

25. O excellent sage, those clouds rumbling and roaring with hideous sounds dropping showers at the slightest wish of Śiva burst asunder in the sky.

26. When the sky was covered by those roaring clouds, Śiva and the Goddess Śivā were quite calm.

27. O sage, thereafter becoming fearless, I concluded the remaining rites of the marriage at the bidding of Śiva.

28. O excellent sage, a shower of flowers dropped by the devas with great pleasure fell on the heads of Śivā and Śiva and also on all their sides.

29-30. O Nārada, great festivities were conducted by the wives of the devas. Musical instruments were played, songs were sung, Vedic hymns were recited devoutly by groups of brahmins. The celestial damsels Rambhā and others danced zealously.

31. Then the delightful lord, the lord of sacrificial rites, following the conventions of the world, spoke to me as I was standing with palms joined in reverence.

*Śiva said :—*

32. O Brahmā, all the rites of marriage have been performed extremely well. I am pleased. You officiated as the priest. What shall I give you as the nuptial fee ?

33. O eldest of devas, you can demand it even if it be hard to get. Tell me quickly, O fortunate one. For there is nothing which cannot be granted by me.

*Brahmā said :*

34. O sage, on hearing these words of Śiva I humbly bowed to Him repeatedly with palms joined in reverence and said :—

35. “O lord of Devas, if you are pleased, if I deserve your blessings, O lord, please do as I request you with pleasure.

36. O lord Śiva, for the purification of men from sins you will please stay for ever in this altar in this self-same form.

37. O moon-crested God, I shall make my hermitage in its vicinity and perform penance to destroy my sin.

38-39. If anyone visits this holy site on the thirteenth