auspicious from beginning to end.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *(The Excellence of Listening and Deliberation)*

*The sages said :—*

1. O holy one, what is Śravaṇa ? what is Manana ? How is the Kīrtana performed ? Please expound these precisely.

*Brahmā said :—*

2. The mind is fond of reasoning deliberation. The ability of the mind to ponder and evaluate the corresponding efficacy of the worship, Japa, the attributes of Īśa, His form, His divine sports and multifarious names, is the result of the benignant glance of Īśvara. Hence this steady continuance in the act of deliberation is the most important of all the means.

3. By Kīrtana (glorification) is meant the clear ex-

34. The word Śruti in the Purāṇas does not mean 'sacred tradition' but simply 'tradition'.—Pargiter *AIHT*. Ch. II.