

22. After getting the blessings of Śiva and going out of the cosmic egg, Viṣṇu made Vaikuṇṭha<sup>207</sup> his permanent abode.

23. Desiring to create, I remembered Śiva and Viṣṇu. In the waters that had already been created I offered handfuls of water as libation.

24. Then the cosmic egg arose consisting of twenty-four Principles<sup>208</sup>. O brahmin, then a splendid, huge form Virāṭ appeared and the form of waters was not seen.

25. Confusion arose in my mind and I performed a severe penance for twelve years meditating on Viṣṇu.

26. At that time, Viṣṇu appeared before me and touching my body lovingly and joyously he told me.

*Viṣṇu said :—*

27. O Brahmā, thanks to the favour of Śiva, I am capable of giving you everything. There is nothing which cannot be given to you. I am delighted. Tell me the boon (you wish to have).

*Brahmā said :—*

28. O Viṣṇu, the fortunate one, I have been entrusted to you by Śiva. Hence it is but proper that I should request you. Please give me who request you what He has told you (to give me). Obeisance be to you.

29. This Virāṭ form of the cosmic egg consists of twenty-four principles. There is no sentience in it. It is insentient.

30. O Viṣṇu, you have now appeared before me; thanks to the blessings of Śiva. Confer sentience on this cosmic egg originating from Śiva's power.

31. When I said this, the great Viṣṇu adhering strictly to the directives of Śiva assumed infinite forms and entered the cosmic egg.

207. It is Viṣṇu's abode variously described as situated in the Northern ocean or on the eastern peak of mount Meru.

208. According to the Paurāṇic account of creation, the cosmic Egg constituted of twenty-four tattvas was entirely material. In the beginning it was a dead egg and it remained so until it was activated by the principle of Brahmā which having entered into it split the egg into two halves by the process of fission.