

Hindi / English / Gujarati

ब्रह्म पुराण

व्यास मुनि



महाचार्य

CONTENTS

CHAPTERS

1.	On the Origin of Devas and Asuras	1
2.	Origin and glory of Pṛthu	19
3.	Manvantaras	29
4.	Evolution of Vivasvat Āditya	33
5.	Review of the Solar Race	37
6.	Kings of the Solar Race	45
7.	Birth of Soma	53
8.	Kings of the Lunar Race	56
9.	Genealogy of Ancient Kṣatriyas	61
10.	The Narrative of Yayāti	65
11.	Dynasty of Yayāti	69
12.	Birth of Śrīkrṣṇa	84
13.	The Family of Vṛṣṇis	88
14.	How the Syamantaka jewel was brought back	93
15.	Akrūra obtains Syamantaka	97
16.	Seven Continents	100
17.	Jambūdvīpa	105
18.	Magnitude of Oceans and Continents	108
19.	Magnitude of Nether worlds	114
20.	Hells in nether regions	117
21.	Upper Regions	121
22.	Pole Star	124
23.	Holy Centres : Their Greatness	126
24.	A Dialogue between Brahmā and Sages	132
25.	Bhārata Subcontinent	135
26.	The Glory of Koṇāditya	140
27.	Efficacy of Devotion to Sun-god	145
28.	Glory of Sun-God	150
29.	Names of Sun-god	157
30.	Nativity of Sun-god	160
31.	One Hundred and Eight Names of Sun-God	170
32.	Penance of Umā	174
33.	Testing of Pārvatī	183
34.	Pārvatī weds Śiva	189
35.	Hymn in Praise of Śiva	201
36.	Umā and Śaṅkara leave Himālayas	205
37.	Destruction of Dakṣa's Sacrifice	209
38.	The Prayer by Dakṣa	217
39.	The holy Centre of Ekāmra	230
40.	The holy centre of Utkala	237

CONTENTS

PART II

CHAPTERS

41. The Narrative of Indradyumna; Description of Avanti	241
42. The Holy Centres Sighted	248
43. A Review of Past Incidents	254
44. Description of Holy Centres	261
45. Horse-sacrifice	264
46. Prayer for Welfare	272
47. Origin of Idols	280
48. Description of Puruṣottama	285
49. A visit to the Holy Banyan Tree by Mārkaṇḍeya	291
50. Mārkaṇḍeya views Annihilation	292
51. Mārkaṇḍeya wanders in the belly of the Lord	296
52. Prayer to the Lord	297
53. Mārkaṇḍeya's vision of the holy lord	301
54. Visit to Kṛṣṇa shrine	308
55. Greatness of Narasimha	314
56. Greatness of Śveta Mādhava	320
57. Mode of Procedure for a Holy Dip in the Ocean	328
58. Rules of worship and Mantras	334
59. Merit of a holy dip in the Ocean	339
60. Glory of five holy spots—Pancatirthī	341
61. Mahājyeṣṭhī Full-Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha	343

Contents

62.	Holy ablution in propitiation of Kṛṣṇa	345
63.	Glory of holy procession : Guṇḍikā yātrā	354
64.	The twelve holy pilgrimages and their benefits	356
65.	The world of Viṣṇu	362
66.	Glory of lord Puruṣottama	368
67.	Glory of Ananta Vāsudeva	371
68.	Glory of holy shrine of Puruṣottama	377
69.	Narrative of sage Kaṇḍu	380
70.	Doubts raised by sages	397
71.	Lord's incarnation in the family of Yadus	404
72.	Incarnations of Hari	407
73.	Nativity of Śrīkṛṣṇa	411
74.	Kaṁsa takes steps to ward off danger	415
75.	Pūtanā slain and Cart smashed	416
76.	Cowherd's colony shifted to Vṛndāvana	418
77.	Suppression of Kāliya	421
78.	Dhenuka and Pralamba are slain	425
79.	Worship of Govardhana mountain	429
80.	Coronation of Lord Kṛṣṇa	432
81.	Ariṣṭa is slain	437
82.	Keśin is slain	442
83.	Akrūra comes to the cowherd's colony	446
84.	Return of Akrūra	450
85.	Kaṁsa is slain	457
86.	The son of Sandipani restored	464
87.	The onslaught of Jarāsandha	467
88.	Mucukunda's Prayer	468
89.	Balarāma returns to the cowherd's colony	472
90.	Balarāma's sport with Ploughshare	474
91.	Return of Pradyumna	476
92.	Rukmin is slain	479
93.	Naraka is killed	482
94.	The prayer by Indra	485

Contents

95.	Lord Kṛṣṇa marries sixteen thousand and one hundred virgins	491
96.	Progeny of Śrī Kṛṣṇa	493
97.	Uṣā and Aniruddha—their marriage	495
98.	The burning of Kāśī	500
99.	Glory of Balarāma	503
100.	The monkey Dvivida is slain	506
101.	Śrī Kṛṣṇa returns to his abode	508
102.	Lord Kṛṣṇa ascends heaven	513
103.	Episode of Kṛṣṇa concluded	514
104.	Different manifestations of the lord	522
105.	Path to the world of Yama	535

CONTENTS

PART III

CHAPTERS

106. Tortures in Hell	547
107. The Goal of the Virtuous	559
108. The Cycle of Worldly Existence	566
109. Gift of food the best of all charitable acts	573
110. On the performance of Śrāddha and the associated legend	575
111. The details of the Śrāddha ritual	584
112. The details of Sapindikaraṇa Rite	588
113. Conduct of the Good	597
114. Assignment of duties to different castes and stages of life	612
115. Characteristics of mixed castes	617
116. Review of Virtue	622
117. „ „ „	627
118. Dialogue between Maheśvara and the sages	632
119. Goal of the devotees of Viṣṇu	637
120. The benefits of singing devotional songs of Viṣṇu while keeping awake at night	641
121. Manifestation of Māyā	654
122. Foretelling future	662
123. „ „ „	669
124. Description of Annihilation	677
125. The Natural Re-absorption	681

Contents

126.	The Ultimate Re-absorption	685
127.	Practice of Yoga	691
128.	Review of Sāṃkhya and Yoga	695
129.	„ „ „	701
130.	„ „ „	709
131.	Review of injunctions regarding Yogic practice	714
132.	Review of the principles of Sāṃkhya	719
133.	The perishable and the Imperishable	729
134.	A dialogue between Vasiṣṭha & Janaka	733
135.	„ „ „	737
136.	„ „ „	745
137.	„ „ „	749
138.	In praise of the Purāṇa	754

CONTENTS

GAUTAMI-MĀHĀTMYA [THE GLORIFICATION OF GAUTAMI]

CHAPTERS

1. Holy Centres	759
2. Śiva's Marriage	762
3. Gift of a Water Vessel to Brahmā	766
4. How Gaṅgā Entered the Matted Hair of Śiva	770
5. Vināyaka and Gautama	776
6. Descent of Gautamī	784
7. Glory of the Holy River	789
8. The Descent of Bhāgirathī	793
9. The Holy Centre Varāha	799
10. Kapotatīrtha	801
11. Kumāratīrtha	809
12. Krittikā Tīrtha	811
13. Daśāśvamedha Tīrtha	812
14. Paiśāca Tīrtha	815
15. Kṣudhā Tīrtha	816
16. Indra Tīrtha : Ahalyāsaṅgama Tīrtha	819
17. Janasthāna Tīrtha	825
18. Cakratīrtha	827
19. Aśvabhānu Tīrtha	832
20. Garuḍa Tīrtha	835
21. Govardhana Tīrtha	839
22. Pāpapraṇāśana Tīrtha	840
23. Viśvāmitra Tīrtha	844
24. Śveta and other Tīrthas	847
25. Śukratīrtha and Mṛtasañjivani Tīrtha	851

Contents

26. Seven Thousand Holy Centres	854
27. Paulastyā Tīrtha	856
28. Agnitīrtha	859
29. R̄namocana Tīrtha	861
30. Kadrū-Suparnā-Saṅgama Tīrtha	863
31. Sarasvatīsaṅgama	866
32. Review of the Greatness of Five Tīrthas	868
33. Śamī and other Holy Centres	869
34. Twentytwo Thousand Holy Centres	870
35. The Twentyfive Confluences of Various Rivers	878
36. Amṛtāsaṅgama and other Holy Centres	881
37. Description of Seventeen Holy Centres	885
38. Sixteen Thousand Holy Centres	893
39. Cakra Tīrtha	905
40. Cakreśvara and other Holy Centres	910
41. Nāgatīrtha a Holy Centre	932
42. Mātṛtīrtha	940
43. Brahmatīrtha and other Holy Centres	943
44. Avighnatīrtha	945
45. Śeṣatīrtha and other Holy Centres	947
46. Vaḍavā and other Holy Centres	949
47. Ātmatīrtha	952
48. Aśvatha and other Tīrthas	954
49. Somatīrtha	957
50. Dhānyatīrtha	959
51. Vidarbhaśaṅgama and other Holy Centres	961
52. Pūrṇatīrtha and other Holy Centres	963
53. Rāmatīrtha and other Holy Centres	973
54. Putratīrtha and other Holy Centres	991
55. Holy Centres Yamatīrtha etc.	1004
56. The Holy Centre Tapastīrtha and Others	1010
57. Holy Centre Ārṣiṣenatīrtha etc.	1014
58. Holy Centre Tapovanatīrtha etc.	1020
59. Holy Centres Indratīrtha etc.	1027
60. Āpastambatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1038
61. Holy Centres Yamatīrtha and Others	1042
62. Holy Centres Yakṣiṇīsaṅgama etc.	1047
63. Śuklatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1048
64. Cakratīrtha and other Holy Centres	1050

Contents

65.	Vāṇīsaṅgama and other Holy Centres	1051
66.	Viṣṇutīrtha and other Holy Centres	1054
67.	Lakṣmītīrtha and other Holy Centres	1057
68.	Bhānutīrtha and other Holy Centres	1061
69.	Khaḍgatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1065
70.	Anvindratiṛtha and other Holy Centres	1067
71.	Kapilasaṅgama and other Holy Centres	1071
72.	Devasthāna and other Holy Centres	1074
73.	Siddhatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1076
74.	Paruṣṇisaṅgama and other Holy Centres	1077
75.	Mārkaṇḍeyatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1080
76.	Yāyātatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1081
77.	Apsaroyugasāṅgama Tīrtha and other Holy Centres	1086
78.	Koṭitīrtha and other Holy Centres	1088
79.	Narasimhatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1090
80.	Paiśācatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1091
81.	Nimnabheda and other Holy Centres	1094
82.	Nandītaṭa and other Holy Centres	1096
83.	Bhāvatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1100
84.	Sahasrakuṇḍa and other Holy Centres	1101
85.	Kapilatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1104
86.	Śaṅkhahrada and other Holy Centres	1105
87.	Kiṣkindhā—A Holy Centre	1106
88.	Vyāsatīrtha—A Holy Centre	1109
89.	Vañjāraśāṅgama and other Holy Centres	1113
90.	The Holy Centre Devāgamatīrtha	1118
91.	The Description of Kuśatarpaṇa and other Holy Centres	1120
92.	The Holy Centre Manyu	1126
93.	Sārasvata and other Holy Centres	1129
94.	Ciñcikatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1134
95.	Bhadratīrtha	1138
96.	Pata <tr>trītīrtha</tr>	1142
97.	Vipratīrtha also known as Nārāyaṇatīrtha	1143
98.	Bhānutīrtha and other Holy Centres	1146
99.	The Holy Centre Bhilla	1150
100.	Cakṣustīrtha and other Holy Centres	1154
101.	Urvāśi and other Holy Centres	1162

Contents

102. Meeting of Godāvarī and the Sea in Seven Branches	1167
103. R̄ṣisatra and Bhīmeśvaratīrtha	1169
104. The Confluence of Gaṅgā with Sea	1172
105. The Benefits of Listening to the Purāṇa	1175
INDEX	1185

CHAPTER ONE

On the Origin of Devas and Asuras

1. After paying obeisance to Nārāyaṇa and also to Nara¹ the best among men and goddess Sarasvatī,² one should utter the Puranic lore.³

2. I make obeisance unto that eternal all-pervading, steadfast and pure entity named Puruṣottama from whom this entire illusory universe with all its extensive diversities is evolved, in whom it abides, in whom it gets ultimately dissolved⁴ in the succeeding Kalpas and by meditating on whom, the sages attain eternal liberation without the tint of worldliness.

3. I make obeisance to Hari the delightful, spotless, omnipotent, attributeless, beyond the states of the manifest and unmanifest, devoid of worldliness, attainable by meditation alone, omnipresent and the destroyer of the cycle of birth and the unageing bestower of liberation, whom the learned at the time of samādhi meditate upon, who is pure space-like, abode of eternal bliss and the gracious lord, devoid of all dirt and attributes. He is devoid of manifoldness. He is beyond the manifest and unmanifest. He is the overlord, comprehensible through meditation alone. He is the cause of annihilation of worldly existence and unageing.

1. *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*:—Later epics and kāvyas speak of Nara as Arjuna and Nārāyaṇa as Kṛṣṇa. According to Mbh. Śānti Parva (Ch. 384) Nara and Nārāyaṇa were the two incarnations of Mahāviṣṇu. According to another Tradition Nara and Nārāyaṇa were the two sages who did penance for thousands of years in the Badarikāśrama in the Himālayas. (P. Ency. p. 532).

2. *Sarasvatī*: The goddess of Speech and Learning (Brahma P. Ch. 43).

3. The verse is common to the Purāṇas. Originally it belonged to the Mahābhārata, since the term Jaya mentioned in the verse was applied to the Mahābhārata which originally consisted of eight thousand and eight hundred verses (P.E. under *Jaya*).

4. This is an old concept. But, later on, a single entity—Nārāyaṇa—was conceived as consisting of three forms: Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, representing the three qualities—Rajas, Sattva and Tamas respectively. The three are assigned separately the work of creation, existence and dissolution.

4-12. In the very holy, charming and extremely sacred Naimiṣā¹ forest, a great sacrifice lasting for twelve years was performed by the sages. The forest abounded in flowers of diverse kinds and trees such as Sāla, Karṇikāra, Panasa, Dhava, Khadira, Āmra, Jambū, Kapittha, Nyagrodha, Devadāru, Aśvattha, Pāri-jāta, Candana, Arjuna, Campaka and others. Many kinds of birds and beasts lived there. It abounded in Aguru, Pāṭala, Bakula, Sapta-Parna, Punnāga, Nāgakesara, Sāla, Tamāla, Nārikela and Arjuna. It was beautified by many trees, Campaka and others embellished by variety of water-reservoirs such as pools and holy lakes. It abounded in people of various castes—Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, people of all stages of life, students, householders, forest-dwellers and ascetics. It was richly endowed with birds of various sorts, cows and cattle wealth and storage of barley wheat, chick peas, pulses, beans, sesamum and sugarcane and other plants. It was adorned by stocks of paddy and other fresh vegetables. There in that forest the bright, sacred fire was kindled and the sages performed a sacrifice extending for twelve years. Thus the sages and other brahmins congregated there.

13-14. The brahmin guests were suitably welcomed and honoured by the hosts along with the duly seated priests. In the meanwhile there arrived Romaharṣaṇa,² the intelligent Sūta. On seeing him the excellent sages were extremely delighted and they honoured him in a fitting manner.

15. He too made obeisance to them and occupied a respectable seat. The brahmins conversed with Sūta for some time.

16. At the end of preliminary conversation, the sponsors of

1. *Naimiṣā or Naimiṣa*, mod. Nimsar: It is situated on the left bank of Gomati in the Sitapur district, U. P. The place is so called because the rim of the revolving wheel of Virtue was shattered here and virtue had to make a permanent abode in this region (*Vyās* 2.7). Or the place is so called because here an army of Asuras was destroyed by Sage Gauramukha in a twinkling of eye (*Varāha P.*). According to Matsya, it was situated at the confluence of Gomati and Gaṅgā. The place was sacred in Kṛta age, as Puṣkara in Tretā, Kurukṣetra in Dvāpara and Gaṅgā in Kali. Kāṭhaka Samhitā (10.6), Kauśitaki Brāhmaṇa (26.5), Chāndogya Upaniṣad (1.2.13) refer to it. The Rāmāyaṇa (7.91) states that Rāma performed Aśvamedha here.

2. *Romaharṣaṇa or Lemaharṣaṇa*: a famous disciple of Vyāsa to whom Vyāsa gave the collection of Purāṇas. Romaharṣaṇa had six disciples: Sumati, Agnivarcas, Mitrāyus, Śāṁśapāyana, Akṛtavraṇa and Sāvarṇi.

the sacrifice accompanied by the priests and other honoured guests who had congregated there wanted to clear their doubts by means of questions put to him.

The Sages said:

17. O excellent one, you are well-versed in Purāṇas, Āgamas and other holy texts together with traditional tales. You are aware of the origin and exploits of Devas and Daityas.

18. There is nothing unknown to you in the Vedas, Scriptures, Bhārata,¹ Purāṇa² and treatises on salvation. O highly intelligent one, you are omniscient.

19-21. Sūta, we desire to know how this entire visible world consisting of the mobile and immobile beings originated at the outset, along with Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yaksas, Rākṣasas and Serpents. Where did it get merged ? Where will it get dissolved ?

Lomaharṣaya said:

22-30. Obeisance to Viṣṇu, the universal Soul who is immutable, mysterious, of unchanging form and all-conquering. Obeisance to Hiranyagarbha³, Hari and Śaṅkara Vāsudeva the protector who is the agent of creation, sustenance and destruction. Obeisance to Viṣṇu who has unitary and manifold forms. Obeisance to the deity who is gross as well as subtle. Obeisance to

The Vāyu P. (I.1.3) gives the derivation of his name as follows:

लोमानि हर्षयाऽन्वके श्रोतुणां यत्सुभाषितैः ।

कर्मणा प्रथितस्तेन लोकेऽस्मल्लोमहर्षणः ॥

1. *Bhārata*: The original name of the Mahābhārata was Jaya composed by Vyāsa. It consisted of eight thousand and eight hundred verses. Vaiśampāyana added fifteen thousand two hundred stanzas and the book was named Bhārata. When Sūta recited this book to the hermits in the Naimiṣa forest, the book had one lakh of stanzas. Hence, it was called Mahābhārata.

2. *Purāṇa*: Originally the word was used collectively for the sacred treatises which described Creation, Re-creation, Genealogies of Kings, Ages of Manus, History of rulers and distinguished persons. Later on, with the addition of more matter, it became an Encyclopaedia of General knowledge related to different subjects, divided and subdivided into Purāṇas and Upa-Purāṇas. For details see *Epics and Purāṇas of India*: Pusalkar and Majumdar.

3. *Hiranyagarbha*: Brahmā was born from the golden-egg formed out of the seed deposited in the waters—Manu 1.9. The word is often used in the Veda.

Viṣṇu who becomes manifest and unmanifest and who is the cause of liberation. Obcisance to Viṣṇu the Supreme Soul who is at the root of creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe and who is identical with the universe. I bow unto Acyuta, Puruṣottama who is the support of this great as well as small world (the macrocosm and microcosm). He is factually devoid of impurity. He has the form of perfect knowledge. He is stationed in the form of this Visual world in our illusory vision. I bow to Viṣṇu who consumes the universe, who is the lord of creation and sustenance, who is omniscient, lord of the universe, the birthless and deathless, immutable, and the primordial, subtle overlord of the universe. I bow to Brahmā and others. I bow to my lord preceptor, the son of Parāśara¹ and the knower of the essence of the import of all Śāstras and the Purāṇas. He is the master of the Vedas and Vedāngas.² After bowing down to my lord preceptor I shall recount the Purāṇa which is on a par with the Vedas.

31. I shall mention in the same manner as was mentioned by the lotus-born lord Brahmā³ formerly on being asked by Dakṣa and other excellent sages.

32. Listen to the wonderful story that I narrate to you now and which is pregnant with meaning. It provides with auxiliary to those mentioned in the Vedas. I shall tell you the story that liberates people from sins.

33. He who listens to this story frequently, he who perpetually retains this in memory shall perpetuate his family and be honoured in the heavenly region.

1. *Parāśara*, father of Vyāsa from Satyavati, the fisherman's daughter with whom he had an intercourse without marriage. This girl, later on, married Śantanu, king of Hastināpur.

2. *Vedāngas*: Certain classes of works regarded as auxiliary to the Vedas and designed to aid in the correct pronunciation and interpretation of the text and the right employment of mantras in ceremonials. The Vedāngas are six (1) *Śikṣā*—the science of proper articulation and pronunciation, (2) *Chandas*—the science of prosody, (3) *Vyākaranā*—grammar, (4) *Nirukta*—etymological explanation of difficult Vedic Words, (5) *Jyotiṣa*—astronomy and (6) *Kalpa*—ritual or ceremonial.

3. *Lotus-born Brahmā*: According to Puranic tradition, there grew up a lotus in the navel of Viṣṇu and in that lotus Brahmā took his form. Seated in the lotus, Brahmā performed penance. Thereafter he began the work of creation. He is called Padmāsana, Padmabhū etc. therefore.

34. Pradhāna is the eternal unmanifest cause which is of the nature of sat (existent) and asat (non-existent). Puruṣa, the lord, evolved the universe out of it.

35. O excellent sages, know that he is Brahmā of unmeasured resplendence. He is the creator of all living beings. He is Nārāyaṇa the greatest Being.

36. Cosmic Ego (Ahamkāra) was born of Mahat (great principle) : from Mahat, Bhūtas (Elements) were born. Varieties of living beings were born of the Elements. Thus is the eternal creation.

37. It is being glorified with details of all aspects in accordance with my intelligence and in the manner I have heard. Now listen to it. It shall enhance the reputation of all of you.

38-40. The glory of persons who had performed meritorious deeds and whose renown is permanent is proclaimed herein.

The Self-born lord who was desirous of creating varieties of subjects from the unmanifest Pradhāna created waters¹ alone at the outset. He instilled vigour in them. The waters are called Nāras (born of Nara—man); waters are the progeny of Nara.² At the outset, they were his place of resort. Hence he is remembered as Nārāyaṇa. A gold-wombed Egg took shape and floated on the waters.

41-42. Brahmā himself was born there. We have heard that he is self-born. The gold-coloured lord stayed there for a year and then split the Egg into two—heaven and Earth. In the middle of these two halves the Lord created firmament.

43-45. He held the Earth floating on the waters. He created ten quarters, as well as mind, speech, love, anger and pleasure.

Desirous of evolving creation befitting these, he created Prajā-

1. *Manu. 1.8 apa eva sasarjādau, tāsu vīryam avāksipat.* “Waters are the first creation of the Self-existent. He laid seed in them.”. The account of creation (sarga) as described here is formed in *Manusmṛti Ch.I.*

2. Cp. *Manu 1.10.*

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः ।
ता यदस्यायनं पूर्वं तेन नारायणः स्मृतः ॥

For the third Pāda, this Purāṇa reads:

अयज्ञे तस्य ताः पूर्व

patis¹ (Lords of subjects) viz. Marīci, Atri, Āṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha. Thus the lord of great resplendence created seven mental sons.² In the Purāṇas these are known as the seven Brahmās.

46. Subsequent to the seven sons of Brahmā who were identical with Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā created Rudra out of his fury.

47. He created the divine lord Sanatkumāra who was the eldest of all his previous sons. O brahmins, the subjects and Rudras were born of these seven.

48-50. Skanda and Sanatkumāra stayed there condensing their brilliance. Seven great families of divine nature comprising the groups of Devas were born of seven Brahmās. They had progeny and they performed holy rites. The families were adorned by great sages. Brahmā created lightning, thunder, clouds, saffron-coloured rainbows, birds and Parjanya (lord of clouds) at the outset. He composed Ṛks, Yajus and Sāman for conducting sacrifices.

51. We have heard that he created Sādhyas and other Devas. Living beings high and low were born of his limbs.

52-53. Even when Prajāpati had created such an extensive horde of progeny, the created subjects did not multiply. Then he split his body into two halves. One half became a man and the other half a woman. The man begot of the woman different kinds of subjects.

54. With his grandeur he pervaded heaven and Earth and stored by Viṣṇu created Virāṭ (an immense being) and Virāṭ created Puruṣa.

55. Know that Manu was that Puruṣa. The Manvantara the ruling period of Manu is the second one of Manu, the mental son of Brahmā.

1. *Prajāpati-s*: lords of subjects. The word is as old as the Veda. Formerly, there were ten Prajāpatis. But as the number of subjects increased, eleven more were added to this number. Thus there were twentyone Prajāpatis whose functions were to facilitate creation. They were Brahmā, Rudra, Manu, Dakṣa, Bhṛgu, Dharma, Tapa, Yama, Marīci, Āṅgiras, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Parameṣṭhi, Sūrya, Candra, Kardama, Krodha, and Vikṛita

2. *Seven Brahmās*—seven mental sons of Brahmā. Each Manvantara has different saptarśis. The Saptarśis of the present Vaivasvata Manvantara, consist of Marīci, Āṅgiras, Atri, Pulastya, Vasiṣṭha, Pulaha and Kratu.

56. That Vairāja (Son of Virāt) Puruṣa, lord of creation of the subjects, was the lord who created. The subjects created during Nārāyaṇa's creation as well as Manu's were not born of the womb.

57. On hearing this account of creation at the outset, a man becomes longlived, well-renowned and blessed with progeny. He will obtain his desired goal.

58. Āpava—that Puruṣa and Prajāpatī—was desirous of creating subjects. He obtained Śatarūpā,¹ an Ayonija lady as his wife.

59. With his grandeur, Āpava pervaded heaven and stood by. Then, O excellent sages, Śatarūpā was delivered of her progeny righteously.

60. She performed a severe penance for ten thousand years and obtained as her husband that Puruṣa of bright penance.

61. O brahmins, that Puruṣa is called Svāyambhuva Manu (Manu born of the selfborn lord). His Manvantara consisted of seventyone cycles of Yugas.

62-64. Śatarūpā bore to Vairāja Puruṣa the heroic sons Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. After the heroic sons (a daughter) Kāmyā was born. O excellent sages, Kāmyā (was the wife) of Kardama Prajāpati. The sons of Kāmyā were four viz. Samrāt, Kuksi, Virāt and Prabhu. Prajāpati Atri adopted Uttānapāda as his son. Sūnṛtā bore four sons to Uttānapāda.

65. The charming daughter of Dharma is known as Sūnṛtā. She was born as a result of horse sacrifice. She was the illustrious mother of Dhruva.

66. Prajāpati Uttānapāda begot four sons of Sūnṛtā viz. Dhruva, Kirtimān, Āyuṣmān and Vasu.

67. O brahmins, the highly blessed Dhruva, seeking very great fame, performed penance for three thousand divine years.

68. Prajāpati Brahmā being delighted gave him a stable abode, on par with his own in front of seven sages.

69. On observing his prestige and greatness flourishing, formerly Uśanas the preceptor of Devas and Asuras sang this Verse:

1. Śatarūpā—wife of Svāyambhuva Manu herein called Āpava. He took his sister Śatarūpā as his wife. The couple had two sons: Priyavrata and Uttānapāda and two daughters: Prasūti and Ākūti. Prasūti was married to Dakṣa Prajāpati and Ākūti to Ruci Prajāpati.

70. Wonderful is the power of his penance. Wonderful is his learning. Wonderful indeed is Dhruva¹ whom the seven sages have kept ahead of themselves.

71. Śambhu bore to Dhruva (two sons) viz. Śliṣṭi and Bhavya. Succhāyā bore five noble sons to Śliṣṭi.

72. They were Ripu, Purañjaya, Putra, Vṛkala and Vṛkatejas. Br̥hatī bore to Ripu the son Cāksuṣa who had an all round splendour.

73. He begot Cāksusa Manu of Puskariṇī, Vairiṇī the daughter of Aranya the Prajāpati of great soul.

74. O leading sages, ten sons of great prowess were born to Manu and Naḍvalā the daughter of Prajāpati Vairāja.

75-76. The first nine were Kutsa, Puru, Śatadyumna, Tapasvin, Satyavāk, Kavi, Agniṣṭubh, Atirātra and Sudyumna. The tenth was Abhimanyu. These sons of great prowess were born of Naḍvalā. Āgneyī bore six sons of great lustre to Puru.

77. They were Aṅga, Sumanas, Khyāti, Kratu, Aṅgiras and Gaya. Sunīthā bore to Aṅga a single son Vena.

78. There was a great uproar due to the misdemeanour of Vena. For procreating progeny the sages churned his right hand.

79-81. A mighty king was born when his hand was churned. On seeing him the sages declared: "This king will make his subjects delighted. His resplendence is great. He will earn great renown." He was born equipped with a bow and a coat of mail. He was as lustrous as the burning fire: Pr̥thu, the son of Vena protected this Earth. He was the oldest of Kṣatriyas. He was the first and foremost of those whose coronations were performed with a Rājasūya² sacrifice. He was the overlord of the Earth.

82-85. The intelligent Sūta and Magadha were born of being desirous of securing the means of subsistence for his subjects, the king (Pr̥thu) milked this Earth in the form of a cow. O excellent sages. The king milked the cow alongwith Devas, sages, Pitṛs, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, serpents, Puṇyajanas, creepers etc. On being milked by them the Earth gave

1. *Dhruva*—Svāyambhuva Manu, son of Brahmā, had two sons: Priyavrata and Uttānapāda. Uttānapāda had two wives: Suruci and Suniti. Suruci gave birth to Uttama and Suniti to Dhruva.

2. *Rājasūya sacrifice*—performed at the coronation of a king. MBh. II describes the Rājasūya sacrifice of king Yudhiṣṭhira in detail.

them as much milk as could fill up their vessels. They sustained their lives thereby. At the end of sacrifice, two righteous sons were born to Pṛthu viz Antardhi and Pātin.

86-87. Śikhaṇḍinī bore Havirdhāna to Antardhāna (i.e. Antardhi). Dhiṣṇā, the daughter of Agni, bore six sons to Havirdhāna viz Prācīnabarhiś, Śukra, Gaya, Kṛṣṇa, Vraja and Ajina. Lord Prācīnabarhiś was a great Prajāpati.

88-91. After Havirdhāna, excellent sages, it was lord Prācīnabarhiś by whom the subjects moving about on the Earth were brought up and made to flourish. After concluding the rigorous penance on the shore (of the ocean), the king married Savarnā the daughter of the ocean. Savarnā, the daughter of the ocean, bore ten sons to Prācīnabarhiś. They were called Pracetas. They were well-versed in archery. Performing holy rites jointly they practiced a great penance for ten thousand years lying submerged under the waters of the ocean.

92-95. While the Pracetas were performing penance, the Earth was left unguarded. Hence the trees overgrew the Earth and enveloped it. Thereby, the destruction of subjects set in. The trees grew so dense that the wind was unable to blow. For ten thousand years the subjects were unable even to stir. All the Pracetas who were performing penance heard about it. They became furious and generated wind and fire through their mouths. The wind uprooted the trees and desiccated them. The terrible fire burned them. Thus the trees were destroyed.

96. On knowing that the trees were being destroyed and that only a few of them remained, Soma approached the Prajāpatis and said:

97. O kings, O son of Prācīnabarhiś, restrain your wrath. The Earth has been denuded of trees. May your fury and fire be subdued.

98-99. This girl of excellent complexion is the jewel of the forest. She had been held by me in my womb as I was aware of the future. This daughter of the forest is Māriṣā by name. O highly blessed ones, may she be your wife. May she raise the lunar race. For this purpose alone she has been created.

100. With half the splendour pertaining to you and with half of my splendour, the learned Prajāpati named Dakṣa will be born of her."

101. He is on par with Agni. He will make this Earth and the subjects flourish once again. He will develop this Earth, practically burned out by the fiery splendour pertaining to you.

102. Then, at the instance of Soma, the ascetics restrained their fury towards the trees and accepted Māriṣā as their lawfully wedded wife.

103. O brahmins, with a part of Soma, Dakṣa Prajāpati of great splendour was born of Māriṣā and the ten Pracetas.

104. After mentally creating the immobile and mobile beings, the bipeds and the quadrupeds, Dakṣa created women.

105. Lord Dakṣa gave ten of his daughters to Dharma, thirteen to Kaśyapa, the remaining (twentyseven) named after twentyseven constellations to king Soma.

106. Devas, birds, cows, serpents, Daityas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Apsaras and other classes of people were born of them.

107. O leading brahmins, it was only after this that the procreation by means of sexual intercourse began. The subjects before are said to be born of mental conception, sight or touch.

The Sages said:

108. The origin of Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, serpents, Rākṣasas, as well as that of Dakṣa the great soul has been heard by us.

109-110. Indeed, Dakṣa of auspicious rites was born of the right thumb of Brahmā. His wife was born of the left thumb. How could Dakṣa of great penance be born of Pracetas ? O Sūta, please clarify our doubt. How did the grandson of Soma attain the status of his father-in-law ?

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

111. O brahmins, origin and annihilation do occur continuously among living beings. Sages and other learned people are not deluded in this respect.

112. Dakṣas and other beings are born in every Yuga. They are annihilated afterwards. A learned man does not become deluded thereby.

113. O excellent brahmins, formerly there was neither seniority nor juniorship (conditioned by time). Penance alone was the important factor. Power was the cause (of this consideration)

114. He who understands this side-creation of Dakṣa comprising the mobile and immobile beings, shall be blessed with progeny. He will live the full span of life. He is honoured in the heavenly world.

The Sages said:

115. O Lomaharṣaṇa recount in details the origin of Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Rākṣasas and serpents.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

116. Formerly, Prajāpati Dakṣa was directed by the self-born lord (who said) "create subjects." O brahmins now listen how he created them.

117. The Prajāpati created living beings mentally. He created sages, Gandharvas, Asuras, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas.

118-119. O brahmins, when his mental progeny did not multiply, the virtuous Prajāpati began to ponder over ways and means of increasing subjects. He became desirous of creating variety subjects by the process of sexual intercourse. He took Asikni the daughter of Prajāpati Vīraṇa as his wife. She was endowed with the power of penance. She, the great was capable of sustaining the worlds.

120-127. Prajāpati Dakṣa the great begot five thousand sons of Asikni the daughter of Vīraṇa. On seeing those highly blessed sons desirous of increasing the subjects, the celestial sage Nārada of sweet tongue spoke to them certain words which brought their destruction and invited a curse for himself (?). Formerly Sage Kaśyapa was afraid of Dakṣa's curse, hence he procreated the more excellent son (Nārada) in the daughter of Dakṣa. This Nārada was the son of Brahmā formerly. Like his father Brahmā, Dakṣa again created Nārada in his wife Asikni the daughter of Vīraṇa. Dakṣa's sons Haryāśvas were completely destroyed by Brahmā. Dakṣa of unmeasured exploits attempted to destroy Brahmā. Keeping the Brahmanical sages ahead he was requested by the latter not to be angry. Dakṣa then made a compromise with Brahmā. "May Nārada be born of my daughter as your son." Then Dakṣa gave his beloved daughter to Brahmā. Fearful of being cursed again (?) Sage Nārada was born of her.

The Sages said:

128. O lord, how were the sons of Prajāpati destroyed by Nārada the great sage? We wish to hear all about it factually.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

129. Haryaśvas, the extremely powerful sons of Dakṣa arrived (at a spot near the sea) desirous of making the subjects multiply: Nārada spoke to them.

130-131. "Alas, all of you are very puerile. You do not know the magnitude and extent of this Earth. Still, O sons of Pracetās you are desirous of creating subjects. But how will you create the subjects within it, above it and below it? On hearing his words they wondered in all directions.

132-134. They have not returned so far like rivers merging into the sea. When Haryaśvas vanished, lord Dakṣa, son of Pracetās procreated a thousand sons in the daughter of Vīraṇa. They were known as Śabalāśvas. They were also desirous of multiplying the subjects, Nārada spoke to them as he had spoken to Haryaśvas. They told one another.

135. The great sage said pertinently: let us trace out our brothers. When we have found them out and ascertained the extent of the Earth, we shall easily create the subjects."

136. They too went in all directions along the same path. Till today they have not returned like rivers flowing into oceans.

137. Ever since then, O brahmins, a brother who goes in search of a lost brother perishes himself. Thus a wise brother should not go in search of his lost brother.

138. On realising that they too had perished Prajāpati Dakṣa procreated sixty daughters in the daughters of Vīraṇa. This we have heard.

139. O brahmins Kaśyapa, lord Soma, Dharmā and other sages took them as their wives.

140-141. He gave ten daughters to Dharmā, thirteen to Kaśyapa, twentyseven to Soma, four to Ariṣṭanemi, two to Bahuputra, two to Angriras and two to Kṛṣṇāśva. Now listen to their names.

142-146. The ten wives of Dharmā were Arundhatī, Vasu, Yami, Lambā, Bālā, Marutvatī, Saṅkalpā, Muhūrtā, Sādhyā and Viśvā. O brahmins, understand the children born of these.

Viśvedevas were born of Viśvā. Sādhyā gave birth to Sādhyas; Marutvats were born of Marutvatī. Vasus were the sons of Vasu, Bhānus were the sons of Bhānu, Muhūrtas were born of Muhūrtā, Ghoṣa was the son of Lambā. Nāgavīthī was the daughter of Yamī; objects of the Earth were born of Arundhatī. Saṅkalpa, the soul of the universe was born of Saṅkalpā; Vṛṣala was born of Nāgavīthī the daughter of Yamī.

147. Dakṣa, the son of Pracetas, gave his daughter in marriage to Soma: All those are named after constellations. They are glorified in the Astral Science.

148. Those others who are known as Devas going ahead of luminaries are the eight Vasus. I shall mention them in detail.

149. Āpa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhava, (or Dhruva), Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa are the names of Vasus.

150. Āpa's sons were Vaitaṇḍya, Śrama, Srānta and Muni. Dhruva's son was Kāla who reckons time in the world.

151. Soma's son was Varcas whereby people become resurgent. Dravīṇa and Hutahavyavāha were the sons of Dhava. Manoharā's sons were Śiśira, Prāṇa and Ramaṇa.

152. Śivā was the wife of Anila. Her son was Manojava. Anila had two sons: Manojava and Avijñātagati.

153. Agni's son Kumāra was enveloped by splendour in the cluster of Śara reeds. His sons were Śākha, Viśākha and Naigameya.

154. He was the adopted son of Kṛttikās.¹ Hence he was called Kārttikeya. They say that the sage Devala was the son of Pratyūṣa.

155-156. Devala had two sons endowed with knowledge and forbearance. Brhaspati's sister Yogasiddhā was excellent lady who expounding the Brahman wandered over the entire world. She was detached at first, but later on she became the wife of Prabhāsa the eighth among the Vasus.

157. The highly blessed Prajāpati Viśvakarman was born

1. When Subrahmaṇya was born, Devas deputed six mothers to breast-feed him and they were called Kṛttikās. Certain Purāṇas hold that Subrahmaṇya had six faces and he was fed on six breasts at the same time. Six mothers were deputed to feed him, as he was born with six faces. Again according to certain Purāṇas it was Pārvatī who deputed the Kṛttikās. The child came to be known as Kārttikeya as it was fed by Kṛttikās.

of her. He was a carpenter of Devas and the architect of thousands of arts and crafts.

158. He was the maker of all ornaments and the most excellent among the artisans. It was he who made the aerial chariots for Devas.

159. Human beings too subsist on the works of art of that great architect.

Surabhi bore eleven Rudras to Kaśyapa.

160-162. That chaste lady sanctified by her penance (gave them birth) by the grace of Mahādeva.

They were Ajaikapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Tvaṣṭṛ, Rudra the powerful, Hara Bahurūpa, Tryambaka, Aparājita, Vṛṣākapi, Śambhu, Kapardī Raivata, Mṛgavyādha, Sarva and Kapālin O excellent brahmins, these are the eleven (?) well-known Rudras¹ lords of the universe.

163. A century of these Rudras of unmeasured strength has been mentioned in the Purāṇas. O leading sages, the entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings is pervaded by them.

164-165. O leading brahmins, now listen to the names of the wives of Prajāpati Kaśyapa. They are Aditi, Diti, Danu, Ariṣṭā, Surasā, Khasā, Surabhi, Vinatā, Tamrā, Krodhavaśā, Irā, Kadru and Muni. O brahmins, know the children born of them.

166-169. In the previous Manvantara there were twelve magnificent and excellent Devas named Tuśitas. When the Vai-vasvata Manvantara was imminent they told one another thus—“During the Manvantara of Cākṣuṣa Manu of great fame, O Devas, all of you shall gather together for the welfare of the world. Come quickly ye all and enter the womb of Aditi. We shall be born then. It will be to our welfare and advantage” After saying thus they of prolific resplendence were born of Aditi and Kaśyapa in the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara.

170-171. Viṣṇu and Śakra were born again then. The following are the twelve Ādityas: Aryaman, Dhātṛ, Tvaṣṭṛ,

1. *Rudras* : According to this Purāṇa, eleven Rudras were born to Kaśyapa from Surabhi. Other Purāṇas give different origins and names of Rudras. The names of Rudras given there are the synonyms of lord Śiva.

Pūṣan, Vivasvan, Savitṛ, Mitra, Varuṇa, Arīṣa and Bhaga of great splendour alongwith Viṣṇu and Śakra.

172. In the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara they were known as Tuṣitas. In the Vaivasvata Manvantara they are called Āditya.

173. Brilliant children of unmeasured splendour were born of those ladies of holy rites who had been mentioned as the twenty-seven wives of Soma.

174-175. The wives of Ariṣṭanemi had sixteen children. The four Vidyuts were the sons of Bahuputra the wise sage. In the previous Cākṣuṣa Manvantara Ṛks were honoured by the brahmin sages. Devapraharaṇas are known as the children of Kṛṣṇa, the celestial sage.

176. These are born again at the end of a thousand cycles of four Yugas, these are the groups of Devas. Thirty-three of them are born of Kāma.

177-178. O brahmins, annihilation and origin are said to befall them too. Just as the sun rises and sets in the firmament so also the groups of Devas in every Yuga.

We have heard that two sons were born to Diti.

179-180. They were Hiranyakāśipu and Hiranyaṅkṣa. A daughter named Sirhikā was also born to her. She became the wife of Vipracitti. Her sons of great strength are known as Saimhikeyas. Hiranyakāśipu had four sons of well reputed prowess.

181. They were Hrāda, Anuhrāda, Prahrāda and Saṁhrāda. Hrāda was the son of Hrada.

182. Hrada's sons were Māyāvī, Śiva and Kāla. Virocana was the son of Prahrāda, Bali was the son of Virocana.

183-184. O ascetics, Bali had hundred sons of whom Bāṇa was the eldest. (The most important of them are) Kumbha-Nābha, Gardabhākṣa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sūrya, Candramas, Indratāpana, and Kukṣi. Bāṇa was the eldest and the strongest amongst them. He was a devotee of Śiva.

185. In a former Kalpa, Bāṇa propitiated lord Śiva and begged for this boon "I shall sport about at your side."

186-187. Hiranyaṅkṣa had five sons. They were both scholars and warriors. They were—Bharbhara, Śakuni, Bhūta, Santapanā, Mahānābha of great exploits and Kālanābha.

Danu had a hundred sons of energetic exploits. They were

ascetics of great prowess. I shall enumerate the most important among them.

188-192. They are Dvīmūrdhā, Śaṅkukarna, Hayaśiras, Ayomukha, Śambara, Kapila, Vāmana, Mārīci, Maghavan, Ilvala, Śrīmaṇa, Viṣṭobhāṇa, Ketu, Ketuvīrya, Śatahrada, Indrajit, Sarvajit, Vajranābha, Ekacakra, Mahābāhu, Tāraka of great strength, Vaiśvānara, Puloman, Vidrāvaṇa Mahāśiras, Svar-bhānu, Vṛṣaparva, Vipracitti of great virility. These sons of Danu were begotten by Kaśyapa.

193-194. Vipracitti was the chief among Dānavas of great strength. O excellent brahmins, it is not possible to enumerate their children because they are too numerous. The sons and grandsons were also too many to mention. Prabhā was the daughter of Svarbhānu, Śacī was the daughter of Puloman.

195. Upadānavī was the daughter of Hayaśiras, Śarmiṣṭhā was the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan, Puloman and Kālakā were the two daughters of Vaiśvānara.

196-198. They were the wives of Marīci. They had great strength and they bore many children. They had sixty thousand sons who delighted Dānavas. Marīci who performed a very great penance, procreated another fourteen hundred sons who stayed in the city of Hiranya-pura. The Dānavas named Paulomas (Sons of Pulomā) and Kālakeyas (Sons of Kālakā) were very terrible. Vipracitti's sons were born of Siṁhikā. Due to the admixture of Daityas and Dānavas they became valorous and powerful.

199-201. Thirteen very powerful Saṁhikeyas were known as Varmśya, Śalya, Nala, Bala, Vātāpi, Namuci, Ilvala, Śrīmaṇa, Añjika, Naraka, Kālanābha, Saramāna and the powerful Svara-kalpa.

Mūṣaka and Huṇḍa were the sons of Hrada.

202. Mārīca the son of Sunda was born of Tādakā. These are the excellent Dānavas who made the race of Danu flourish.

203-204. Their sons and grandsons were hundreds and thousands. The Nivātakavacas were born in the family of Daitya Saṁhrāda who had purified his soul by observing penance. The highly blessed Vaidyutas are reputed to have been born to Tāmrā. They had three crores of sons and they resided in Maṇivatī.¹

1. *Maṇivatī*—The capital of Vidyādhara, a group of semi-gods who wear garlands.

205-209. It was difficult for Devas to kill them. They were struck down by Arjuna (the Pāṇḍava.)

(Tāmrā's daughters were) Krauñcī, Śyenī, Bhāsi, Sugrīvī, Śuci and Gr̥dhri. Krauñcī gave birth to owls and crows, Śyenī to hawks and falcons, Bhāsi to Bhāsas (vultures, cocks), Gr̥dhri to Gr̥dhras (vultures), Śuci to aquatic birds, Sugrīvī to horses, camels and donkeys. Thus listen to the race of Tāmrā.

Vinatā had two sons—Garuḍa and Aruṇa. Garuḍa is the most excellent among the flying birds. He is very terrible in his activities.

Surasā's children were a thousand serpents of unmeasured prowess and many heads. O brahmins, they move about in the firmament and they are noble souls. The sons of Kadrū were very strong and had unmeasured strength and prowess. They were one thousand in number.

210-213. The multiheaded Nāgas of mighty valour were born. They were under the control of Garuḍa. The most important of these were:

Śeṣa, Vāsuki, Takṣaka, Airāvata, Mahāpadma, Kambala, Aśvatara, Elāpatra, Saṅkha, Karkoṭaka, Dhanañjaya, Mahānīla, Mahākarna, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Balāhaka, Kuhara, Puṣpadamṣṭra, Durmukha, Sumukha, Saṅkha, Saṅkhapāla, Kapila, Vāmana, Nahuṣa, Saṅkharoman, Maṇi and others.

214. Their sons and grandsons were in hundreds and thousands. There were fourteen thousand cruel snakes which live on air.

215. O brahmins, there is a group called Krodhavaśa. These have terrible fangs. The birds on land are infinite. They are the progeny of Earth.

216. Surabhi gave birth to cows and buffaloes, Irā gave birth to trees, creepers, plants and species of grass all round.

217-218. Khaśā gave birth to Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, Muni gave birth to Apsaras (celestial damsels); Ariṣṭā gave birth to Gandharvas of immense prowess and unmeasured energy. Thus these descendants of Kaśyapa consisting of mobile and immobile beings have been related. Their sons and grandsons are in hundreds and thousands.

219-223 Q brahmins, this creation existed in the Svārocīṣa Manvantara; what follows occurred in the Vaivasvata Manvan-

tara. Brahmā commenced a big and extensive sacrifice pertaining to Varuṇa. Listen to the creation of subjects in the course of sacrifice whom Brahmā himself had created as his sons from his mind in the previous Kalpa.

O brahmins, then ensued the mutual animosity between Devas and Dānavas in which Diti lost all her sons. She propitiated Kaśyapa with great devotion; duly honoured and served by her, Kaśyapa was highly pleased. He permitted her to ask for a boon. She requested him for a son of unmeasured prowess who would be capable of killing Indra.

224-225. On being requested thus, Kaśyapa of great austerity granted her boon. After granting the boon Kaśyapa spoke to her—"Your son will kill Indra if you retain the foetus for a hundred autumns maintaining cleanliness and performing rites."

226. O excellent sages, "So shall it be" said that gentle lady with devotion (to her lord) of great austerity. Maintaining cleanliness she conceived.

227-228. After impregnating Diti Kaśyapa returned. He desired for an excellent group of Devas of unmeasured prowess. After withdrawing his invincible splendour that could not be destroyed even by the immortal beings he went to a mountain resolving to perform penance and holy rites.

229-231. The chastiser of Pāka¹ stood waiting for a loop-hole to gain entry within her. The unswerving Indra saw a loop-hole when the century of years nearly came to a close. Without washing her feet Diti went to bed and slept. Indra entered her belly. Armed with his thunderbolt he cut the foetus into seven parts. On being split by the thunderbolt the foetus groaned.

232-233. "Mā rodih" (Do not cry) said Indra to the child. It split into seven parts. The infuriated Indra, the suppressor of enemies further cut each of these pieces into seven more pieces by means of his thunderbolt. O excellent brahmins, those children later on came to be known as Maruts.²

1. *Pākāśana*, Lord Indra who chastised the Asura Pāka.

2. *Maruts*—Diti bore a child in her womb. When Indra knew that the child when born would slay him, he entered the womb when Diti was asleep, with a desire to kill it there itself. The child began to cry but Indra said "Do

234. They became Maruts according to what Indra had said. These forty-nine Devas became the associates of Indra, the wielder of thunderbolt.

235-238. O excellent brahmins, Hari desired for an excellent group of Devas of unmeasured prowess with these functioning as such. He allotted Prajāpatis for each multitude. Gradually, the kingdoms with Pṛthu at the head were organized. That Hari is the heroic Puruṣa, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, Parjanya, Tapana and Ananta. The whole universe belongs to him. O excellent brahmins, there is no fear of recession unto him who knows perfectly this creation of living beings. Whence can be fear for the other world ?

CHAPTER TWO

Origin and glory of Pṛthu

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. After crowning Pṛthu the son of Vena as the overlord, Brahmā began to allot realms to each deity separately.
2. He crowned Soma in the kingdom of birds, creepers, constellations, planets, sacrifices and austerities.
3. He crowned Varuṇa in the realm of waters. He made Vaiśravaṇa the lord of kings; Viṣṇu the lord of Ādityas and Pāvaka the lord of Vasus.¹

not cry—mā ruda.” Then Indra cut the child into forty-nine pieces. They were born alive and they got the name Marut. When grown up they became helpers of Indra.

1. *Vasus*: a class of deities, eight in number: Āpa, or Aya, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara or Dhava, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa. Sometimes Amha is substituted for Āpa. Ādi Ch. 66, Verses 17, 18.

घरो ध्रुवश्च सोमश्च अंहश्चैवानिलोऽनलः ।
प्रत्यूषश्च प्रभासश्च बसवोऽष्टाविति स्मृताः ॥

Compare this Purāṇa, Ch. 1. Verse 149.

They were born to Dharmadeva of his wife Vasu, daughter of Dakṣa. Different Purāṇas give different names. This shows some of them had more than one appellation.

4. He made Dakṣa the lord of Prajāpatis, Indra the lord of Maruts, and Prahrāda of unmeasured prowess the lord of Daityas and Dānavas.

5-6. He crowned Yama the son of Vivasvat in the kingdom of Pitṛs. He made the trident-bearing Śiva the overlord of Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, kings, goblins and ghosts. He made Himavān the lord of mountains and the ocean the lord of rivers.

7. He made lord Citraratha the overlord of Gandharvas, Vāsuki the lord of Nāgas and Takṣaka the lord of Serpents.

8. He made Airāvata the king of elephants, Uccaiḥśravas the lord of horses and Garuḍa the lord of birds.

9. He made Śārdūla (tiger) the lord of animals and the bull the lord of cows. He crowned Plakṣa as the king of Vegetables and plenty.

10. After allotting realms like this, lord Brahmā established the guardians in each quarter.

11. In the eastern quarter he crowned Sudhanvan the son of Prajāpati Vairāja the guardian of quarters.

12. In the southern quarter he crowned Śaṅkhapāda the son of Prajāpati Kardama.

13. In the western quarter he crowned Ketumān the unswerving son of Rajas.

14. In the northern quarter he crowned Hiranyaroman the invincible son of Prajāpati Parjanya.

15. Till today the entire Earth consisting of its towns and continents is being virtuously administered by them with due deference to their respective jurisdiction.

16. In accordance with the injunctions laid down in the Vedas king Pṛthu was crowned¹ as the overlord in the course of Rājasūya Sacrifice.

17. Afterwards, when the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara of unmeasured splendour had passed off he allotted the realm on the Earth to Vaivasvata Manu.

18. I shall describe in detail the story of Vaivasvata Manu for your knowledge if you intend to hear. The story of this personage has been narrated in the Purāṇas.

¹ 1. Historians trace the origin of kingship to Pṛthu. The observance of consecration and the religious and political rites such as Rājasūya sacrifice support the view that the Hindu monarchial system is very old.

The sages said:

19-23. O Lomaharṣaṇa, please do describe the birth of Pr̥thu in detail, how this earth was milked by that noble soul; how it was milked by Pitṛs, Devas, Sages, Daityas, Nāgas, Yakṣas, trees, mountains, ghosts, Gandharvas, excellent brahmins and Rākṣasas of immense strength. O sage of holy rites, it behoves you to recount the special vessels they took for milking. Please mention the calves that they had and the type of milk they received. Who milked the earth? Whatfor was the hand of Vena churned formerly by the infuriated sages? O dear one, relate the cause thereof.

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

24. Listen, I shall relate in detail the story of Pr̥thu the son of Vena. O leading brahmins, listen with attention and zeal.

25. O brahmins, I shall never relate this to an unclean person, to a petty-minded one, to one who is not a disciple, to one who does not perform holy rites, to one who is ungrateful or to one who is antagonistic.

26. This story is conducive to heavenly pleasure, renown, longevity and wealth. It is on a par with the Vedas. Listen to this secret story in the manner it has been mentioned by the sages.

27. He who narrates this story of Pr̥thu the son of Vena daily after bowing down to the brahmins shall not repent for his omissions and commissions.

28. Formerly, there lived a Prajāpati named Anga who was born in the family of Atri. He was as powerful as Atri and he guarded Dharma.

29. He had a son named Vena who was not interested in Dharma. Vena the patriarch was born of Sunīthā, the daughter of Yama.

30. Due to the fault of his maternal grandfather, Vena, the son of the daughter of Yama, turned his back on his virtuous duties and indulged in lust and covetousness.

31. That king broke the conventional barriers necessitated by Dharma. Transgressing the Vedic canons and codes he became engrossed in evil and sinful acts.

32. When he was Prajāpati, the subjects were deprived of an opportunity to study the Vedas or utter Vaṣṭakāra Mantras. Neither sacrifices were performed nor Soma was drunk. Devas too could not drink Soma.

33. "No one should perform a sacrifice. No one should perform Homa"—was the cruel order promulgated by that monarch as his destruction was imminent.

34. "I am the person for whom the sacrifice should be made. I am the performer of sacrifices. I am the foremost among sattras. All sacrifices should be performed in my favour", he declared.

35. When he adopted an unbecoming and improper attitude and transgressed the traditional conventions, Marīci and other sages addressed him thus.

36-37. "O Vena, do not commit a sinful deed. For many years we have taken up this vow of sacrifice. This is the eternal norm. O king, you are born of Atri. You are undoubtedly a Prajāpati. You have entered into a solemn agreement thus "I will protect the subjects"¹

38. The wicked Vena conversant solely with what was harmful ridiculed the instructions of great sages and acted contrarily. *Vena said:*

39. Who else is he the creator of Dharma ? Whose behest am I to pay heed to ? In this Earth who can equal me in learning, strength, austerity and truthfulness ?

40. I am the source of origin of all living beings and of holy rites in particular. You are confounded and deluded. You are of unsound mind (and hence) do not understand me.

41. If I wish I can burn this Earth or float it in the waters. I can blockade and torment the earth as well as heaven.

42-43. When they could not dissuade him from his arrogant deluded pose, the sages got infuriated. Even as the mighty king was throbbing with rage the sages caught hold of him. In their fury they churned his left thigh.

44. As the king's thigh was being churned a short-statured dark-complexioned being came up.

45. O excellent brahmins, utterly frightened he stood there with his palms joined in reverence. On seeing him excessively bewildered the sage Atri asked him to sit.

46. O foremost among the eloquent, he became the founder of Niṣādas. He created Dhīvaras (fishermen) from the sins of Vena.

1. The statement shows that kingship was conditioned by certain responsibilities. See the *Coronation Oath* in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. For details Jayawal's *Hindu Polity*.

47. The Tuṣāras¹ and Tunduras² who have their abodes on the Vindhya³ mountains and who indulge in sinful deeds, O brahmins, have emanated from the thigh of Vena.

48. Thereafter, the noble sages who were still in tension, caught hold of his right hand and churned it like the Araṇī (the wood for generating fire by attrition).

49-50. Pṛthu was born of that hand. He blazed like fire. His body dazzled with fiery brilliance. He held a bow that banged with a loud report and some divine arrows too. The name of the bow was Ajagava; for his protection he wore a coat of mail of great lustre.

51. When he was born, the living beings all around were very much delighted and they flocked there. O highly blessed one, Vena went to heaven.

52. O brahmins, Vena the tiger among men was saved from hell named 'Pum'⁴ by that noble and virtuous son who was born of his hand.

53. The oceans and rivers took jewels (to present him with) and waters for his ablution and approached him reverently.

54-55. Lord Brahmā came there accompanied by Devas and Aṅgirasas. The living beings too both mobile and immobile came there and sprinkled water over Pṛthu. The subjects were delighted by that mighty monarch.

56. Pṛthu, that valorous son of Vena of great splendour, was duly crowned as the sovereign monarch by those who were experts in holy rites.

57. The subjects who were alienated by his father were reconciled to him. Due to affection his title 'Rājā'⁵ became meaningful.

1. *Tuṣāras*—Tochari tribe on the north of Hindu Kush mountains. In the Harivarṇśa they are classed along with Śakas, Dāradas, Pahlavas and considered to be Mlechhas and Dasyus (115). But they are ranked with wild tribes, originating from king Vena's sins and located in the Vindhya region. They are said to have been repressed by king Sagara.

2. *Tunduras*: Classed with Tuṣāras and located in the Vindhya region.

3. *Vindhya mountain*: One of the seven chief mountain chains which separates South India from North India.

4. Put, a hell to which the childless are condemned. 'Putra' 'a son' is so called because he protects his ancestors from this hell.

5. *Rāja* from rāñj, so called because he delighted his subjects.

58. As he marched against the oceans, waters stood stunned and solidified. Mountains gave way. Never did his banner-post break down.

59. The earth yielded rich harvest without being ploughed. Cooked food cropped up at the very thought: cows yielded milk in abundance. There was honey in every leafy cup.

60. Meanwhile during the course of splendid sacrifice of Brahmā the intelligent Sūta was born of Sūti on the Sautya day.

61. In the very same sacrifice Māgadha too was born. They were called there by the sages for eulogising Pr̥thu.

62. The sages told Sūta¹ and Māgadha.² May this king be eulogised. This job befits you and this king deserves it also.

63-64. Then Sūta and Magadha addressed those sages—“It is Devas and sages that we propitiate by performing sacred rites. O brahmins, we do not know the name, fame, traits or exploits of this brilliant king whereby we would eulogise him.”

65-66. They were persuaded to eulogise Pr̥thu by means of what would happen in future. O excellent sages, all those activities which Pr̥thu of great strength pursued later on in the three worlds were proclaimed by them by way of blessings and benedictions. Ever since that day in all the three worlds benedictions are offered by Sūtas, Māgadhas and Bards.

67. Delighted by their eulogy Pr̥thu, the lord of subjects, granted the Anūpa³ land to Sūta and Magadha to Māgadha.

68-69. On seeing him the subjects were extremely pleased. The

1. *Sūta* was a royal herald or bard, whose business was to proclaim the heroic deeds of the king and his ancestors and who had therefore to know by heart the portions of the epic poems and ancient ballads. The most celebrated Sūta was Lomaharṣaṇa who was a pupil of Vyāsa.

2. *Māgadha*—One who used to adulate the king. He is called Māgadha because he belonged to Magadha.

3. *Anūpa*—“A country situated near water” or “a marshy country.” The name was applied to tracts near the seacoast, generally in combination “Sāgarānūpa” in Bengal; in or near the Pāṇḍya Kingdom in the south, in the north and west of the peninsula of Kathiawar and on the western coast generally. But the name was more specially applied to a tract on the west coast which constituted a kingdom in the Pāṇḍava’s time. The only country which rests on the Vindhya and borders on the sea is the tract on the east of the Gulf of Cambay, north of Narmadā river. For details see Mār. P. fn. p. 344, Pargiter’s edition.

learned men said—“This king will offer all of you the means of subsistence”. They requested Pr̥thu, the noble son of Vena saying—“At the instance of great sages offer us the means of our subsistence.”

70. Thus approached in a body by the subjects the mighty king was moved by a desire to do what was conducive to the welfare of subjects. Seizing his bow and arrow he pursued the Earth.

71. Afraid of him the earth took the form of a cow and fled. As she fled, Pr̥thu chased her with bow and arrows.

72. After passing through the world, Brahmaloka etc. due to the fear of Pr̥thu she saw Pr̥thu with bow held ready for discharge (standing before her).

73. He was of unerring aim. He was brightly illumined by the sharp blazing arrows. He was a great Yigin of noble soul. He was invisible even to the immortals.

74-75. Unable to obtain a way of escape she resorted to him. Herself worthy of being honoured by the three worlds she joined her palms in reverence and said to Pr̥thu :—“You don’t seem to see sin in killing a woman. O king, how will you sustain your subjects without me ?

76-80. O king, the worlds are stationed in me. The universe is supported by me. O king, with my destruction the subjects will perish. Understand it. If you desire to do what is conducive to the welfare of your subjects you will not kill me. O Protector of Earth listen to these words of mine. Begun with proper means all activities become fruitful. Find out some means whereby you will be able to sustain subjects. O king, Even if you kill me you will not be able to nurture your subjects. I shall be favourable to you, O highly intelligent one, restrain your wrath. They say that women even in the lower species of animals, should not be killed.¹ Seeing with your open eyes, O protector of Earth, it does not behove you to eschew virtue.”

81. On hearing these and many other statements the noble-minded king, of virtuous soul, controlled his anger and spoke to the Earth:

1. Dharmasāstras prohibit the slaying of Brāhmaṇas and women.

Pr̥thu said:

82-87. If one were to kill many animals or a single animal for the sake of a person whether it be himself or any other, one may incur sin thereby. If many were to obtain happiness, when one inauspicious person is killed there cannot be any major or minor sin in slaying that inauspicious person; O gentle lady. As for me, O earth it is in the interest of subjects that I will be killing you, should you, at my instance not be prepared to do what is conducive to the welfare of the universe. If you turn your face against my behest I will kill you with my arrow and proclaiming myself I will sustain the subjects myself. Hence, O foremost one among the righteous persons, pay heed to my behests and enliven the subjects. Indeed, you are capable of sustaining them. Submit to me and be my daughter. Then I shall withdraw this arrow that is frightful in its appearance and that is now ready to kill you.

The Earth said:

88-89. O heroic one, undoubtedly I shall do all these things. Bind my calf so that I can discharge milk with my affection kindled. O foremost one among those who uphold virtue, keep me levelled up everywhere so that the milk that flows down shall spread everywhere.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

90. Then with the tip of his bow the son of Vena, Pr̥thu swept aside hundreds and thousands of mountains. Therefore, the height of the mountains increased.

91. In the previous creation when the surface of the Earth was uneven there was no demarcation of villages and cities.

92. There were no cultivated plants, no breeding of cattle, no agricultural occupation nor was there any bazar or shopping centre. There was no problem of truth and falsehood. There was neither greed nor indecent rivalry and competition.

93. It was only after the advent of Vaivasvata Manvantara, ever since the days of Vena (and his descendants), that all these began to appear.

94. O brahmins, wherever the land was level the subjects began to colonise.

95. Then the diet of subjects consisted of fruits and roots. They were faced with great difficulties, as we have heard.

96-97. Pṛthu made lord Svāyambhuva Manu the calf. He the tiger among men, then milked the Earth in his own hand. Pṛthu the valorous son of Vena milked the vegetable kingdom. Even to this day the subjects subsist on those food grains and edibles.

98-99. O excellent brahmins, the sages, Devas Pitṛs, reptiles, Daityas, Yakṣas, Puṇyajanas, Gandharvas, mountains, trees—all these milked the Earth. The milk, calf, milkman and vessel were separate for each of them.

100. O brahmins, to the sages the calf was Soma, the milkman was Brhaspati; their milk was penance and the Vedic metres were their vessels.

101. To Devas—the vessel was gold, the calf was Indra, the milk was Ojaskara (that which enhances prowess) and the milkman was Sun-god himself.

102. To Pitṛs—the vessel was silver; the calf was Yama; the milkman was Antaka and their milk was nectar.

103. To Nāgas—the calf was Takṣaka ; the vessel was Alābu (gourd); the milkman was Airāvata; their milk was poison.

104. To Asuras—the milkman was Madhu; the milk was Maya; the calf was Virocana and the vessel was iron.

105. To Yakṣas—the vessel was unbaked mudpot; the calf was lord Vaiśravaṇa; the milkman was Rajata-nābha and the milk was Antardhāna.

106. To Rākṣasas—the calf was Sumāli, the milk was blood, the milkman was Rajatanābha and the vessel was skull.

107. To Gandharvas—the calf was Citraratha, the vessel was lotus; the milk-man Suruci and the milk was sweet scent.

108. To mountains—the vessel was rock; the milk was jewels and medicinal herbs; the calf was Himavān and the milk-man was the great mountain Meru.¹

1. *Meru*. At the churning of the ocean the milkman was the mountain Meru. Compare *Kumbrasambhava—Merau sati dogdhari dñhadatse*.

According to the Purāṇas, Meru forms the central point of Jambūdvipa. It has been equated with the high land of Tartary north of the Himalays (MW). According to S. M. Ali (*The Geography of the Purāṇas*), Meru can be identified with the Pamir plateau.

109. To trees—the calf was Plakṣa; the milkman was the Sāla tree in full bloom; the vessel was the leaf of Palāsa tree and the milk was the skill for re-plantation of rice after it was cut or burned.

110. And then the Earth is Dhātri (the supporter), Vidhātri (maker), Pāvani (purifier), Vasundharā, holder of riches. It is the source of origin of all beings mobile and immobile. It is the support of all.

111. It yields everything that everyone desires. It grows all plants. It extends to the oceans. It is well known as Medīni.

112. The (fat) of the asuras Madhu and Kaiṭabha spread throughout the Earth. Hence Earth is called Medīni by the exponents of Truth.

113. O brahmins, the Earth enjoyed the honour of being the daughter of king Pr̥thu, the son of Vena. Hence, the Earth is called Pr̥thvī.

114. The Earth divided and reformed by Pr̥thu flourished with mines and plants. It abounded in towns and cities.

115. Pr̥thu, the son of Vena, wielded a great prowess. He was the most excellent among kings. Undoubtedly he was worthy of being honoured by all beings.

116. Pr̥thu indeed is worthy of being honoured by the highly blessed brahmins who have mastered the Vedas and Vedāngas because he is eternal with Brahmā as the source of his origin.¹

117. Pr̥thu the first king, the valorous son of Vena should be honoured by highly blessed kings who desire stable kingship (on the earth).

118. The primordial king who grants subsistence to the world, the well renowned Pr̥thu should be honoured by valorous warriors who are desirous of attaining victory in the battle-field.

119. The warrior who goes to war after glorifying king Pr̥thu returns unscathed from the terrific scene and attains fame.

120. Pr̥thu alone should be honoured by the Vaiśyas who seek for wealth and who take up trade and such-like activities. Pr̥thu grants the means of subsistence. For he is renowned for that.

1. Pr̥thu, the first king, has been equated with Brahmā. The comparison suggests that he is divine. In fact, he is human but becomes divine when he is consecrated. He is invested with kingly responsibilities which he has to shoulder. He attains divinity by his acts secular or ceremonial and not otherwise.

121. Pṛthu should be honoured by Śūdras who serve the three castes seeking for their welfare.

122. Thus different calves, milkmen, milk and vessels have been mentioned by me. What more shall I describe now ?

CHAPTER THREE

MANVANTARAS¹

The sages said:

1-2. O Lomaharṣaṇa, O highly intelligent one, describe in detail the Manvantaras along with their previous creations. O Sūta, we wish to hear factually, how many Manus were there and how long the Manvantaras lasted.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

3. O brahmins, they cannot be described in detail even in hundreds of years. O brahmins, listen to the brief description of the Manvantaras.

4-7. There were six Manus in the past viz. Svāyambhuva, Svārociṣa, Uttama, Tāmasa, Raivata and Cākṣuṣa, O brahmins, Vaivasvata is the present Manu. There will be seven Manus in future:—Viz. Sāvarṇi, Raibhya, Raucya, and four Merusāvarṇis. Thus the Manus of the past, present and future, are fourteen in number. I shall now mention sages, Devas and their sons too.

8. The following seven were the sons of Brahmā:—Marīci, Atri, An̄giras, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastyā and Vasiṣṭha.

9-10. O brahmins, there are seven sages in the northern quarter. Ten sons of great prowess were born of Svāyambhuva Manu:—Agnīdhra, Agnibāhu, Medhya, Medhātithi, Vasu, Jyotiṣmān, Dyutimān and Havya. O brahmins, thus the first Manvantara has been cited.

1. A manvantara contains seventyone cycles of Mahāyugas which are equal to 12,000 years of gods. The Purāṇas mention fourteen Manvantaras which derive their names from fourteen successive mythical progenitors and sovereigns of the earth. There are seventyone Caturyugas in each Manvantara. At the end of 71 such Caturyugas (71 × 4) a Manu completes his life-span.

11-15. Aurva the son of Vasiṣṭha, Stamba, Kaśyapa, Prāṇa, Brhaspati, Datta, Atri, and Cyavana—O brahmins, these great sages have been acclaimed by Vāyu as sages of great holy rites. Devas in the Svārocīṣa Manvantara are known as Tuṣitas. O brahmins the following were the noble sons of Svārocīṣa Manu:— Havighna, Sukṛti, Jyotiṣ, Āpomūrti, Pratīta, Nabhasya, Nabha and Urja. Thus, the kings of great virility and exploits have been glorified. O brahmins, thus the second Manvantara has been mentioned by me.

16-19. O excellent brahmins, I shall mention the third Manvantara now. Vasiṣṭha had seven sons. They are known as Vasiṣṭhas. Hiraṇyagarbha's sons were extremely resplendent. O excellent sages ! understand these ten sons of Manu as I mention them to you.

They are:—Iṣa, Urja, Tanūrja, Madhu, Mādhava, Śuci, Śukra, Saha, Nabhasya and Nabhas. Devas in this Manvantara are Bhānus. The third Manvantara has been cited thus.

20-23. Now, I shall mention the fourth Manvantara. O brahmins, the seven sages therein are:—Kavya, Pṛthu, Agni, Jahnu, Dhātā, Kapivān and Akapivān. O excellent brahmins, their sons and grandsons are glorified as noble brahmins in the Purāṇas. In the Manvantara of Tāmasa Manu, the groups of Devas are Satyas. These have been glorified as the ten sons of Tāmasa Manu:— Dyuti, Tapasya, Sutapas, Tapobhūta, Sanā-tana, Taporati, Akalmāṣa, Tanvi, Dhanvi and Parantapa. This is the fourth Manvantara O excellent sages:

24-28. In the fifth Manvantara the seven sages are Devabāhu, Yadudhra, Vedaśiras, Hiraṇyaroman, Parjanya, Urdhvabāhu son of Soma, and Satyanetra son of Atri. Devas are Abhuktarajas. The Prakṛtis are Pariplava and Raibhya. The sons of Raivata are Dhṛtimān, Avyaya, Yukta, Tattvadarśin, Nirutsuka, Aranya, Prakāṣa, Nirmoha, Satyavāk and Kṛti. This is the fifth Manvantara.

29-33. I shall mention the sixth Manvantara now. O excellent brahmins, understand that there are seven great sages: Bhṛgu, Nabha, Vivasvān, Sudhāma, Virajas, Arināman and Sahiṣṇu. O brahmins, the following are Devas in Cākṣuṣa Manvantara. The heaven-dwellers are not different from sages. There are five groups of Devas named Lekhas. O excellent sages, the Nādvale-

yas of great prowess and noble souls are the sons of sage Āṅgiras. The ten sons of Cākṣuṣa Manu, Ruru and others are well known. The sixth Manvantara has been mentioned thus. I shall narrate seventh Manvantara now.

34-41. Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Kaśyapa the great sage, Gautama Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni the son of Ṛcīka of noble soul are seven sages in the heaven now. The following are Devas in the present Vaivasvata Manvantara—viz. Sādhyas, Rudras, Viśvedevas, Vasus, Maruts, Ādityas and Aśvins born of Vivasvat. Ikṣvāku and others are the ten sons of Vaiwasvat. O brahmins, the sons and grandsons of these great sages of great prowess mentioned herein are present in all quarters. In all Manvantaras the seven groups of seven are well reputed. They are present in the world for establishing virtue and protecting the world. When a Manvantara passes off, four groups of seven proceed to heaven after completing their duties and reach Brahma-loka free from ailments. Then others endowed with penance fill up their places. O brahmins, these (Manus and others) of past and present rule in this order.

42-46. The following are known as the great sages of future. They will be present in the Manvantara of Sāvarṇi: Rāma, Vyāsa and Ātreya. They are brilliant and well known. Bharadvāja, Droṇa's son Aśvatthāmā of great lustre, Gautama who never grows old, Śaradvat son of Gautama, Kauśika, Gālava, and Aurva son of Kaśyapa will be born as the sons of Sāvarṇa Manu, O excellent sages. O leading brahmins, Vairin, Adhvavīvan, Śamana, (?) Dhṛtimān, Vasu, Ariṣṭa, Adhrṣṭa, Vāji and Sumati—these seven will be noble heroes.

47. By repeating their names after getting up early in the morning, one attains happiness as well as fame and will also become long-lived.

48. These seven Manvantaras have been mentioned. Now, listen to the succinct description of the future Manvantaras.

49-53. O brahmins, the Sāvarṇa Manus are five. Understand them. One of them is the son of Vivasvat. Four are the sons of Prajāpati Parameśthin, O brahmins, who attained golden complexion like the mountain Meru. They are the grandsons of Dakṣa and the sons of Priyā, the daughter of Dakṣa. They will become kings endowed with strict austerity on the ridge of Meru.

They are of great prowess. The son of Prajāpati Ruci is known as Raucyamanu. He is Ruci's son begot of the gentle lady Bhūti. Hence, he is named Bhautya. These are the future Manus in this Kalpa. O excellent brahmins, the whole earth including cities and seven continents will be protected by them for the period of a thousand cycles of four ages.

54-56. Annihilation occurs continuously in these Manvantaras due to the penance of Prajāpati. Seventyone sets of four Yugas, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali constitute what is called Manvantara. These fourteen Manus who have been glorified enhance reputation. They are mentioned as very powerful in the Vedas and Purāṇas. O brahmins, they are Prajāpatis whose glorification is conducive to the achievement of wealth and blessedness.

57. At the end of Manvantaras there is annihilation and at the conclusion of the process of annihilation creation takes place. It is impossible to mention their ultimate end even in the course of hundreds of years.

58-60. O brahmins, it is impossible to mention the ultimate end of creation or destruction of subjects.O excellent brahmins, destructions in the course of Manvantaras are mentioned in the Vedas. At that time, Devas and seven sages stay on with their parts still retained since they are endowed with penance, knowledge and celibacy. When a thousand cycles of four Yugas are completed the Kalpa comes to an end. Then the living beings are burned by the rays of the sun.

61-64. Keeping Brahmanā at their head, along with Ādityas, the brahmins enter Lord Hari, Nārāyaṇa the most excellent among gods. He is the creator of all creatures. Again and again at the end of every Kalpa they enter him. The lord is unmanifest and permanent. This entire universe belongs to him. O leading sages, now I shall recount the creation of Vaivasvata Manu, the current one of great lustre. Here, in the context of the description of races, the family where lord Hari, the supreme Ātman, was born is being mentioned. The lord was born in the family of Vṛṣnis.

CHAPTER FOUR

Evolution of Vivasvat Āditya

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. O excellent brahmins, Vivasvān was born of Dākṣayāṇī and Kāsyapa. The gentle lady, the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ named Samjñā was the wife of Vivasvān.

2. That beautiful lady was well known in the three worlds as Sureśvari (goddess of Devas). She was the wife of lord Mārtanḍa of great soul.

3. Samjñā had been endowed with fair complexion, beauty and freshness of youthful bloom. She was not satisfied with the complexion of her husband. She was endowed with penance that had made her brilliant and dazzling.

4. Since, Āditya's limbs had been burnt by the refulgence of his disc, Āditya's complexion did not appear to be very attractive.

5. Āditya is called Mārtanḍa for the following reason:— Once unknowingly Kāsyapa had uttered out of his filial affection "I hope he is not dead even as he lay in the womb."

6. The refulgence of Vivasvān increased day by day whereby the son of Kāsyapa scorched the three worlds too much.

7. O brahmins, Āditya the foremost among those who scorched the earth begot three children of Samjñā, a daughter and two Prajāpatis.

8. At the outset, Vaivasvata Manu, the Prajāpati known as Śrāddhadeva was born. Yama and Yamunā were born as twins.

9. On seeing the dark-coloured Vivasvān, Samjñā could not bear it. Therefore, she created her own shadow known as Savarṇā.

10-11. That illusory Samjñā arising out of her shadow bowed to Samjñā. O excellent brahmins, with her palms joined in reverence she said—"O lady of pure smiles tell me. What shall I do for you. O fair-complexioned lady, I abide by your directives. Command me."

Samjñā said:

12. "Welfare unto thee, I shall go to my father's abode. Thou wilt unhesitatingly stay behind in my house.

13. These two sons of mine and this daughter of beautiful slender waist should be nurtured by thee. O splendid lady, never should this secret be divulged to our lord."

Savarṇā said:

14. "O gentle lady, not until I am caught hold of by my tresses, never till I am threatened with a curse, will I divulge the secret. O gentle lady, obeisance to Thee. You shall go comfortably assured thus".

Lomaharṣṇā said:

15-17. Having commended Savarṇā and having been assured by her saying. "So, it shall be" that lady in her pitiable state approached (her father) Tvaṣṭṛ and stood by him bashfully. That splendid lady standing thus abashed near her father was rebuked by him. Again and again she was directed by him, saying "Go back to your husband". Assuming the form of a mare and thereby concealing her beauty that blameless lady went to the northern Kurus and began to graze grass.

18-19. Taking the second Samjñā to be the real Samjñā, Āditya begot of her a son equal to himself in every respect. O brahmins, since he was on a par with his elder brother Manu, he too became Manu by name. He is called Sāvarṇa (son of Savarṇā) too.

20-21. The second son who was born of her was known as Śanaiścara. Samjñā, like an ordinary woman of Earth, loved her own sons more. She was not equally disposed to the elder ones. Manu forgave this weakness on her part but Yama did not.

22. Out of anger and childishness or may be due to the inevitability of what was destined to happen, Yama, the intrinsically careless son of Vivasvat lifted up his leg (as though to kick her) and threatened Samjñā.

23. The mother of Savarṇa, who became extremely distressed cursed him wrathfully—"May this foot of yours fall down".

24. Extremely frightened and distressed due to the curse, and growing suspicious by the utterances of Samjñā, Yama intimated everything to his father with palms joined in reverence.

25-27. "May this curse be averted" said he to his father, O

brahmins. "A mother should be impartially affectionate to all her sons. O Vivasvān, she wants to remove us and she desires to become the sole beneficiary. Of course the foot was lifted up by me to her but it did not touch her, maybe due to my puerile whim, maybe due to my extreme desire, maybe due to my delusion—whatever that maybe—it behoves you to forgive me. O lord of worlds, O most excellent one among those who scorch, I have been cursed by my mother. O lord of rays, may my foot never fall off, I beg you favour".

Vivasvān said:

28. In this matter, O son, there will undoubtedly be a great reason wherefore fury has stirred you who are conversant with righteousness and who (invariably) speak the truth.

29. It is impossible to falsify the words of your mother. Worms will take the flesh from your foot and it will fall off to the ground.

30. The words of your mother will be rendered truthful but you will be saved by avoiding the worse effects of the curse.

31. Āditya spoke to Samjñā:—"How is it that more affection is shown to one when all sons are on a par with one another?"

32. Evading (a straight reply) she did not tell (the truth) to Vivasvat. He entered into self-meditation and found out the truth by his Yogic power.

33-35. O excellent sages, the lord was ready to curse her to destruction but she mentioned the truth to Vivasvān in the manner it had transpired before. On hearing the same, Vivasvat was infuriated and rushed to Tvaṣṭṛ. On seeing Vivasvat, Tvaṣṭṛ honoured him suitably. As the sun was about to scorch him in anger, he appeased him quietly.

Tvaṣṭṛ said:

36-38. Affected by excessive resplendence this complexion of yours is not alluring. It was because she could not brook it. She is now grazing grass in the meadow in a forest. O lord of rays, by adopting Yogic power you will presently see your wife of auspicious conduct who is worthy of praise and who is endowed with Yogic powers. O lord ! O suppressor of foes, if my suggestion is

approved by you I shall turn your complexion favourable to you. I shall make it alluring.

39. When Vivasvat agreed to the proposal Tvaṣṭṛ mounted him on the lathe, whetted him and made his complexion sparkling.

40. Then his form became more dazzling due to the well knit resplendence. It was very alluring and he appeared very splendid.

41. Adopting his Yogic power he met his wife who had assumed the form of a mare. She could not be thwarted by any living being due to her observance of holy rites and her own brilliance.

42-43. The lord assumed the form of a horse and approached her as she grazed about fearlessly in the form of a mare. It was in her mouth that he had his sexual intercourse, as she began fidgeting due to her suspicion that he might be a person other than her own husband. She let out the semen of Vivasvat through her nostrils.

44-49. Two sons were born of her thus. They were Aśvins who later became excellent physicians. They were known as Nāsatya and Dasra. They were the sons of the eighth Prajāpati.

Bhāskara revealed his alluring form to Samjñā. O excellent sages, on seeing her husband in the attractive form she became delighted.

Yama was extremely distressed due to his activity. He delighted his subjects by his righteous conduct. He was known as Dharmarāja. Due to his righteous activities he became extremely brilliant and attained the lordship of Pitṛs and status of the guardian of a quarter, O ascetics, Manu the son of Sāvarṇa is the future Prajāpati in the Sāvarṇika Manvantara. Even today he is performing penance on the top of Meru.

50-54. His brother Śanaiścara attained the status of a planet. With that resplendence (of Āditya) Tvaṣṭṛ evolved the discus of Viṣṇu for destroying the Asuras. The weapon is never thwarted in a battle. The youngest daughter Yami became the famous excellent river Yamunā who sanctifies the world. The brother is called Sāvarṇa Manu. The second son, the brother of Manu, became Śanaiścara, the planet saturn, honoured in the world. He who listens to this narrative on the origin of Devas and

retains the same in his memory will attain great fame. Even when involved in adversities he will be liberated therefrom.

CHAPTER FIVE

Review of the Solar Race

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1-2. Vaivasvata Manu had nine sons, all equal to him in every respect. They were Ikṣvāku, Nabhaga, Dhṛṣṭa, Śaryāti, Nariṣyanta, Prāṁśu, Riṣṭa, Karūṣa and Pṛṣadhra. O excellent sages, these were the nine sons.

3-7. O brahmins, before the birth of these sons, Prajāpati Manu of great intellect had been desirous of begetting sons and so performed the sacrifice with Mitra and Varuṇa as deities. In the course of that sacrifice, O excellent brahmins, Manu poured libation in the part pertaining to Mitra and Varuṇa. It is said in the Vedas that Ilā was born therefrom. She was clad in divine garments and bedecked in divine ornaments. She had a divine physical form. Manu the holder of the sceptre called her Ilā, and said—"O gentle lady, follow me." Ilā spoke these words in reply to Prajāpati who was desirous of a son and who was righteous.

Ilā said:

8. "O foremost among the eloquent, I am born in the portion pertaining to Mitra and Varuṇa. I shall go to them. Do not violate my Dharma."

9. After saying this to lord Manu and approaching Mitra and Varuṇa, Ilā the lady of beautiful hips spoke to Mitra and Varuṇa with palms joined in reverence.

10. "O Devas, I am born in the portion pertaining to you. What shall I do unto you. I had been asked by Manu to follow him."

11. O excellent brahmins, Mitra and Varuṇa spoke thus to the chaste lady Ilā who was devoted to piety and who had spoken the truth. ...

12-16. "O fair-complexioned lady of beautiful hips, we are delighted by your piety, self-control, humility and truthfulness. O highly blessed lady, you will become famous as our daughter. You alone will turn out to be the son of Manu perpetuating his line. You will become famous in the three worlds well known as Sudyumna, favourite of the universe, practising piety and making the race of Manu flourish".

After hearing this, she returned. While she was returning from the presence of her father, Budha availed himself of the opportunity and invited her for sexual dalliance. O brahmins, Purūravas was born to her by her union with Budha, son of Soma.

17. After giving birth to Purūravas Ilā became Sudyumna. He got three sons who were extremely virtuous.

18-23. O brahmins, they were Utkala, Gaya and Vinatāśva. O brahmins, the Utkala land was given to Utkala¹, Vinatāśva had his land in the western quarter, and O leading sages, Gaya had the land Gayā² in the eastern region where Manu suppressed the challenging foes. He divided the Earth into ten provinces to be ruled over by them. Among them the eldest son obtained the Middle Country. In view of his being a daughter as well, Sudyumna did not get this realm, but at the instance of Sage Vasiṣṭha he got a foothold in Pratiṣṭhāna³.

Dhṛṣṇu, Ambarīṣa and Daṇḍaka got equal shares. The excellent Daṇḍaka forest was named after Daṇḍaka. Merely on entering this forest a man becomes liberated from his sins. O brahmins, after begetting sons Aila Sudyumna went to heaven.

O excellent brahmins, the kingdom of the righteous king Sudyumna was fairly established. After attaining the kingdom, the king of great fame gave it to Purūravas. O excellent sages, he was a son of Manu with the characteristics of a woman and a man. He ruled over the kingdom as Ilā as well Sudyumna. He was well renowned.

24. The Śakas were the sons of Nariṣyanta. Ambarīṣa the most excellent of kings, was the son of Nabhaga, O brahmins.

1. *Utkala* (Odra)—modern Orissa.
2. *Gayā*—A renowned place of pilgrimage sacred to the Pitṛs.
3. *Pratiṣṭhāna*—A sacred place in Prayāga now called Jhusi. Once this place was ruled over by king Yayāti.

25. Dhārṣṭakas became very proud of their might to fight in battles. The residents of Kārūṣa¹ the land of Karūṣa were Kṣatriyas irrepressible in war.

26. The sons of Nabhaṇa and Dhṛṣṭa were originally Kṣatriyas who later on became Vaiśyas.² Amśu had an only son who is known as Prajāpati.

27-31. Nariṣyanta's son was king Yama who held the staff of chastisement. Śaryāti had twins as children. The son was known as Ānarta. The daughter was known as Sukanyā who became the wife of Cyavana. Raivata was the son of Raiva(?). His eldest son Kakudmī was very righteous. He ruled in the city of Kuśasthalī.³ Accompanied by his daughter he approached Brahmā and listened to Gandharva music for the duration of a Muhūrta of the Lord. O brahmins, actually it comprised of many Yugas of the mortals. He returned to his city which was peopled by the Yādavas.

32. It had been converted into a city named Dvāravatī. It looked very beautiful with many gateways. It was protected by the Bhojas, Vṛṣnis and Andhakas whose leader was Vāsudeva.

33-34. O excellent brahmins, Raivata realized the true nature of existence. He gave his daughter Revatī of good holy rites to Balarāma in marriage and himself went to the peak of Mount Meru. He stayed there and performed penance. Balarāma the righteous, sported about in the company of Revatī and was very happy.

The sages said:

35-36. O highly intelligent one, how is it that even after the lapse of many Yugas, old age did not afflict Revatī or Raivata Kakudmin? How was the line of Śaryāti perpetuated on earth after he had gone to Meru. We wish to hear everything precisely.

Lomaharṣana said:

37-41. O excellent sages, O sinless ones, neither old age nor hunger nor thirst nor death nor the circle of seasons has any

1. Kārūṣa was a hilly country south of Kāñcī and Vatsa between Cedi and Magadha. It comprised the hilly country of which Rewa is the centre from about the river Ken on the west as far as the confines of Behar on the east.

2. This shows that the system of caste was not rigid in those days.

3. Kuśasthalī—Dvāravatī—Mod. Dvārakā.

adverse influence in the Brahma-loka at any time. When Raivata Kakudmin departed for the heavenly world, O brahmins, the city of Kuśasthali was attacked and destroyed by Puṇyajanas¹ and Rākṣasas. That righteous noble king had a hundred brothers. On being attacked and massacred by the Rākṣasas they fled in all directions. O excellent brahmins, after fleeing in all directions they established their extensively large line in different places. O excellent sages, their Kṣatriya groups are well-reputed as Śaryātas. They were endowed with good qualities and became famous in all quarters. They had entered dense forests all round. They were endowed with great prowess.

42-46. The two sons of Nabhaga and Riṣṭa were originally Vaiśyas who later became brahmins. The Kārūṣas (the Kṣatriya sons of Karūṣa) were irrepressible in battles. O excellent brahmins, Pṛṣadhra inflicted violent injuries on the cow of his preceptor and due to the curse of his preceptor he attained the state of a Śūdra. Thus, O excellent sages, the nine sons of Vaivasvata Manu have been recounted. O brahmins, it was when Manu sneezed that his son Ikṣvāku was born. Ikṣvāku had a hundred sons who distributed monetary gifts in plenty. Vikukṣi was the eldest among them and he was endowed with great valour. He was a great lord exceptionally conversant with religious virtues. He became the lord of Ayodhyā². He had five hundred sons. The eldest among them was Śakuni.

47-50. They were very powerful and the sole protectors of the Northern region. O excellent brahmins, there were other administrations in the Southern region numbering fifty-eight. Saśāda was the leader of all these. On the Aṣṭaka day Ikṣvāku commanded Vikukṣi—“O powerful one, kill some rabbits and bring their flesh for performing Śrāddha.”³

1. *Puṇyajana*—According to Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Raivata, King of Kuśasthali, born of the race of Śaryāti, went to see Brahmā. Taking advantage of his absence from the place, Puṇyajana took control over Kuśasthali. Afraid of the demon the hundred brothers of Raivata left the country. After that Śaryāti dynasty merged with that of Haihaya.

2. *Ayodhyā*—A city in North India which enjoyed great importance and reputation for many years as the capital of kings of solar race. Till the time of Sri Rāma this city maintained pomp and glory, and after that gradually it fell in decay.

3. *Śrāddha*—The offering given to Pitṛs. According to the Purāṇas,

O brahmins, after planning to perform the Śrāddha rite but before executing it he ate part of the meat of the rabbit which was meant for the Śrāddha. Hence, he was called Śaśāda. At the instance of Vasiṣṭha he was exiled by Ikṣvāku.

51. O brahmins, when Ikṣvāku passed away Śaśāda became the king. Śaśāda's heir and successor was a powerful king named Kakutstha.

52. Kakutstha's son was Anenas and Pṛthu was his son. Virāśva was Pṛthu's son and Ārdra was born of him.

53. O brahmins, Yuvanāśva was Ārdra's son and his son was Śrāvasta. Śrāvasta was the king by whom Śrāvasti¹ was built.

54. Brhadaśva was the successor of King Śrāvasta; his son Kuvalāśva was a very righteous monarch.

55-56. It was he who obtained the title Dhundhumāra, the slayer of Dhundhu.

The Sages said:

O highly intelligent one, we wish to hear about the manner whereby Dhundhu was slain. We wish to hear it precisely how Kuvalāśva came to be known as Dhundhumāra.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

57. Kuvalāśva had a hundred sons. All of them were good bowmen, powerful, clever in learning and unassailable.

58. All of them were righteous. All performed sacrifices wherein they distributed plenty of money as gifts. Brhadaśva crowned his son Kuvalāśva in the kingdom.

Śrāddha is a very important ceremony. MW offers the following remarks about Śrāddha. "Śrāddha is a ceremony in honour and for the benefit of dead relations observed with great strictness at various fixed periods and on occasions of rejoicing as well as mourning by the surviving relatives. These ceremonies are performed by the daily offering of water and on stated occasions by offering Pindas or balls of rice and meals to three paternal and three maternal forefathers, i.e. to father, grandfather and great grandfather".

1. Śravasti—Name of a city situated north of the Ganges and founded by king Śrāvasta of Ikṣvāku dynasty. It was the ancient capital of Kosal where the rich merchant Anāthapiṇḍika built for Buddha a residence in the Jetavana monastery which became his favourite retreat during the rainy season. Other authorities derive the name from Sage Sāvatta who resided there; it has been identified by General Cunningham with the modern city Sahet Mahet, 58 miles north of Ayodhyā.

59. After transferring the royal glory to his son he entered the forest. Uttanika, the brahminical sage, stopped him as he was about to leave.

Uttanika said:

60-71. It is your duty to protect your subjects O king. I am unable to perform a carefree penance; very near my hermitage there is a flat sandy waste land of desert. The sea (nearby) is filled with sand. It is known by the name of Uddālaka. There is a great Asura Dhundhu who remains hidden under the ground beneath the sand. His body is huge. He is very powerful. He is indestructible even by Devas. He is the son of Asura Madhu. He is lying down there performing a severe penance for the destruction of the entire world. At the end of a year when he heaves a deep sigh the whole Earth shakes. A great column of dust is raised by the air he lets out when he sighs. His huge body today conceals the path of the sun. The Earth-quake lasts for a week. The column of dust is accompanied by flames, burning coal and smoke. He is extremely terrible. Hence, O dear one, I am unable even to stay in my hermitage. With a desire to do what is beneficial so the worlds, slay that huge monster. May the worlds heave a sigh of relief after he has been assassinated by you. O lord of the Earth, indeed, you alone are competent to kill him. O king, in the previous Yuga, a boon had been granted unto you by Viṣṇu. Due to this boon granted to you, you will enhance the refulgence and splendour of the person who slays that terrible great Asura of inordinate power. Indeed, this Dhundhu of great splendour cannot be slain, O king, by a person of mean splendour even after a long time, nay, not even in the course of hundreds of Yugas. His virility is immense; inaccessible even to Devas.

On being requested thus, by the noble Uttanika, the saintly king gave him his son Kuvalāśva for the work of killing Dhundhu.

Bṛhadāśva said:

72-73. “O saintly lord, I have already laid down my arms. Here is my son, O excellent brahmin, he will undoubtedly slay Dhundhu.”

After directing his son for slaying Dhundhu, the saintly king went to the mountain and adopted holy rites.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

74. O brahmins, accompanied by his hundred sons and sage Uttanika, Kuvalāśva proceeded ahead for slaying Dhundhu.

75. At the behest of Uttanika and with a desire for achieving the welfare of the worlds, lord Viṣṇu permeated him with his own splendour.

76. When that invincible king proceeded ahead a loud sound arose in heaven—"This glorious and invincible king will become the slayer of Dhundhu".

77. They showered him all round with divine scents and garlands. The celestial drums were sounded loudly.

78. Accompanied by his sons, that powerful king, the most excellent among the victorious, went to the sea and dug up the inexhaustible sandy deposit.

79-81. O brahmins, Dhundhu was ferretted out by his sons who dug the entire western portion. Even as he lay concealed by the sands he appeared to whirl up furiously all the worlds by the fire of his mouth. O leading sages, like the ocean at the rise of the moon he let out jets of water coming up in waves and foams. All the hundred sons of the king excepting three were killed by that demon.

82. Then that brilliant king of immense splendour who had resolved to kill Dhundhu approached the powerful Asura.

83-84. The king, a great Yigin, drank up the speedy current of water let out by the monster and quenched the fire with the very same water. After slaying the aquatic Asura of huge body by means of his inordinate strength the king fulfilled his mission and met Uttanika sage.

85. Uttanika granted boons unto the noble king. He granted him inexhaustible wealth and non occurrence of defeat at the hands of his enemies.

86. He granted him a perpetual interest in righteousness and everlasting stay in the celestial world. To those sons who were slain by the Asura he granted permanent abodes in heaven.

87. The eldest of those who remained is called Dr̥ḍhāśva and the junior princes were called Candrāśva and Kapilāśva.

88. Haryaśva is known as the son of Dr̥ḍhāśva, son of Dhundhumāra. Haryaśva's son was Nikumbha who was ever devoted to Kṣatriya duties.

89. O brahmins, Saṁhatāśva son of Nikumbha was an expert in warfare. Akṛṣāśva and Kṛṣāśva were the sons of Saṁhatāśva.

90. His daughter Haimavatī became famous as Dr̥ṣadvati. Her son Prasenajit was renowned in the three worlds.

91. Prasenajit married the chaste lady Gaurī by name. Cursed by her husband she became the river Bāhudā.¹

92. His son Yuvanāśva was a lord of kings. Māndhātā was Yuvanāśva's son and he conquered the three worlds.

93. His wife Caitrarathī was the daughter of Śaśabindu. She was called Bindumatī also. She was a chaste lady and in the whole world she was unrivalled in beauty.

94. That chaste lady was the eldest sister of ten thousand brothers. O brahmins, Māndhātā procreated in her two sons.

95. They were Purukutsa who was conversant with holy rites and Mucukunda who became the king. Purukutsa's son Trasadasyu became a monarch.

96-97. Sambhūta, his son, was born of queen Narmadā. Sambhūta's successor was Sudhanvan, Sudhanvan's son was Tridhanvan, suppressor of enemies. The scholarly Trayyāruṇa was the son of king Tridhanvan. His son Satyavrata was a mighty prince.

98-99. He was wicked. He put in obstacles when the Mantras were chanted in the course of a marriage. He abducted the wedded wives of other persons. Whether it was due to his childishness or lust, or delusion, or fool-hardiness or fickle-mindedness, he abducted lustfully the daughters of many citizens.

100. Calling out furiously "O disgraceful one" many times, Trayyāruṇa banished him on account of his sinful deeds.

101-102. Thus exiled he said to his father. "Where shall I go?" He asked him many times.

The father replied—"Go and stay among the Cāṇḍālas. O defiler of my family, I do not seek such a son as you." Thus commanded he went out of the city at the instance of his father.

1. *Bāhudā*: From the numerous references to this river, in the Purāṇas, it appears to have been a considerable river between the Gomati and Gaṅgā in or near the territory of Ayodhyā, having its sources well up in the Himālayas. The only river which satisfies these conditions is the modern Rāmagangā which joins the Ganges on the left, near Kanauj.

103-109. Vasiṣṭha the holy sage did not restrain him. O brahmins, the heroic Satyavrata, banished by his father stayed near the slums of the Cāṇḍālas. His father went away to the forest. O brahmins, on account of that sin, Indra did not rain in that land for twelve years.

Sage Viśvāmitra of great penance kept his wife in that land and performed an elaborate penance beyond the sea. His wife tied her middle son round her neck and went about offering him for sale in exchange of a hundred cows for maintaining the other sons. O brahmins, seeing the son of the great sage tied round the neck for sale, the righteous son of the king released him. Satyavrata the mighty prince sustained him for pleasing Viśvāmitra and to get his sympathy. Since he was tied round the neck he was called Gālava. The intelligent sage of severe penance was thus relieved by that heroic monarch.

CHAPTER SIX

Kings of the Solar Race

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. Lord Satyavrata, abiding by the rules of graceful behaviour maintained the wife of Viśvāmitra, out of sympathy and as a result of his own vow.

2. He killed wild buffaloes, boars and deer and tied up the pieces of their meat to a tree near Viśvāmitra's hermitage.

3-6. He adopted the holy rite of Upāṁśu Vrata (maintaining silence) and took to initiation (for a penance) lasting for twelve years. He stayed there at the instance of his father. When the king went to the forest it was sage Vasiṣṭha who administered the city of Ayodhyā, and the whole kingdom. He looked after the affairs of the harem as well in view of his relationship as the preceptor and the family-priest of the monarch. O sinless ones, whether it was due to his childishness or to the unavoidability of the future events, Satyavrata maintained a perpetual grudge against Vasiṣṭha. For, when he was banished, in spite of his being

a favourite son, by his father, sage Vasiṣṭha had not tried to intercede.

7-8. The Mantras chanted at the celebration of a marriage become effective when the seventh step is taken.¹ Hence Satyavrata killed the bridegrooms at the seventh step. But O brahmins, Satyavrata cherished anger against Vasiṣṭha thinking in his mind—"Although Vasiṣṭha knows Dharma he does not save me."

9-10. It was on ethical grounds that Vasiṣṭha the saintly lord, did not intervene on behalf of Satyavrata. This silent behaviour was not understood by Satyavrata. The noble father too was dissatisfied with him. Therefore, Indra did not shower rain for twelve years.

11-16. But now he took upon himself the vow of a great holy rite which is very difficult to maintain on the Earth. O brahmins, he maintained it thinking that expiation for his sin would be done thereby and the family saved. Vasiṣṭha the saintly lord did not restrain his father when he was being banished because the sage thought that his father might crown his son.

The powerful Satyavrata maintained the vow for twelve years.

Once when there was no meat anywhere, the prince saw Kāmadhenu² cow of sage Vasiṣṭha.³ O excellent sages, the king who followed the convention of the land where he stayed killed that cow. He had been so hungry and utterly exhausted. Due to his anger against Vasiṣṭha and delusion (he did not hesitate in this heinous crime). He ate the meat of cow and fed the sons of Viśvāmitra therewith. On knowing about it, Vasiṣṭha became furious.

Vasiṣṭha said:

17-19. O ruthless one, undoubtedly I shall fix this peg of sin even if the previous two pegs are not effective. Now your sin is threefold, dissatisfying your father, abducting another man's

1. *Saptapadi* a rite of walking seven steps round the sacred fire at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony.

2. *Kāmadhenu*: A mythical cow of Vasiṣṭha which satisfied all desires.

3. *Vasiṣṭha or Vasishtha*: Son of Varuṇa, a celebrated sage, the family priest of the solar race of kings and author of several Vedic hymns, particularly of the seventh Maṇḍala of the R̥gveda. He was the typical representative of the Brahmanic dignity and power. The efforts of Viśvāmitra to rise to his level form the subject of many legends.

wife and slaying of the cow belonging to your preceptor. Seeing thus his three pegs of sin, the sage of great penance called him Triśaṅku.¹ Hence he is known as Triśaṅku.

20. Since he maintained his wife, sage Viśvāmitra was pleased and he granted him boons.

21. When the prince was asked to choose a boon as he pleased he said "I shall like to go to heaven in this physical form".

22-23. When the drought of twelve years² had passed off, the sage Viśvāmitra crowned him in the ancestral kingdom and performed a sacrifice on his behalf. This sage of great penance made him ascend heaven in his physical form even as the gods and Vasiṣṭha looked on.

24. His wife Satyarathā born of the family of Kaikeya³ bore him a sinless son, Hariścandra.

25. That king is known (both as Hariścandra and Traiśankava. He is wellknown as an emperor and the performer of Rājasūya sacrifice.

26. Hariścandra's son was the king named Rohita. Harīta was Rohita's son and his son is known as Cañcu.

27. O excellent sage, Vijaya was the son of Cañcu. He was the conqueror of the entire Earth. hence, he was called Vijaya.

28. Ruruka was his son; and he was an expert on Royal wealth and virtue. Vṛka was the son of Ruruka and Bāhu was born of Vṛka.

29-30. The kings Haihayas and Tālajaṅghas ousted him from power. His pregnant wife took shelter in the hermitage of Aurva. Even in that righteous Yuga he was not very pious. Sagara the son of Bāhu was born alongwith the poison.

31-34. He went to the hermitage of Aurva and was well protected by Bhārgava. From Bhārgava the king Sagara obtained the miraculous weapon belonging to Agni. He conquered Earth

1. *Triśaṅku*: Satyavrata, son of king Trayyāruṇa. He was called Triśaṅku because he had committed three sins: (i) he had invited the wrath of his father by going astray, (ii) he abducted other men's wives; (iii) he had consumed the cow's flesh.

2. *Drought of twelve years*: There are several references to such droughts in the Puranic lore.

3. *Kaikeya*: the King of Kekaya desa. The country and the tribe derived their names from him. The dynasty belonged to the solar race.

after killing Haihayas and Tālajaṅghas¹. That unerring king the knower of real Dharma suppressed the religious rituals of Śakas,² Pahlavas³, Kṣatriyas and the Pāradas.⁴ O excellent sages.

The sages said :

How was he born alongwith the poison in the forest? Why did that unerring king furiously suppress the traditional religious rites of Śakas and others as well as those of Kṣatriyas of mighty prowess? O highly intelligent one, narrate this to us in detail.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

35-36. Bāhu was indulging in vice. Hence, he was entirely deprived of his kingdom, O excellent brahmans, by Haihayas and Tālajaṅghas alongwith Śakas. The five groups of kings viz Śakas, Yavanas,⁵ Pāradas, Kambojas⁶ and Pahlavas exhibited

1. *Haihayas and Tālajaṅghas:* The Haihaya race comprised the following tribes, Vīthotras (or Vītahavyas), Śaryātas, Bhojas, Avantis, Tuṇḍikeras (or Kuṇḍikeras), Tālajaṅghas, Bharatas, Sujātyas, Yādavas, Śūrasenas, Ānartas and Cedes.

2. *Śakas* were originally Kṣatriyas, but they were demoted as Śūdras as they incurred the displeasure and anger of Brahmans.

Śakas and Yādavas had helped the Haihaya kings. Paraśurāma, Sagara and Bharata defeated them in war and drove them off from the country.

Mbh (Udyoga Parva Ch. 19) mentions that king Sudakṣiṇa of Kambojas approached Duryodhana with an Akṣauhiṇi, along with the Yavanas to take part in the Bhārata war.

3. *Pahlavas:* Pahlavi people or ancient Persians who lived in the Punjab. King Sagara defeated their confederation, abrogated their laws, degraded them and made them wear beards.

4. *Pāradas:* They are mentioned with hill tribes, to have dwelt in the Western portion of the Himālayas. Manu (x. 43-44) states they were Kṣatriyas but were degraded because they did not observe sacred rites. They were ordered by king Sagara to wear long hair and they became Mlechhas and Dasyus.

5. *Yavanas:* They were originally Kṣatriyas, but became Śūdras by the curse of Brāhmaṇas. According to Mbh (Ādi P. Ch. 85) the Yavana race originated from Turvasu, son of Yayāti. Mbh (Udyoga P. Ch. 19) mentions that king Sudakṣiṇa of Kamboja joined Duryodhana and fought on his side. His army consisted of Kambojas, Yavanas and other tribes. Paṇini derives the word Yavana from yu—to mix and not to mix, i.e. those who could be associated with in certain matters such as alliance in war but not in other matters such as alliance by marriage, since they were degraded people.

6. *Kambojas* lived in the extreme north of India beyond Indus and were

their valour on behalf of Haihayas.

37. Deprived of his kingdom king Bāhu went to the forest followed by his wife. In his unbearable misery he put an end to his life.

38. His pregnant wife hailing from the family of Yadus followed him. O sinless ones, previously poison had been administered to her by her co-wife.

39. This co-wife arranged the funeral pyre of their common husband in the forest and ascended it. O brahmins, Aurva, the descendant of Bhṛgu, protected her sympathetically.

40. The child in the womb came out along with the poison at the hermitage and thus the mighty king Sagara was born.

41. Aurva performed the post-natal and other rites for the child. He taught him Vedas and Śāstras. Thereafter, he taught him the mode of wielding miraculous weapons.

42-43. He taught him the miraculous weapons of fire, O highly blessed ones, which were unbearable even to the immortals. Endowed with great strength enhanced by the power of miraculous missiles the king, ere long, killed the Haihayas in battle like the infuriated Rudra destroying the Vasus. Foremost among the renowned persons he earned further reputation in the world.

44. Thereafter, he resolved to exterminate Śakas, Yavanas, Kambojas, Pāradas and Pahlavas.

45. Being slaughtered by that heroic noble Sagara they sought shelter in Vasiṣṭha after submitting to that learned sage.

46. Vasiṣṭha the extremely brilliant sage offered them freedom from fear on certain conditions. He then restrained Sagara.

47. On hearing the words of his preceptor and being faithful to his promise Sagara suppressed their traditional rituals and changed their guise.

48. He released Śakas after shaving half of their heads. He completely shaved off the heads of Yavanas and Kambojas.

classed with Dāradas, Yavanas, Śakas and Chīnas. The country was famous for its large fleet, and breed of horses. Lesser places Kambojas south of Kashgar and east of modern Kafiristan. They were Aryans by speech. They were of Kṣatriya caste and became degraded through the extinction of sacred rites. They were called Mleechas as they followed evil customs. They were degraded by King Sagara who ordered them to shave their heads like Yavanas.

49. The Pāradas were made to keep their tresses untied and the Pahlavas were asked to grow moustaches and beards. They were deprived of Vedic studies and the chanting of Vaṣatkāra Manras by that noble king.

50-51. O excellent brahmins, all these Kṣatriyas—viz. “Śakas, Yavanas, Kambojas, Pāradas, Kālasarpas,¹ Māhiṣakas,² Daryas,³ Colas⁴ and Keralas were deprived of their traditional religious practices by king Sagara of noble soul at the instance of Vasiṣṭha.

52. After conquering this Earth, that virtuous and victorious king took initiation for the horsesacrifice and released the sacrificial horse to wonder at will.⁵

53. His horse that was roaming about near the South-Eastern sea on the shore was stolen and taken underground.

54-55. Thereupon, the king got that place dug up through his sons. When the great ocean was being dug up they came upon the primordial Puruṣa, lord Hari, Prajāpati Kṛṣṇa and Lord Viṣṇu who was sleeping in the guise of Kapila.⁶

56. O excellent sages, they were burned by the fiery splendour that came out of his eyes as he woke up. But four of them escaped.

57. They were Barhiketu, Suketu, king Dharmaratha and the valorous Pañcanada. These were the kings who maintained the line.

1. *Kālasarpa*—not identifiable.

2. *Māhiṣakas*—the same as the Māhiṣmakas of Māhiṣmatī—an ancient city which was situated on Narmadā river at a place where the Vindhya and Rkṣa mountains contact the valley. The town is identifiable with Oṅkāra Māndhātā in Madhya Pradesh.

3. *Daryas*—the reading is defective.

4. *Colas*—people living in the Cola country in the South. The Cola country extended along the Coromandal coastal plain from Tirupati to Pudukottai where it abutted on the Pāṇḍya territory. Its core was the middle Kāverī basin with Karur and Tiruchirpalli as its main centres.

5. *The horse-sacrifice*. A particular horse was let loose and allowed to wander at will for a year. If another king, out of jealousy or malice captured the horse, he had to fight with the army which protected the horse. The fight lasted till he was forced to submit. A hundred such sacrifices entitled the sacrificer to displace Indra from the Dominion of heaven. The horse was sometimes not immolated, but kept bound during the ceremony.

6. *Kapila*: An ancient sage, identified with Viṣṇu and considered as the founder of Sāṃkhya system.

58-59. Lord Hari, Nārāyaṇa granted him the boon that Ikṣvāku's race would be everlasting and they would have unreceding fame. The lord said that the ocean will be known as his son and his residence in the heavenly world would be everlasting. Taking Arghya unto him the ocean saluted the monarch.

60. Hence, the ocean earned the title Sāgara. Sagara got back the sacrificial horse from the ocean.

61. That king of great fame performed a hundred horse sacrifices. We have already heard that he had sixty thousand sons.

The sages said:

62. O Sūtaja, how were the mighty valorous sixty thousand sons of Sagara born? By what process or holy rite were they born?

Lomaharṣana said:

63-64. Sagara had two wives. They had their sins burnt by penance. The elder wife was the daughter of Vidarbha named Keśinī. The younger one was Mahatī the daughter of Ariṣṭanemi. She was extremely righteous and unrivalled in beauty in the world.

65-72. Aurva granted them a boon, understand it, O excellent brahmins. (He said)—“one of you endowed with penance may accept sixty thousand sons. Let the other accept one son who will perpetuate the race. You can choose as you please”. One of them, accordingly accepted sixty thousand sons and the other accepted one son who would uphold the race. The sage said—“So be it”. Keśinī bore a son Asamañjasa to Sagara. That son of great bustle became the king by the name of Pañcajana. The other lady gave birth to a gourd full of seeds. So we hear. There, sixty thousand foetuses, each of the size of a gangelly seed, grew up. As time passed they grew bigger comfortably. The nurses deposited those foetuses in pots filled with ghee. They gave each of them nourishing food. In the course of ten months they grew up in due order. These princes delighted Sagara in due course. O brahmins, thus he had sixty thousand sons. The sons of the king were born out of the gourd, like big foetus. The divine splendour of Nārāyaṇa had permeated the bodies of those noble persons.”

73. The only son (of the other lady) named Pañcajana became the king. Pañcajana's son was Amśumān. He was very valorous.

74-77. Dilipa was his son. He became renowned as Khaṭvāṅga. He obtained only a Muhūrta-long span of life. He came down from heaven and conceived of the three worlds by means of his intellect and intrinsic strength. O sinless ones, Dilipa's successor was lord Bhagiratha. He was the person who made the sacred river Gaṅgā descend (from heaven). He took it to the ocean and made it his daughter. Hence, Gaṅgā is called Bhāgīrathī by the chroniclers. Bhagiratha's son was renowned by the name Śruta.

78. Nabhaga was Śruta's son. He was extremely virtuous. Ambarīṣa was the son of Nabhaga and the father of Sindhudvīpa.

79. Ayutajit was the valorous successor of Sindhudvīpa. Ayutajit's son was R̥tuparṇa of great fame.

80. He was conversant with the divine Mantra called Akṣaḥṛdaya. That mighty king was a friend of Nala. R̥tuparna's son was Ārtaparṇi. He had earned great fame.

81. Sudās was his son. That king became the friend of Indra. King Saudāsa was the son of Sudās.

82. King Mitrasaha became well known as Kalmāṣapāda. Kalmāṣapāda's son was known as Sarvakarma.

83. Sarvakarma's son was the famous Anaranya. Nighna was the son of Anaranya. Nighna had two sons.

84. They were Anamitra and Raghu. They were the most excellent of all good kings. Anamitra's son was Duliduha who was a scholarly king.

85-87. Dilipa was his son. He was the great-grand-father of Rāma. Dilipa's son Raghu was the mighty king of Ayodhyā. Aja was born as the son of Raghu. To him was born Daśaratha. Rāma was born to Daśaratha. Rāma's son was Kuṣa.

88. Atithi was born of Kuṣa. He was a righteous king of great fame. The valorous son Niṣadha was born of Atithi.

89. Nala was the son of Niṣadha; Nabha was the son of Nala. Nabha's son was Puṇḍarika and his son was Kṣemadh-anvan.

90. The valorous Devānika was the son of Kṣemadhanvan. The son of Devānika Ahinagu was a great lord.

91. Ahinagu's successor was Sudhanvan. Sudhanvan's son was king Śala.

92. Śala's son was a righteous soul, Ukyā. Vajranābha was his son and Nala was the son of that noble monarch.

93. O excellent sages, only two Nalas are known in the Purāṇas. One was Virasena's son and the other a leading scion of the Ikṣvāku race.

94. The kings born in the family of Ikṣvāku have been glorified in accordance with their importance. Such were the kings of the solar race who were highly brilliant and brave.

95. He who reads this creation of Āditya, Vivasvān, lord Śrāddhadeva, the bestower of nourishment to the people shall be blessed with progeny. He will attain the world of Vivasvān.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Birth of Soma

1. O Brahmins, the father of Soma, the saintly lord Atri was the mind-born son of Brahmā who was desirous of creating subjects.

2. Formerly, Atri performed a great penance for three thousand divine years. So we have heard.

3. His semen attaining the state of Soma juice rose up. Water exuded from his eyes in ten directions and illuminated the ten quarters.

4. The ten delighted goddesses of the quarters conceived that foetus. They held it collectively but they were unable to do so any longer.

5. When the ten quarters were unable to uphold the foetus, it fell down to the Earth along with them.

6. On seeing Soma fallen to the earth, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, made him ride in a chariot for the welfare of the worlds.

7. O excellent sages, when the son of Atri the noble sage fell down, Devas, the sons of Brahmā, and others eulogised him.

8. The splendour of the resplendent Soma who was being eulogised, was spread all round for the nourishment of the worlds.

9. The Soma of excessive fame, circumambulated the ocean-girt Earth twentyone times by means of that important chariot.

10. His splendour that exuded reached the Earth and turned into the medicinal herbs whereby the universe is sustained.

11. Lord Soma acquired resplendence through the eulogies and holy rites. The highly blessed lord performed penance for hundred thousand billion years.

12. Thereafter, O excellent sages, Brahmā the foremost among those who know the Brahman offered him kingdom of seeds, medicinal herbs, brahmins and waters.

13. After acquiring that extensive realm, Soma the most excellent of those who possess gentleness performed the Rājasūya sacrifice with hundreds and thousands of gold pieces as sacrificial gifts.

14. O brahmins, we have heard that Soma distributed the three worlds as gifts to those important brahminical sages who had assembled there for sacrifice.

15. The Rtvik was Hiranyagarbha Brahmā, Atri and Bhṛgu Adhvaryus. Hari together with many sages was the participant.

16. Nine goddesses who served him—Sinivalī, Kuhū, Dyuti, Puṣṭi, Prabhā, Vasu, Kirti, Dhṛti, Lakṣmī.

17. After the Avabhṛtha¹ ablution the overlord Moon who was unexcited and who was worshipped by Devas and sages shone excessively illuminating the ten quarters.

18. After attaining this rare prosperity coveted even by the sages, his intellect, O dear ones, whirled. In his impudence tactlessness too clouded his intellect.

19. Slighting the son of Aṅgiras, Soma who was deluded by the arrogance of excessive prosperity, suddenly abducted the wife of Bṛhaspati.

20. Although repeatedly requested by Devas and celestial sages he did not hand over Tārā back to Aṅgiras.

1. *Avabhṛthasandhā* : ablution of the sacrificer and the sacrificial vessels after a sacrifice.

21-22. Uśanas then attacked Aṅgiras from the rear. Taking his bow Ajagava Rudra did the same. A massive miraculous missile Brahmaśiras was discharged by that noble deity aiming at Devas. Thereby their fame was destroyed.

23. Thereupon, the battle between Devas and Asuras ensued. It became known as Tārakāmaya battle. The battle raged furiously causing destruction of the worlds.

24. O brahmins, Devas and Tuśitas who remained alive sought shelter in the eternal and primordial god Brahmā.

25. Then Brahmā himself restrained Rudra and Uśanas and handed over Tārā back to Aṅgiras.

26. On seeing her pregnant, Brhaspati was furious and said— “By no means should the foetus be retained by you in your vaginal passage that belongs to me.”

27. She went to a forest of Iṣikā reeds and expelled the foetus. Immediately after the birth that lordly child seized the bodies of Devas.

28. Thereupon, the excellent Devas became suspicious and said to Tārā “Tell us the truth; who is the father of this child Soma or Brhaspati ?”

29. When she did not answer them on being asked by Devas, Kumāra the foremost among the slayers of Dasyus, began to curse her.

30. Thereupon, Brahmā restrained him and asked Tārā to clarify the doubt “O Tārā, tell us the truth whose son is this ?”

31-32. With her palms joined in reverence she told Brahmā that he was the son of Soma. Then Prajāpati Soma kissed him on the head and named the son Budha. Budha stands in the firmament diametrically opposite to Brhaspati.

33. In a princess he begot a son. His son was Purūravas of great brilliance, the son born to Ilā.

34. That noble king begot of Urvaśī seven sons. Thus the birth of Soma that increases fame has been recounted to you.

35-36. O excellent sages, now understand his line. Listening to the story of Soma is conducive to attaining wealth, longevity and health. It is holy. It is the means of attaining whatever is thought of. On hearing it one is released from all sins.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Kings of the Lunar Race

Lomaharṣana said:

1. O excellent sages, Budha's son Purūravas was learned and brilliant. He was liberal and he performed sacrifices distributing gifts extensively.

2. The king was an expounder of Brahman. When attacked by the enemy in battle he was irrepressible. He performed Agnihotra and other sacrifices.

3. He was truthful in speech and pious in mind. He indulged in sexual intercourse very secretly. He was perpetually unrivalled in renown.

4. The entire Vedic lore was present in him due to his penance. The famous celestial damsel Urvaśī set aside prestige and wooed him.

5-6. O brahmins, the king spent periods of ten, five, five, six, seven and eight years staying with Urvaśī in the charming garden Caitraratha, on the banks of Gangā, in Alakā¹, in Viśālā and in the excellent park Nandana.

7. He stayed in the Northern Kurus which abounded in charming fruit trees, in the foothills of Gandhamādana² and in the top of the Meru.

1. *Alakā*: the capital of Kubera, situated on a peak of the Himālayas inhabited also by Śiva.

2. *Gandhamādana*: S. M. Ali (*the Geography of the Purāṇas*, pp. 58, 59) remarks: the Gandhamādana is the range the location of which is highly controversial. There is a confusion in the Purāṇas about the ranges which immediately surround or flank Meru. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa states Meru is confined between the mountains Nila and Niṣadha (on the North and South). The Gandhamādana is also mentioned in some Purāṇas. It is also spoken of as one of the Southern Buttresses of Meru (*Matsya*), as one of the filament mountains on the west, as a range of boundary mountain on the south, and a Varṣa mountain of Ketumāla (*Vāyu*). The Bhāgavata gives different names to different parts of Gandhamādana. For instance, the buttress is called Merumandara, the filament mountain the Harṣa, Gandhamādana is restricted to the eastern range. But according to S. M. Ali, Gandhamādana means the northern ridge of the Hindu Kush arch with its northern extension the Khwaja Mohammad range, the Hindu Kush consists of two parallel ranges which come closer to each other at the apex of the arch, south of the Pamirs (Meru). These ridges are well-defined in Afghanistan, less so in Kashmir and reappear again

8. In these excellent and important sylvan regions usually frequented by Devas, the king dallied in the company of Urvaśī¹ with great joy.

9. He sported about in extremely holy lands praised by sages. He administered his kingdom from Prayāga.²

10. The royal son of Ilā, the most excellent among men, wielded power. He earned fame at Pratiṣṭhāna on the northern bank of Gaṅgā.

11-12. The seven sons of Aila Purūravas were on a par with the sons of Devas. Those noble princes born in celestial regions were Āyu, Amāvasu, Viśvāyu, Śrutāyu, Dṛḍhāyu, Vanāyu, Bahvāyu. These were the sons of Urvaśī.

13. Amāvasu's successor was Bhīma, an imperial king. The glorious Kañcanaprabha was the king who succeeded Bhīma.

14. Kañcana's successor was the mighty and learned Suhotra. Jahnu was the son of Suhotra. He was born of the womb of Keśinī.

15-21. He performed a great sacrifice of long duration. Greedily seeking a husband Gaṅgā wooed him as her husband. Since he dissented, Gaṅgā flooded his sacrificial hall. O excellent brahmins, on seeing his sacrificial hall thus flooded the infuriated son of Suhotra, king Jahnu³ cursed her. He proclaimed—"See, I shall drink up your waters and make your effort futile. O Gaṅgā, ere long reap the fruit of your arrogance." Thereafter, on seeing Gaṅgā drunk up by the saintly king the sages brought her back. Thereafter, she came to be known Jāhnavī the daughter of Jahnu. Jahnu married Kāverī the daughter of Yuvanāśva. Due to the curse of Yuvanāśva Gaṅgā

on the east. The Purāṇas called the northern ridge Gandhamādana. The contradictory statements in the Purāṇas that Gandhamādana is in the south, east or west are reconciled if we keep in mind the correct alignment of the northern range of Hindukush. This range touches the Pamirs in the south and falls away from it towards southwest and southeast.

1. *Urvaśī*: A heavenly nymph. For details P.E.

2. *Prayāga*—a holy city in Uttara Pradeśa, situated at the meeting-point of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

3. *Jahnu*—A sage. There is a legend that once Gaṅgā which flowed through the earth submerged the hermitage of Jahnu who became angry at her haughtiness and drank up the river. But at the entreaty of Bhagiratha he pushed Gaṅgā through his ear. Since that event Gaṅgā got the name Jāhnavi.

flowed into two halves flanking Kāverī the most excellent of rivers, the uncensured wife of Jahnu. Jahnu begot his beloved and righteous son Sunandā, of Kāverī. Ajaka was his son.

22. Ajaka's successor, king Balākāśva was a habitual hunter. Kuśa was his son.

23-27. Kuśa had four sons of divine brilliance: Kuśika, Kuśanābha, Kuśāmba and Mūrtimān. This king Kuśika was ousted from power by the Pahlavas and he roamed in the forest. Resolving "I shall obtain a lordly son equal to Indra" he performed a penance. Indra in his fear approached him and understood his purpose. When full thousand years had passed, Indra met him. On realising that he was competent to procreate a son, after seeing the sage of severe penance the thousand-eyed Indra agreed to become his son.

Most excellent of Devas Lord Indra resolved to become his son. King Gādhi was Maghavan himself born as the son of Kuśika.

28. Paurukutsānī (Daughter of Purukutsa) was his wife and Gādhi was born of her. Gādhi's daughter was the blessed splendid lady Satyavatī.

29. Lord Gādhi gave her in marriage to Ṛcīka the son of Kāvya. Her husband the descendant of Bhṛgu, the delighter of the members of the family of Bhṛgu, was pleased with her.

30. He prepared two Carus for securing sons for her and Gādhi too. Ṛcīka the descendant of Bhṛgu called her and said:

31-32. One part of Caru should be used by you, and the other part should be used by your mother. A brilliant son, the leader of Kṣatriyas will be born to her. He will not be conquered by the Kṣatriyas in the world. He will slay the leading Kṣatriyas. O auspicious lady, this Caru will secure for you a calm and courageous son who will be the most excellent brahmin with austerity as his asset."

33-36. After saying this to his wife, Ṛcīka the scion of the family of Bhṛgu, perpetually devoted to penance, entered the forest. At that time in the context of his pilgrimage to holy places the king Gādhi came to the hermitage of Ṛcīka accompanied by his wife in order to see his daughter. Carefully handling the Carus, Satyavatī approached her mother and told her about their effi-

cacy. As they looked alike, the mother in her ignorance gave to her daughter her own Caru and swallowed the daughter's Caru instead of her own.

37-40. Then Satyavatī conceived a foetus that was destined to destroy the Kṣatriyas. Her body became bright and resplendent. She assumed a fearful look. Rcīka saw her and understood the fact by his Yogic power. The most excellent brahmin said to his fair-complexioned wife—"By changing the Carus, O gentle lady, you have been deceived by your mother. An extremely fearful son of ruthless activities will be born to you. You will have a brother, an ascetic who will realise the Brahman.

41-47. The entire Vedic lore had been instilled (into the Caru) by me with my penance."

Thus warned by her husband, the highly blessed Satyavatī propitiated her husband—"Let not a base brahmin like this be born as a son unto me begotten by you."

When requested thus, the sage said—"O gentle lady, this is not my desire. I did not imagine that it should be thus. But the son is destined to be ruthless in activities on account of his father and mother."

Thus addressed, Satyavatī said: "O sage, if you wish you can create even worlds. What then about a mere son? It behoves you to grant me a straightforward son of subdued nature. O my lord, well may such a grandson be born to us if this cannot be altered otherwise, O excellent brahmin."

Then, he blessed her through the power of his penance. He said "O gentle lady of fair complexion, whether it be the son or grandson I don't feel any difference. Everything shall take place in accordance with what you desire."

48. Thereafter, Satyavrata gave birth to a son named Jamadagni. He was tranquil and devoted to penance. (As a descendant of Bhṛgu) he was also known as Bhārgava.

49-54. It was due to the change of Caru pertaining to Indra and Viṣṇu given by Bhṛgu. Jamadagni was born due to the sacrifice performed in the half pertaining to Viṣṇu. The holy-natured Satyavatī devoted to truthful virtue flowed as a great river named Kausiki¹.

1. Kausiki—the hermitage of sage Viśvāmitra stood on its bank. It has been identified with Gomati (P.E.) The modern name of this river is Kosi which flows through Bihar.

There was a king in the family of Ikṣvāku named Reṇu. His blessed daughter was Kāmali known also as Reṇukā. The son of Ṛcīka endowed with penance and learning begot the terrible Jāmadagnya Rāma of Kāmali, daughter of Reṇu. He was an excellent master of the science of archery as well as all lores. He shone like the blazing fire. Thus Jamadagni the most excellent among the knowers of Brahman was born as the extremely famous son of Satyavatī due to the potency of penance of Ṛcīka son of Aurva. (The middle son was Śunahśepha and the youngest was Śunahpuccha.

55-60. Gādhi, the son of Kuśika begot Viśvāmitra as his son and successor. He was subdued in mind due to his penance and learning. Viśvāmitra the righteous soul attained equality with the brahminical sage (Vasiṣṭha) and later became a brahminical sage. He is remembered by the name Viśvaratha too. Due to the grace of Bhṛgu he was born of Kauśika and perpetuated the race of Kauśika. Devarāta and others are known as the sons of Viśvāmitra. They are famous in the three worlds. Their names are Devarāta, Kati, Hiraṇyākṣa, Reṇu, Reṇukā, Saṅkṛti, Gālava, Mudgala, Madhucchandas, Jaya, Devala, Aṣṭaka, Kacchapa, and Hariya. The Kātyāyanas are the descendants of Kati. Hiraṇyākṣa, Reṇu and Reṇuka were born of Śālavatī.

61-63. The spiritual lines of the noble Kauśikas are famous. They are: Prāṇins, Babhrus, Dhyānajapyas, Pārthivas, Devarātas, Śālaṅkāyanas, Bāskalas, Lohitas, Yamadūtas, Kārūṣakas, Sauśravas, Kauśikas, Saindhavāynas, Devalas, Reṇus, Marṣanas from Yājñavalkya, Audumbaras, Ambubhiṣṇāvas, Tārakāyanas, Cuñculas, Śālavatyas, Hiraṇyākṣas, Saṅkṛtyas, Gālavas, Nārāyaṇis. The Kauśikas are numerous and their lines are merged with many other sages. O excellent sages, in this race there is that admixture of brahmins and Kṣatriyas¹ as evidenced by that of the descendants of Puru and the brahminical sage Kauśika.

64. Śunahśepha is known as the eldest of the sons of Viśvāmitra. That excellent sage changes his spiritual line from that of Bhārgava to that of Kauśika.

65-68. Śunahśepha, the son of Viśvāmitra was employed as the sacrificial animal in the sacrifice of Hariścandra. Śunahśepha

1. This shows that the caste was not rigid during this period.

was handed over to Viśvāmitra by Devas. Since he was handed over by Devas he came to be known as Devarāta. Seven sons beginning with Devarāta were born to Viśvāmitra. Aṣṭaka, the son of Viśvāmitra, was born of Dr̥śadvatī. Aṣṭaka's son was Lauhī. Thus the group of descendants of Jahnu has been mentioned by me. Henceforth, I shall mention the family of Āyu the noble soul.

CHAPTER NINE

Genealogy of Ancient Kṣatriyas

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1-2. Āyu had five sons who were mighty heroes born of the daughter of Svarbhānu named Prabhā. They became kings. Nahuṣa was the eldest among them. Vṛddhaśarmā came next. The rest—Rambha, Raji and Anenas became famous in the three worlds.

3. Raji begot five hundred sons. This group of Kṣatriya princes is known as Rājeya. They generated fear even in the mind of Indra.

4. When a battle between Devas and Asuras, destined to be tremendously terrible, was imminent, both went to Brahmā and spoke to him:

Devas and Asuras said :

5. O lord of living beings, who will be victorious in the battle between us? We wish to hear precisely.

Brahmā said:

6-7. There is no doubt that only those will conquer the three worlds, on whose behalf lord Raji takes up arms and fights in the battle. Where there is Raji there is courage; where there is courage there is glory. Where there is glory and courage there is righteousness and victory.

8. Thus advised by Lord Brahmā Devas and Asuras became

delighted. Desirous of victory and hopeful of winning him over they approached Raji the leader of the people.

9. Indeed, king Raji born of Prabhā, and the grandson of Svarbhānu, was excessively resplendent. He was destined to perpetuate the lunar race.

10. Delighted in their minds, Devas and Asuras said to Raji—"Please take up your excellent bow for our victory".

11. Thereupon, conversant with the purpose of Devas and Asuras, Raji said thus, with an eye on his own interest and revealing his glory.

Raji said:

12. "O Indra, I shall fight in the battle if after conquering the asuras through my valour I can duly become Indra.

13. At the outset O brahmins, Devas who were delighted in their minds assented to the proposal. "O king, this desire of yours can be realised as you wish".

14. On hearing the words of Devas king Raji asked the leaders of Asuras too, in the same manner as he had asked Devas.

15. The Asuras full of arrogance and realising their own interest, proudly spoke to the monarch thus.

Asuras said:

16-21. "Our Indra is Prahrāda on whose behalf we fight and conquer. O excellent king, you join us shining with glory in this battle."

Even as the king was about to say "so be it" he was urged by Devas, "You will certainly become Indra after conquering Asuras". The king who was thus urged, killed those Asuras who could not be slain by the thunderbolt-armed Indra. After killing all Asuras lord Raji of great glory and self-control redeemed the lost glory of Devas. Then, in the company of Devas, Indra said to Raji of great valour—"I am Rajiputra (son of Raji), O dear one, you are Indra of all Devas. I, Indra, am your son, I shall attain fame through your activities.

On hearing these words of Indra Raji was deceived by his Māyā.

22-25. The delighted king said to Indra—"So be it."

When that saintly king passed away Raji's sons seized their legacy, the kingdom of heaven from Indra. The five hundred

sons attacked the abode of Indra, the heavenly world Triviṣṭapa.¹

When they became excessively deluded, passionately mad, irreligious and batters of the brahmins, their power and valour were destroyed. Then Indra regained his prosperity and the excellent abode after killing the sons of Raji who were slaves of lust and wrath.

26. He who listens to this narrative of dethronement and re-establishment of Indra and he who retains it in memory will never fall to wretchedness.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

27. Rambha was issueless. I shall mention the line of Anenas. King Pratikṣatra of great fame was the son of Anenas.

28. Pratikṣatra's son Śrījaya was very famous. Jaya was Śrījaya's son and Vijaya was his son.

29. Kṛti was the son of Vijaya and his son was Haryatvata. Haryatvata's son Sahadeva was a valorous king.

30. Sahadeva's son the pious Nadīna was a famous king. Nadīna's son was Jayatsena and Jayatsena's son was Samikṛti.

31. Samikṛti's son was Kṣatravṛddha. He was righteous-souled and he earned great fame. The line of Anenas has been recounted. Now hear Kṣatravṛddha's lineage.

32. Kṣatravṛddha's son was Śunahotra of great fame. Śunahotra had three successors who were extremely righteous.

33-34. They were Kāśya, Śalla and Gr̥tsamada. Gr̥tsamada's son was Śunaka. Śaunakas (sons of Śunaka) were brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. Ārṣiṣeṇa was the son of Śalla and his son was Kaśyapa.

35-37. Kaśyapa's son was Dirghatapas who ruled over Kāśi. Dhanvan was the son of Dirghatapas and Dhanvantari was his son. At the conclusion of a great penance when the king had become old, lord Dhanvantari was born. He was the great ruler of Kāśi and was an expert physician. He could cure all ailments.

38. He learnt medical science from sage Bharadvāja. He divided therapeutic processes into eight sections and taught them to his disciples.-

1. *Triviṣṭapa*—Abode of Indra.

39. Dhanvantari's son was Ketumān. The heroic Bñimarratha was the son of Ketumān.

40. Bhīmaratha's son was Divodāsa. Divodāsa was a righteous monarch who became the ruler of Vārāṇasī.

41-42. At this time, O brahmins, a Rākṣasa named Kṣemaka attacked Vārāṇasī and rendered it desolate. It had been cursed by Nikumbha that it would remain void and desolate for a thousand years.

43. As soon as it had been cursed king Divodāsa founded a beautiful city at the extremity of his realm on the banks of Gomati.

44-48. Formerly, Vārāṇasī belonged to Bhadraśreṇya. It was after killing one hundred sons of Bhadraśreṇya who were excellent bowmen, that king Divodāsa occupied the territory. By that powerful king the realm of Bhadraśreṇya was seized. Bhadraśreṇya had a son Durdama who later became famous. As he was a child, Divodāsa let him alone out of mercy. Then the king seized the hereditary realm of Haihaya.

The legacy of his forefathers that had been forcefully taken away by Divodāsa was retaken by Durdama the son of Bhadraśreṇya. O blessed ones, thus revenge was taken by that king of good spiritual splendour.

49. The heroic Pratardana was born of Drṣadvatī and Divodāsa. That son even as a boy mightily beat back the enemy.

50. Pratardana had two sons: Vatsa and Bharga. Vatsa's son was Śatrujit and his son was Rtadhvaja.

51. His son was Alarka. He was favourably disposed to the brahmins and truthful in speech. A verse has been sung by the veterans about Alarka the saintly monarch.

52. He was a handsome youth. He ruled for sixtysix thousand years. He upheld his family by his mighty prowess.

53. By the grace of Lopāmudrā he attained the maximum longevity. Endowed with youth and beauty he ruled over a very extensive kingdom.

54. When the period of curse came to an end the mighty king killed the Rākṣasa Kṣemaka and re-occupied the beautiful city of Vārāṇasī.

55. Sannati's successor was a righteous king Sunītha. Sunītha's successor Kṣema gained good fame and glory.

56. Kṣema's son was Ketumān and Suketu was his son. We know from traditional records that Dharmaketu was the son of Suketu.

57. Dharmaketu's successor was the mighty warrior Satyaketu. Satyaketu's son was king Vibhu.

58. Ānarta was Vibhu's son and Sukumāra was his son. Sukumāra's son Dhṛṣṭaketu was extremely virtuous.

59. The successor of Dhṛṣṭaketu was king Veṇuhotra. Veṇuhotra's son was king Bharga.

60. Vatsabhūmi was the son of Vatsa and Bhargabhūmi the son of Bharga. These were the descendants of Aṅgiras the scions of the family of Bhṛgu.

61. They were brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas, thousands in number and endowed with brilliance. These Kāśyapas (rulers of Kāśi) have been recounted. Understand the descendants of Nahuṣa.

CHAPTER TEN

The Narrative of Yayāti

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. Nahuṣa had six successors who possessed the refulgence of Indra and Viṣṇu. They were born of Virajā the daughter of Pitṛs.

2. They were—Yati, Yayāti, Śaryāti, Āyāti, Yāti and Suyāti. Among them it was Yayāti who became the king.

3. Yati was the eldest. Yayāti was junior to him. The extremely virtuous Yati married Gomatī the daughter of Kakutstha but he became a sage. He realised Brahman and attained absolution.

4-8. Yayāti, the eldest of the remaining five conquered the Earth. He married Devayāṇī the daughter of Uśanas and Śarmiṣṭhā the Asura lady the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan.

Devayāṇī gave birth to Yadu and Turvasu. Śarmiṣṭhā the daughter of Vṛṣaparvan gave birth to Druhyu, Anu and Purū.

Indra who was pleased with him gave him an extremely resplendent divine chariot. It had all its parts made of gold. Excellent divine white horses as fast as the mind were fitted to it. He conducted his activities by means of this chariot. With this fine chariot the invincible Yayāti conquered the Earth in six days and defeated Devas and Asuras in battle.

9-17. That chariot belonged to the kings of Kuru race. From Janamejaya the descendant of Kuru, whose other name was Saṁvartavasu it was handed over to Emperor Parikṣita the scion of the family of Kuru. The chariot vanished due to the curse of sage Garga. King Janamejaya spoke harsh words to Garga and violently injured Garga's son who was then a mere boy. Hence, he incurred the sin of brahmin slaughter. Emitting the bad odour of rusting iron the saintly king roamed about here and there. He was shunned by the citizens and the country-folk. He did not attain pleasure of peace of mind by any means. He was extremely miserable. He failed to get consolation from any quarter. The king then sought refuge in Śaunaka the leading brahmin. O excellent brahmans, in order to sanctify him, Śaunaka performed a horse sacrifice on behalf of king Janamejaya. When he had completed the concluding ablution of Avabhṛtha the stinking odour of rusting iron was expelled. The divine chariot was in the possession of Cedi ruler having been handed over to him by Indra who was pleased with him. From him Bṛhadratha acquired it. From him it came into the possession of king Bṛhadratha (Jarāsandha). After killing Jarāsandha, Bhīma redeemed that excellent chariot. Out of love the scion of the family of Kuru, Bhīma gave it to Vasudeva.

18. After conquering the Earth extending to the oceans and containing seven continents Yayāti, the son of Nahuṣa, divided his kingdom among his sons.

19-21. Yayāti crowned his eldest son Yadu in the Eastern quarter; Purū in the middle land; Turvasu in the South-Eastern quarter. The entire Earth with its cities and seven continents is being ruled till today by them with due deference to their respective jurisdiction. O excellent sages, I shall recount their progeny later on.

22. The king was ageing. He set aside his bows and arrows.

He entrusted the entire administration to his kinsmen including the five leading men, his sons.

23. Having deposited his arms, the king roamed over the Earth. King Yayāti was extremely delighted.

24-25. After distributing the kingdom thus, Yayāti said to Yadu—"Dear son, accept my old age. Becoming youthful once again by your handsome features and depositing my old age with you, I shall travel round the Earth on another mission. Do accept my old age".

Yadu said:

26. O king, Alms have been promised to a brahmin by me. I have not yet handed them over to him. Without fulfilling it I shall not take up your old age.

27. There are many defects in senility caused by drink and diet. Hence, O king, I am not enthusiastic over accepting your old age.

28. O king you have many sons whom you love more than me. O knower of virtues, choose another son to take up your senility.

29. Thus repulsed by Yadu the king became furious. Yayāti, the most excellent among the eloquent said thus, rebuking his son.

Yayāti said:

30. "What other stage of life will you have? What virtue or righteousness is left for you, O wicked one, after slighting me since I am your preceptor".

31. Saying thus, O brahmins, in his anger he cursed his son thus—"O deluded one, your subjects will be undoubtedly deprived of their kingdom.

32. O excellent brahmins, Yayāti was repulsed by three of his other sons too, the king repeated the same to Druhyu, Turvasu and Anu.

33. The infuriated Yayāti, the unconquerable monarch cursed them also. O excellent brahmins, everything about him has been precisely mentioned by me.

34. After cursing the four sons elder to Purū thus, O brahmins, the king addressed the very same words to Purū also.

35. "O Purū, if you agree, I shall become youthful once again with your handsome features and shall roam about the Earth after depositing my old age with you."

36. That valorous Purū took over the senility of his father. With the handsome features of Purū, Yayāti roamed about the Earth.

37. Seeking the ultimate satiety of lustful dalliance the lord, the most excellent of kings indulged in amorous sports in the garden Caitraratha in the company of Viśvācī.

38. When he became utterly dissatisfied and disgusted with lustful orgies and enjoyment of pleasures the king took back his senility from Purū.

39-46. In this connection, O excellent sages, the following verses were sung by Yayāti—"He who withdraws within himself all lustful passions like the tortoise that draws its limbs within itself is indeed a person who has attained yoga¹

Never does lust and lechery subside by indulging in the enjoyment of sexual pleasures. Just as the fire blazes all the more with the ghee poured in, so also it increases at every indulgence. If one were to possess all grains of rice and barley on the Earth, if one were to possess all gold, if all were to become the master of all animals on the Earth or if one were to indulge in sexual union with all women one will find that it is not enough to quench thirst. That being so one should not be deluded by these things. When one does not have any sinful feeling towards any living being, mentally, physically and verbally one is likely to attain Brahman. When one is not afraid of others, when none is afraid of him or when one does not like or dislike others too much, one attains Brahman. Happiness befalls that person who eschews greed and covetousness which are impossible to be eschewed by the wicked, which do not become old even when one becomes old and decrepit and which is an oilment that comes to an end only when the vital airs die out. When one becomes old, one's hair grow old; when one becomes old, one's teeth become old; but the hope and greed for wealth and life never grow old when one grows old. The happiness that one is supposed to derive from

1. The tortoise simile is very popular with the yogins. A yogi withdraws his lustful passions within himself just as the tortoise withdraws its limbs within itself.

indulgence in sexual pleasure, the great happiness that one may have in heaven—these two do not deserve even a sixteenth part of happiness one is sure to have when greed is destroyed."

47-51. After saying this that saintly king entered the forest accompanied by his wife. He performed a great penance of long duration. That king of great fame performed penance on the peak Bhṛgutunga.¹ At the conclusion of penance he performed holy rite of refraining from taking food and cast off his mortal body. Accompanied by his wife he attained heaven. O excellent sages, there were born five excellent saintly kings in his family. The entire Earth is pervaded by them as if by the rays of the sun. O excellent sages, the man who listens to the story of Yayāti continuously shall become endowed with progeny, longevity and renown. Now listen, I shall recount the family of Yadu honoured by kings. It was in this that Nārāyaṇa, Hari was born as the uplifter of the family of Vṛṣnis.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Dynasty of Yayāti

The brahmins said:

1. O Śveta, we would like to hear precisely the line of successors of Purū, Druhyu, Anu, Yadu and Turvasu, separately.

Lomaharṣana said:

2. O leading sages, listen at the outset of the race of Purū even as I relate it in detail and in due order.

3. Suvira was the son of Purū: Manasyu was his son. The king Abhayada was the son of Manasyu.

4. King Sudhanvan was the son of Abhayada, Sudhanvan's son was Subāhu, Raudrāśva was his son.

1. *Bhṛgutunga*—A place made sacred by the performance of tapas by Bhṛgu. Rcīka had lived there with his wife and children. It has been located either in the Himālayas or in the Vindhya (MW).

5-8. Raudrāśva had ten sons and ten daughters. The sons were—Daśārṇeyu, Kṛkaṇeyu, Kakṣeyu, Sthanḍileyu, Sannateyu, Rceyu, Jaleyu, Sthaleyu, Dhaneyu, and Vaneyu. The daughters were Bhadrā, Śūdrā, Madrā, Śaladā, Maladā, Khaladā, Naladā, Surasā, Gocapalā and Striratnakūṭā. Sage Prabhākara of the family of Atri was their husband.

9-14. When the sun was eclipsed by Rāhu and he seemed to be falling down from the firmament to the Earth, the whole world was enveloped in darkness. Then it was his sage who caused light. At this utterance of the sage, 'Hail to Thee', the sun who was about to fall did not fall to the Earth from the firmament. This sage of great penance founded the excellent spiritual lines after Atri. In sacrifices Devas offered him the same power as were bestowed on Atri. He begot of Bhadra a son named Soma. In all he had ten sons of great merit who were engaged in severe penance. O brahmins, they established their spiritual lines. They were masters of the Vedas. They were known as Svastyā-treyas. They were devoid of three types of worldly wealth, viz. gold, cattle and land.

Kakṣeyu had three sons of great might and heroism.

15. They were Sabhānara, Cākṣuṣa and Paramanyu, Sabhānara's son was the learned king Kālānala.

16. Kālānala's son Srñjaya was conversant with virtue. The heroic king Purañjaya was the son of Srñjaya.

17. O excellent sages, Janamejaya was the son of Purañjaya, Mahāśāla was the son of pious king, Janamejaya.

18. He was recognized by Devas and his fame was established all over the Earth. The son of Mahāśāla named Mahāmanas was virtuous.

19. Mahāmanas was a born hero; he was honoured by Devas too. O brahmins, Mahāmanas begot two sons.

20-23. They were Uśinara who was conversant with Dharma and Titikṣu who was very mighty.

Uśinara had five wives, daughters of king Vṛṣa as a result of great penance. They were Nṛgā, Kṛmi, Navā, Darvā and Drṣadvati. Uśinara begot of them five sons who perpetuated his line. Nṛga was born of Nṛgā, Kṛmi of Kṛmi; Nava of Navā and Suvarata of Darvā, Sibi of Drṣadvati.

24-29. O brahmins, the realm of Sibi is known as the Sibis,

that of Nṛga as the Yaudheyas; that of Nava as the Navarāṣṭra, the city of Kṛmila belonged to Kṛmi. The realm of Ambaṣṭhas belonged to Suvrata.

Understand the sons of Śibi. The four sons of Śibi are known as the Śibis. They were—Vṛśadarbha, Suvīra, Kaikeya and Madraka. Their realms were very flourishing by the names of Vṛśadarbhās, Suvīras, Kaikeyas and Madrakas.

O brahmins, Titikṣu became a king in the Eastern region. He had many sons. Uṣadratha of great vigour was prominent among them. His son was Phena. Sutapas was born of Phena. Bali was the son of Sutapas. His quiver was golden. He was a great Yогin and a king.

30-36. He procreated five sons who continued his lineage on the Earth. Aṅga was born at the outset. Then were born Vaṅga, Suhma, Puṇḍra and Kaliṅga. The Kṣatriya descendants of Bali are known as Bāleya Kṣatras. There were brahminical descendants of Bali too. They too established their family on the earth.

O brahmins, a boon had been granted to Bali by Brahmā who was pleased with him. Thereby he acquired the following attributes:

He was a great Yогin. His span of life extended to that of a Kalpa. He was unequalled in strength. He had a deep insight in the principles and topics of Dharma. He was unconquerable in battle. He held an important position in the matter of deciding what Dharma was. He had a clear vision of three worlds. He was accorded prominence at the sacrifice of Prasava (?). When this was said to him by the lord, viz “you will establish the four castes duly” he attained mental peace. O brahmins, after a great deal of time, he went to the heavenly abode.

The realms of the five descendants are—Aṅgas, Vaṅgas, Suhmakas, Kaliṅgas and Puṇḍrakas.

Now the descendants of Aṅga are related.

37. Aṅga's son was Dadhivāhana, the leader of kings. Dadhivāhana's son was king Diviratha.

38. The son of Diviratha was Svargaratha who was equal in valour to Indra. His son was Citraratha.

39. While he performed a sacrifice on the Kālañjara¹ moun-

1. Kālañjara (a mountain). It is one of the twenty mountains spread on the four sides of mount Mahāmeru.

tain the Soma juice was drunk by Svargaratha along with Indra.

40. Citraratha's son was Daśaratha. He became famous by the name Lomapāda and Śāntā was his daughter.¹

41. By the grace of Rṣyaśṛṅga a heroic son of great fame was born to Daśaratha who commanded the four divisions of the army and made the family flourish. His name was Caturaṅga.

42. Caturaṅga's son was known by the name Pṛthulākṣa. The king of great fame Campa was the son of Pṛthulākṣa.

43. Campa's city was Campā which was formerly known as Mālinī. By the grace of Pūrṇabhadra, his son Haryaṅga was born.

44. Then Rṣyaśṛṅga made the excellent vehicle, the elephant of Indra descend to the Earth by means of Mantras.

45. King Bhadraratha was the son of Haryaṅga. King Brhatkarman was the son of Bhadraratha.

46-48. Brhaddarbha was his son and Brhanmanas was born to him. The leading king Brhanmanas begot Jayadratha. King Dr̥ḍharatha was born to him. Dr̥ḍharatha's successor was Janamejaya the conqueror of the universe. His son was Vikarṇa. Vaikarṇa was his son. He had a hundred sons who made the family of the Aṅgas flourish.

49. Thus, all the kings born of the family of Aṅga have been glorified by me. They were noble souls pledged to truthfulness. They were mighty warriors and they procreated children.

50. O brahmins, O excellent sages, listen. I shall mention the family of king Rceyu the son of Raudrāśva.

51-53. Rceyu's son was king Matināra who ruled over the whole Earth. Matināra had three extremely virtuous sons—Vasurodha, Pratiratha and the righteous Subāhu. All of them were conversant with the Vedas, truthful in speech and favourable to the brahmins. O excellent sages, his daughter Ilā was an expounder of the Brahman. Tamisu married her.

54-55. Tamisu's valorous son was the pious king Dharmannetra. He was an expounder of Brahman and an assailer of foes. His wife was Upadānavī, who bore four splendid sons to him viz Duṣyanta, Suṣmanta, Pravīra and Anagha.

1. There is some confusion here. Śāntā was the daughter of king Daśaratha. Lomapāda had adopted her as his daughter. She was married to sage Rṣyaśṛṅga. Lomapāda was not identical with Daśaratha.

56-61. Duṣyanta's valorous heir was Bharata. His original name was Sarvadamana. He had the strength of ten thousand elephants. The son of Duṣyanta, the great soul was a great Emperor. Bharata was born of Śakuntalā and this country is named Bhārata after him. The sons of king Bharata perished through the fury of Mātṛs (Mothers). This story had been told by me previously. Thereupon, the great brahminical sage Bharadvāja the son of Brhaspati, the descendant of Aṅgiras performed great sacrifices. Due to the effort of Bharadvāja, a son was born to Bharata who was so named because the birth of the previous sons had been futile. After the birth of Vitatha, Bharata had passed away. After crowning Vitatha, Bharadvāja returned to his hermitage.

62-64. Vitatha begot five sons—viz. Suhotra, Suhotṛ, Gaya, Garga and Kapila.

Suhotra had two sons, Kāśika of great might and king Gr̥tsamati. Gr̥tsamati had Brahmin, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya sons. Kāśika had two sons viz Kāśeya and Dirghatapas.

65. The learned scholar Dhanvantari was the son of Dirghatapas. Dhanvantari's son Ketumān is well known.

66-67. The scholarly Bhīmaratha was the son of Ketumān. The son of Bhīmaratha became the ruler of Vārāṇasī. He was well known as Divodāsa and he destroyed all Kṣatriya kings. The heroic king Pratardana was the son of Divodāsa.

68. Pratardana had two sons, viz Vatsa and Bhārgava. Alarka was the son of king Sanmatimān. He too was a king.

69-70. The king seized the hereditary property of Haihaya. The ancestral property forcibly seized by Divodāsa was taken back by irrepressible son of Bhadraśreṇya, the noble Durdama. He had been formerly let off mercifully by Divodāsa thinking that he was a mere boy.

71-72. The king Aṣṭaratha was the son of Bhīmaratha. O brahmins, that boy was struck by this Kṣatriya son desirous of putting a stop to the enmity, O excellent sages.

Alarka, king of Kāśi, was truthful in speech and favourable to the brahmins.

73. This scion and the uplifter of the family of Kāśi kings was a youth endowed with handsome features who ruled for sixty-six (thousand) years.

74-75. It was to the grace of Lopāmudrā that he attained the maximum span of life. O excellent sages, towards the end of his life the king killed the Rāksasa Kṣemaka and re-established the beautiful city of Vārāṇasī. Alarka's successor was king Kṣemaka.

76. Kṣemaka's son was Varṣaketu. King Vibhu was his successor.

77. Anarta was the son of Vibhu and Sukumāra was his son. Sukumāra's son was the mighty warrior Satyaketu.

78. This son of great resplendence became an extremely virtuous king. Vatsabhūmi was the son of Vatsa and Bhargabhūmi was born of Bhārgava.

79. These descendants of Aṅgiras were born in the family of Bhṛgu. O excellent sages, they were brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Sūdras.

80-87. There is another line of kings viz. Ajamīḍha. O excellent brahmins, may it be listened to. Br̥hat was the son of Suhotra. Br̥hat had three sons viz. Ajamīḍha, Dvimiḍha and the powerful Purumiḍha. Ajamīḍha had three wives endowed with fame viz.—Nili, Keśinī and Dhūminī. All of them were excellent ladies. The valorous Jahnu was born of Keśinī and Ajamīḍha. He performed a sacrifice of long duration called Sarva Medhā-makha. Eager to have him as her husband Gaṅgā approached him like a humble lady. As he declined the proposal Gaṅgā flooded his sacrificial hall. O brahmins, on seeing the sacrificial chamber thus flooded all round king Jahnu became infuriated. He said to Gaṅgā—"O Gaṅgā, ere long, reap the fruits of this arrogance of thine. I shall condense your water flourishing in the three worlds and drink it up."

On seeing Gaṅgā drunk up, the highly blessed great sages of noble souls bought her back as Jāhnavī his daughter.

Jahnu married Kāverī, daughter of Yuvanāśva. Later on, due to the curse of Gaṅgā half of her body was turned into a river.

88-91. The valorous beloved son of Jahnu was Ajaka. Ajaka's successor was king Balākāśva who was fond of hunting. Kuśika was his son. This king was murdered by wild foresters along with the Pahlavas. Kuśika performed a penance resolving to himself—"I shall obtain a lordly son equal to Indra." Indra approached him out of fear and understood his purpose. Indra

himself became the son of Kuśika. He was king Gādhi. Viśvāmitra was the son of Gādhi and Aṣṭaka was born of Viśvāmitra.

¹ (O brahmins, Viśvabādhi, Śvajit and Satyavati (also) were born. Jamadagni was born of Satyavati and R̥cika. Devarāta and others were the sons of Viśvāmitra. They became famous in three worlds. O brahmins, listen to their names. They were Devarāta, Kati, Hiraṇyākṣa and Reṇu. The descendants of Kati were Kātyāyanas. Hiraṇyākṣa was born of Śālavatī. Reṇukā was the daughter of Reṇu. The spiritual lines of noble Kauśikas are known as Sāṃkṛtyas, Gālavas, Maudgalyas, Pañins, Babhrus, Dhyānajapyas, Pārthivas, Devarātas, Śālaṅkāyanas, Sauśravas, Lohitas, Yamadūtas, Kāriṣis, and Saindhavāyanas. O brahmins, there and other descendants of Kuśika are well known in the world. Many descendants of Kuśika are those who could have marriage alliances with other sages. O excellent sages, in this family there is thus the admixture of brahmins and Kṣatriyas due to the connection of Paurava and the brahminical sage Kauśika. Sunahṣepha was the eldest of the sons of Viśvāmitra. That leading sage was originally a Bhārgava (descendant of Bhṛgu). Later on, he attained the state of being a descendant of Kuśika. Devarāta and others were also the sons of Viśvāmitra. Dr̥śadvatī's son Aṣṭaka was born of Viśvāmitra).

92-97. Aṣṭaka's son was Lauhi. Thus descendants of Jahnu have been mentioned by me. May another line pertaining to Ajamīḍha be heard, O excellent sages. Suśānti was born of Nīlinī and Ajamīḍha. Purujāti was the son of Suśānti. Bāhyāśva was born of Purujāti. Bāhyāśva had five sons comparable to the immortals. They were—Mudgala, Śrījaya, king Bṛhadaśva, Yavīnara the valorous and Kṛmilāśva the fifth one. These five kings are known as Pañcālas because they were competent to protect the five realms. Their five realms were flourishing. Hence they got the designation Pañcālas. Mudgala's successor of very great fame was Maudgalya. Indrasenā bore Vadhnyāśva to him.

* (His son Satyadhṛti was a master of archery. On seeing a celestial lady in front of him, his semen got discharged among some reeds of Śara. Twins were born of it. Out of sympathy

*The text puts these verses within brackets without number.

Śantanu who had gone ahunting took them up and brought them up. The boy was known as Kṛpa, the girl Gautamī was known as Kṛpi. These are said to be Śāradvatas. These are known as Gautamas too. Henceforth, I shall mention the line of succession of Divodāsa. Divodāsa's successor was king Mitrayu (who became a) brahminical sage. Mitrayu's son was Soma. Therefore they are known as Maitreyas. These too though born of Kṣatriya family entered the spiritual line of Bhṛgu)¹

98. Pañcajana was the son of Śrījaya. King Somadatta was the son of Pañcajana.

99-101. Sahadeva of great fame was the successor of Somadatta. Sahadeva's son Somaka was well known. Ajamīḍha of great power was the son of Gr̥tsamati. When the family declined in prosperity Ajamīḍha's son Somaka was born. Jantu was the son of Somaka. His hundred sons shone brilliantly. The youngest of them Lord Pṛṣata was the father of Drupada. These noble Somakas are known as Ajamīḍhas.

102-105. Dhūminī the crowned queen of Ajamīḍha longed for a son. O excellent sages, she was highly blessed, chaste and noble. Desiring a son she performed holy rites. For ten thousand years she performed a difficult penance. She conducted sacrifices duly. The pious lady ate very little. O excellent sages, she lay down only on the Kuśa of Agnihotra. Ajamīḍha had sexual union with the gentle lady Dhūminī and procreated Ṛkṣa who was smoke-coloured and handsome in appearance.

106. Saṁvaraṇa was born of Ṛkṣa and Kuru was born of Saṁvaraṇa. He shifted his capital from Prayāga and founded Kurukṣetra.

107. That spot is holy, beautiful and frequented by pious persons. His family is extensive and his descendants are known as Kauravas.

108. Kuru had four sons—Sudhanvan, Sudhanu, Parīkṣit and the most excellent Arimejaya.

109. The righteous Janamejaya was the successor of Parīkṣit. Śrutasena, Agrasena and Bhīmasena (succeeded him).

* (The intelligent Suhotra was the successor of Sudhanvan. His son was king Cyavana who was an expert on virtue and

1. The text puts these verses within brackets without number.

wealth. Kṛtayajña was born of Cyavana. This knower of Dharma performed sacrifices and begot the heroic Caidyoparivara as his son. He was a well known king who became a friend of Indra. He was known as Vasu too and he could traverse the skies.

Girikā bore to Caidyoparivara seven manly sons. They were Bṛhadratha who was a mighty warrior and king of Magadha; Pratyagratha, Kratha whom they call Maṇivāhana, Sakala, Juhu, Matsya and Kāli the seventh. Bṛhadratha's successor Kuśāgra was well known. Kuśāgra's scholarly and valorous son was Rṣabha. Now, I shall mention the family of Juhu. It is endowed with all good qualities. Juhu begot a son Suratha who became a king.

110. All these were highly blessed, valorous and mighty. The intelligent Suratha was the son of Janamejaya.

111. The valorous Vidūratha was born as the son of Suratha. Rkṣa of great might was the successor of Vidūratha.

112. His second son was born through the favour of Bhardvāja and he became well known by that name. In this lunar race there were two Rkṣas and two Parikṣits.

113. O brahmins, there were three Bhīmasenas and two Janamejayas. Bhīmasena was the son of second Rkṣa.

114. Pratīpa was born of Bhīmasena. Three mighty sons were born to Pratīpa. They were Śantanu, Devāpi and Bāhlika.

115. O excellent brahmins, Śantanu was a king of this race. Now listen to the race of Bāhlika the saintly king.

116. Somadatta of great fame was the son of Bāhlika. Three sons were born of Somadatta. They were Bhūri, Bhūriśravas and Śala.

117. Sage Devāpi became the preceptor of Devas. Cyavana's son Kṛtaka was a chum of this noble sage.

118. Śantanu the foremost among the descendants of Kuru became a king. I shall mention the family of Śantanu well known in the three worlds.

119. That lord begot of Gaṅgā a son named Devavrata. He became famous by the name of Bhīṣma. He was the grandfather of the Pāṇḍavas.

120. Kāli bore the son Vicitravīrya to Śantanu. He was a righteous soul devoid of sins.

121. Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana generated Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Pāṇḍu and Vidura in the wives of Vicitravīrya.

122. Hundred sons were begotten of Gāndhārī by Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Among them Duryodhana was most excellent. He became the lord of all.

123. Arjuna was the son of Pāṇḍu and his son was Abhimanyu. Parīkṣit was the son of Abhimanyu.

124. Pārikṣita (Abhimanyu) begot two sons of Kāśī, viz. the king Candrāpiṣṭa and Sūryāpiṣṭa the knowers of Brahman.

125. Candrāpiṣṭa begot hundred sons who were excellent bowmen. They are known as the Kṣatriya descendants of Janamejaya.

126. The mighty Satyakarṇa was the eldest among them. In the city of Hastināpura he performed a sacrifice in which much wealth was distributed as gift.

127. Satyakarṇa's successor was the valorous Śvetakarṇa. That righteous king was issueless and he entered a penance-grove.

128. His beautiful wife Mālinī, daughter of Subāhu, (otherwise known as) Grahamālinī, and a descendant of Yadu became pregnant in the forest.

129. When the conception had taken place, king Śvetakarṇa continued his journey as he had done previously.

130. On seeing her beloved husband going, the chaste lady Mālinī the lotus-eyed daughter of Subāhu followed him to the forest.

131. On the way the youthful maiden gave birth to a tender son. Leaving the son there she followed the king to the forest.

132. The highly blessed chaste lady did the same thing as Draupadi the chaste lady had done before¹. The tender, tiny boy began to cry amidst the mountain bushes.

133-136. Taking pity on that noble boy, clouds appeared in the sky. The two sons of Śravīṣṭhā, Paippalādi and Kauśika saw him. They took pity on him, took him up and washed him with water. His sides drenched in blood were scraped on the rock. When his sides were carefully scraped the boy became dark-complexioned like a goat. Hence, the two brahmins named him

1. Draupadi had followed Yudhiṣṭhira to the forest.

Ajapārśva. The boy was brought up by the two brahmins in the chamber of Romaka.

137. The wife of Romaka adopted him as her son and brought him up. The boy became the son of Romaki and the two brahmins became her attendants.

138. Such is the race of Purū. The family of the Pāñdavas was established there. Their sons and grandsons had their spans of life simultaneously.

139-140. In this context the following verse had been sung by Yayāti the son of Nahuṣa. That intelligent king was highly pleased when old age was transferred to his son. This Earth may be devoid of sun, moon and planets. But the Earth will never be devoid of descendants of Purū.

141. This well known dynasty of Purū has been mentioned to you by me. I shall now mention the dynasties of Turvasu, Druhyu, Anu and Yadu.

142. Vahni was the son of Turvasu. Gobhānu was his son. The unconquerable king Traiśānu was the son of Gobhānu.

143-144. Karandhama was the son of Traiśānu and his son was Marutta. Another Marutta, the son of Avikṣita has already been mentioned by me. This king had been issueless. He performed sacrifice where much wealth was gifted in charity. A daughter named Sarmyatā was born to the king.

145. She was given to the noble Samvarta as gift. She obtained a pious son Duṣyanta, descendant of Purū.

146. Thus, O excellent brahmins, the race of Turvasu merged into the family of Purū as a result of the curse of Yayāti in the context of transferring his old age.

147-148. Duṣyanta's successor was king Karūroma. Āhrida was born of Karūroma. He had four sons. They were called:—Pāñdyā, Kerala, Kola and king Cola. Their flourishing realms are Pāñdyas, Colas and Keralas.

O king ! Babhrusetu was Druhyu's son.

149-151. Āṅgārasetu was his son. He is called the lord of winds. This mighty king was killed with difficulty in the course of battle with Yauvanāśva. A tremendous battle ensued that lasted for ten months. The king Gandhāra was the successor of Āṅgārasetu. The great country of Gandhāra was named after

him. The horses hailing from Gandhāra are the most excellent of all horses.

152. Dharma was the son of Anu. Dhṛta was his son. Satadruha was born of Dhṛta. Pracetas was his son.

153-154. Sucetas was the son of Pracetas His sons have been mentioned by me.

Yadu had five sons comparable to the sons of Devas. They were Sahasrada, Payoda, Kroṣṭā, Nīla and Añjika. Sahasrada had three virtuous sons.

155. They were Haihaya, Haya and king Veṇuhaya. The son of Haihaya was Dharmanetra.

156. Kārta was the son of Dharmanetra. His son was Sāhañja. The city Sāhāñjanī was founded by Sāhañja.

157. The valorous Bhadraśrenya was the son of Mahiṣmān. The successor of Bhadraśrenya was named Durdama.

158. The son of Durdama was Kanaka. The forebears of Kanaka were well known in the world.

159. They were Kṛtavīrya, Kṛtaujas, Kṛtakarman and Kṛtāgni. Arjuna was born of Kṛtavīrya.

160. Endowed with a thousand hands he became the lord of the Earth consisting of seven continents. All alone, he conquered the Earth with a chariot that had the brilliance of the sun.

161. Performing a penance that was extremely difficult to be performed, for the period of ten thousand years Kārtavīrya propitiated Datta the son of Atri.

162-164. Datta granted him four boons of inordinate glamour:—(1) the full complement of a thousand arms. (2) the ability to retain knowledge even in sinful atmosphere (3) After conquering the Earth with fierce ruthlessness, acquiring an ability to reconcile and propitiate the subjects through righteousness, and (4) having won in many battles and having killed thousands of enemies in battle, death at the hands of one superior to him in battle.

165. O brahmins, he acquired a thousand arms only when he was engaged in fighting. They manifested themselves as if by the power of Yoga in the case of a Master of Yogic feats.

166. This entire earth consisting of seven continents and

oceans, towns and cities was conquered by him by a ruthless and fierce process.

167. O excellent sages, it is heard that seven hundred sacrifices were duly performed by him in the seven continents.

168-169. O excellent sages, hundreds and thousands of gold pieces were distributed as gifts; in each of these there were golden sacrificial altars. All of them were made splendid by Devas, Gandharvas and celestial maidens stationed in their aerial chariots and fully bedecked in ornaments.

170. In his sacrifice Nārada the musician, son of Varidāsa, sang this laudatory song. Nārada was wonder-struck by his grandeur.

Nārada said :

171. Other kings will certainly never emulate Kārttavīrya in performing sacrifices, offering charitable gifts, practising austeries, possessing valour or learning.

172. That Yigin was seen moving about in the seven continents in his chariot, wielding his leathern shield, sword and bow.

173. Due to the power of that great king who protected the subjects righteously there was neither grief nor bewildered flutter among the subjects. No money or valuable article was lost by them.

174. He became an emperor endowed with the enjoyment of all jewels. He alone was the guardian of the cattle. He alone was the guardian of fields.

175-181. That Arjuna who could create showers because he was a Yigin was the lord of clouds. With his thousand arms the skin whereof had become hardened because the bowstring had frequently struck it, he shone like the sun in Autumn with his thousand rays. That brilliant king defeated Nāgas, sons of Karakoṭaka and established them in his city Māhiṣmatī¹. That lotus-eyed king playfully restrained the onward rush of the ocean with his arms during the rainy season and made it flow back. The river Narmadā abounding in crocodiles was rolled up by him

1. *Mahiṣmatī*—identified with the modern Maheśvara on Narmadā, but this seems to be untenable, for Maheśvara lies within the ancient Avanti. Probably the city can be identified with Omkāra Māndhātā or such some place near there.

when he sported in its waters. With its thousand waves moving to and fro it appeared as though the river approached him hesitatingly. When the great ocean was agitated by his thousand arms, the mighty Asuras residing in the netherworlds hid themselves in fright. With his thousand arms the king agitated the ocean scattering the great waves into sprays, making the fishes and huge whales move about in flutter and flurry, causing the gusts of wind split the foams and stirring up the eddies.

182-185. Thus, he agitated the ocean like the Mandara mountain that had been churned formerly by Devas and Asuras and that stirred up the milk ocean.

Great serpents were frightened by stirring up the ocean. They were suspicious that Garuḍa was about to swoop down on them. In their fear they jumped up. On seeing the terrible excellent king they bowed down with their hoods motionless. They appeared like the stumps of plantain trees swayed by the wind in the evening. By the exercise of his bowstrings he bound the haughty king of Laṅkā (Rāvaṇa)¹ after making him faint with five arrows. He defeated his army in the battle of Laṅkā. Capturing and bringing him under his control forcibly he imprisoned him in his city of Māhiṣmatī.

186. On hearing that his grandson Rāvaṇa had been imprisoned by Sahasrārjuna, sage Pulastya went to Māhiṣmatī and met Sahasrārjuna.

187-193. On being requested by Pulastya he released Rāvaṇa the grandson of Pulastya.

The loud twanging report of his bowstring made on his thousand arms resembled that of the thunderbolt of the throbbing cloud at the close of Yugas.

1. Rāvaṇa—grandson of Pulastya and son of Viśravas. He had two brothers Kumbhakarṇa and Vibhiṣaṇa and a sister Sūrpaṇakhā. He had also a step-brother, Kubera who being the eldest among brothers became the king of Laṅkā. But Rāvaṇa drove him out and himself became a king. Well-versed in the Vedas and the performer of penance and sacrifices Rāvaṇa was called a Rākṣasa because he and his mighty team of warriors protected the country's coast. The Vālmīki Rāmāyana, which contains the oldest record of his activities derives the term Rākṣasa from rakṣ to protect. Because of his immoral activities the term lost its original meaning and came to be used in derogatory sense.

Indeed, the vain and vigour of Bhārgava was very wonderful since he cut off the thousand arms of that king, the arms that resembled the golden cluster of palm trees.

Once, thirsty fire-god begged of him for enough material to quench his thirst. Accordingly the heroic Sahasrārjuna granted the fire-god his request for alms, the seven continents, cities, villages, cowherd colonies—nay the whole of his realm. Due to the power of Sahasrārjuna all these blazed along with the eagerness of fire-god to burn more. He burned the mountains and forests of Kārttavīrya. Though accompanied by the firegod he was extremely frightened when he burned the vacant but beautiful hermitage of Vasiṣṭha the son of Varuṇa. Formerly, Varuṇa had begot this brilliant excellent son who became a seer.

194-201. That sage Vasiṣṭha became famous as Āpava. The saintly lord Āpava cursed Arjuna—"A great misdeed has been perpetrated by you, O Haihaya, in not having spared this forest of mine. A powerful man will kill you. The mighty and valorous son of Jamadagni named Rāma will chop off your thousand arms. The powerful resplendent brahmin the descendant of Bhṛgu will thrash you and kill you."

No doubt, the king had secured the boon whereby the subjects obtained prosperity and did not come to grief. (No doubt) he suppressed his foes. The prosperity of his subjects could be retained only as long as he protected them righteously.

But, due to the curse of the sage, he acted unrighteously and had to court death. In fact, O brahmins, a boon to that effect (i.e. death at the hands of his superior alone) had been chosen by himself. The noble king had a hundred sons, but only five of them survived. These were heroic, mighty and righteous. They were trained in the right use of missiles. They were famous. They were Śūrasena, Śūra, Vṛṣaṇa, Madhupadhvaja and Jayadhvaja.

This Jayadhvaja was a king of Avanti. Kārttavīrya's sons were mighty and vigorous.

202. Jayadhvaja's son was Tālajaṅgha of great might. He had a hundred sons who became well known as Tālajaṅghas.

203-204. O excellent sages ! many groups of valorous kings are well known among the noble descendants of Haihaya. They were—the Vīthotras, Suvratas, Bhojas, Avantis, Taundikeras,

Tālajaṅghas, Bharatas and Sujātas. They had not been recounted in detail because they are too numerous.

205. O brahmins, Vṛṣa and others were the descendants of Yadu (Because of Yadu they are called Yādavas). They were meritorious in their activities. Vṛṣa was the founder of a separate line. Madhu was his son.

206. Madhu had a hundred sons. Vṛṣṇa was the perpetuator of the line. Because of Vṛṣṇa they are called Vṛṣnis. Because of Madhu they are known as Mādhavas.

207-209. The Haihayas are called Yādavas after Yadu.

He who daily repeats the story of Kārttavīrya will never incur the loss of wealth. He will regain what is lost.

O excellent brahmins, the lines of the five sons of Yayāti have been glorified thus. They were heroes (wellknown all over the world. O excellent sages, just as the five elements sustain the mobile and immobile beings, they support the worlds.

210-213. On hearing the five lines of kings a king will become an expert on virtue and wealth. He will have self-control. He will have five sons. He will get five rare and excellent things in the world—longevity, fame, sons, prowess and prosperity by retaining five groups in memory. Even as I relate, O excellent sages, listen to the line of kings descending from Kroṣṭr who perpetuated the line of Yadu, who performed sacrifices and who was meritorious in his activities. One is liberated from all sins on listening to the line of Kroṣṭr since in his family was born god Viṣṇu himself. He uplifted the family of Vṛṣṇi.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Birth of Kṛṣṇa

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. Kroṣṭr had two wives—Gāndhārī and Mādri. Gāndhārī gave birth to Anamitra of great might.

2. Mādri gave birth to Yudhājit and Devamīḍhuṣa. Thus the flourishing family of Vṛṣnis came to be threefold.

3. Mādri had two (more) sons : the splendid Vṛṣṇi and Andhaka. Vṛṣṇi had two sons—Śvaphalka and Citraka.

4. O excellent sages, there is no fear from sickness, no fear of drought in the place where Śvaphalka the righteous soul is present.

5. O excellent sages, once, Indra the chastiser of Pāka did not shower rain in the realm of the king of Kāśī, for three years.

6. He therefore brought the excessively honoured Śvaphalka there (to his kingdom). Due to the arrival of Śvaphalka, Indra showered rain.

7-8. Śvaphalka married the daughter of the king of Kāśī, named Gāndinī. She was so called because she gave every day a cow to a brahmin. Akrūra a liberal donor, a performer of sacrifices, a learned hero and one fond of receiving guests, was born of Śvaphalka. He distributed wealth as gift to the Brahmins.

9-10. Other sons too were born viz.—Upamadgu, Madgu, Medura, Arimejaya, Avikṣita, Akṣepa Śatruघna, Arimardana, Dharmadhṛk, Yatidharma, Dharmokṣa, Andhakaru, Āvāha and Prativāha. Varāṅganā a beautiful daughter was also born to him.

11. O excellent brahmins, Prasena and Upadeva of divine splendour were born to Ugrasenā, a woman of beautiful limbs, by Akrūra.

12-17. Citraka begot these sons—viz. Pṛthu, Vipṛthu, Aśvagrīva, Aśvabāhu, Svapārśvaka, Gaveṣaṇa, Ariṣṭanemi, Aśva, Sudharmā, Dharmabhṛt, Subāhu, and Bahubāhu, and two daughters Śraviṣṭhā and Śravaṇā. He begot of Asiknī the heroic son Śūra, Devamīḍhuṣa. Ten courageous sons were born of the crowned queen Bhojyā. At the outset was born the mighty Vasudeva (otherwise known as) Ānakadundubhi (so called because) when he was born drums were beaten in heaven and the loud report of Ānaka drums arose in the skies. At that time heavy shower of flowers fell on the abode of Śūra. In the whole of this mortal world there was none equal to him in handsome features. He was foremost among men and he had the splendour of the moon.

18-24. The other nine sons were born:—Devabhāga, Devaśravas, Anādhṛṣṭi, Kanavaka, Vatsavān, Grñjama, Śyāma, Śamīka and Gāndūṣa. He had five excellent ladies as daughters—

Pṛthukīrti, Pṛthā, Śrutadevā, Śrutasravā and Rājādhidevi. These five were mothers of mighty heroes. Jagṛhu was born as the son of Śrutadevā and the king of Avanti. King Śiśupāla was born of Śrutasravā and the king of Cedi. Formerly, he had been Hiraṇyakaśipu the king of Daityas. Dantavakra of great might, the heroic overlord of Karuṣas was born of Pṛthukīrti as the son of Vṛddhaśarman. Kunti adopted Pṛthā as his daughter. Pāṇḍu married her. King Yudhiṣṭhira conversant with virtuous conduct was born of Kunti through the blessings of Dharma; Bhīmasena was born through the blessings of Vāyu and Arjuna was born through the blessings of Indra. Arjuna was a hero who had valour and exploit equal to that of Indra. In the whole world he had none to face him in a chariot-battle. Sini was born of Anamitra the youngest of the sons of Vṛṣṇi.

25. Satyaka was the son of Sini and Yuyudhāna was the son of Satyaka. Uddhava was the blessed son of Devabhāga.

26-28. They call the excellent Devaśravas the most excellent among the learned men. Anādhṛṣṭi begot of Aśmaki, Śatruघna a son who repulsed foes and earned fame.

Śrutadevā too gave birth to a son. The son of Śrutadevā is well known as Naiṣādi (a son of Niṣāda-hill tribe). O excellent sages, he was Ekalavya who was brought up by the Niṣādas (huntsmen).

Vasudeva the valorous son of Śūra gave his broom-born heroic son Kauśika to Vatsāvan who had no issue. He gave the son (as in a religious act) along with water libations.

29-31. To Gaṇḍūṣa who had no son, Viṣvaksena gave his sons Cārudeṣṇa, Sudeṣṇa and Pañcāla who had characteristic-marks of a warrior. He was a warrior who never remained without a battle. O excellent brahmins, this mighty warrior was the youngest son of Rukmiṇi. When Cārudeṣṇa went on his campaigns thousands of crows closely followed him thinking—"Today we will enjoy the delicious flesh of those who are killed by Cārudeṣṇa".

32. Tantriija and Tantripāla were the two sons of Kanavaka. Viru and Aśvahanu were the two heroic sons of Gṛñjama.

33-34. Śamīka was the son of Śyāma. Śamīka ruled over a kingdom. He felt depressed being a mere Bhoja. Hence he per-

formed a Rājasūya sacrifice. Ajātaśatru the destroyer of enemies was born to him. Henceforth, I shall describe the heroic sons of Vasudeva.

35. Thus the race of Vṛṣṇi is threefold. It is mighty and it has many branches. One who retains this extensive race in memory is never afflicted by any calamity.

36-38. Vasudeva had fourteen excellent women as his wives. The first five were: a descendant of Purū named Rohinī, Madirā, Vaiśākhī, Bhadrā and Sunāmnī. The second set of seven ladies comprised Sahadevā, Śāntidevā, Śrīdevī, Devarakṣitā, Vṛkadevī, Upadevī and Devakī. The thirteenth and the fourteenth were Sutanu and Yādavī. These two had at first been maid servants.

39. The descendant of Purū named Rohinī was the daughter of Bāhlika. O excellent sages, she was the eldest and most favourite wife of Ānakadundubhi.

40-41. Rohinī had eight sons and a daughter. The eldest son was Rāma. The others were Śāraṇa, Śaṭha, Durdama, Damana, Śubhra, Piṇḍāraka and Uśinara. The daughter was named Citrā. O excellent sages, this Citrā afterwards became famous as Subhadrā.

42. The renowned Sauri (Kṛṣṇa) was born of Devakī and Vasudeva. The beloved son Niśaṭha of Rāma was born of Revatī.

43. Abhimanyu, the skilled chariot-fighter was born of Subhadrā and Arjuna Satyaketu was born of the daughter of king of Kāśī and Akrūra.

44. Understand individually by their names the sons of great valour who were born to Vasudeva in his highly blessed seven wives.

45-50. Bhoja and Vijaya were the two sons of Śāntideva. Vṛkadeva and Gada were the two sons of Sunāmā. Vṛkadevī gave birth to the noble son Agāvaha. The daughter of the king of Trigarta and wife of Śiśirāyanī was inquisitive to ascertain his manliness. No semen was discharged. In his twelfth year he had the colour of a black pig. Falsely accused, Gārgya was urged by anger. He seized a cowherd lass and began to indulge in sexual intercourse. That cowherd lass was a heavenly nymph in disguise. She conceived the foetus of Gārgya. It was unerring and very difficult to bear. It was through the behest of the trident-bearing lord Śiva that the heavenly nymph, the wife of Gārgya,

in human form had done this. A heroic son of great might named Kālayavana was born of her.

51-57. O excellent sages, the boy grew up in the harem of a Yavana who had no son. He grew into a youth of leonine frame. The upper half of his body was shapely muscular and cylindrical. Hence, he came to be called Kālayavana.

The king (Yavana) was in the habit of fighting. He asked the excellent brahmin Nārada who mentioned the Vṛṣnis and Andhakas as the persons whom he should fight. He marched against Mathurā with an Akṣauhiṇī of soldiers. He sent a messenger to the Vṛṣnis and Andhakas. Keeping the highly intelligent Kṛṣṇa as their leader the Vṛṣnis and the Andhakas met together and took counsel as they were afraid of the Yavana king. They decided to run away. Out of deference to the Pināka-bearing lord Śiva they abandoned Mathurā and resolved to colonise Kuśasthalī, Dvāravatī.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Family of Vṛṣnis

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. Kroṣṭṛ had a son of great fame named Vṛjinivān. Svāhi the most excellent of sacrificers was the son of Vṛjinivān.

2-3. King Uṣadgu the most excellent of eloquent ones was the son of Svāhi. Desirous of progeny, a very excellent son, he performed several sacrifices wherein much wealth was gifted to the sacrificing priests. Citraratha endowed with many holy rites was born as his son.

4. Heroic Saśabindu was the son of Citraratha. He performed sacrifices wherein much wealth was distributed as the sacrificial fee. He followed the holy conduct of life lived by saintly kings.

5. King Pṛthuśravas of extensive fame was the son of Saśabindu. Those who are conversant with the Purāṇas praise Antara as the deserving son of Pṛthuśravas.

6-7. Suyajña was the son of Antara. Uṣat was the son of Suyajña. He performed all sorts of sacrifices. He had great reverence for Religion. Śineyu the scorcher of enemies was the son of Uṣat. King Maruta his son was a saintly king.

8-9. Marut obtained Kambalabarhis as his eldest son. Although he was against holy rites due to wrath, he performed many such rites desiring to obtain a son for his son Kambalabarhis. After a hundred still born children the son Rukmakavaca was born.

10. After killing a hundred bowmen protected with coats of mail by means of sharp arrows in the battle, Rukmakavaca attained excellent glory.

11-13. Parajit, the slayer of inimical heroes, was born of Rukmakavaca. Parajit had five valiant sons. viz.—Rukmeṣu, Pṛthurukma, Jyāmagha, Pālita and Hari. The father gave Pālita and Hari to Videhas. With the support of Pṛthurukma, Rukmeṣu became a king. Externed by both of them, king Jyāmagha stayed in a hermitage.

14-16. The tranquil king was advised by the brahmins (to conquer new territories). Taking up his bow and waving his flag in his chariot the king went to another land on the banks of Narmadā. Single-handed he conquered the cities of Mekhalā¹ and Mṛttikāvati.² After conquering the mountain Rkṣavān³ he stayed in Śūktimati.⁴ Jyāmagha's wife Śaibyā was a powerful chaste woman. Hence, though he had no son in her he did not marry another woman.

1. *Mekhalā* (*Mekalā*). Mekhalā was a country which had attained Puranic fame in ancient India. The inhabitants of this place were called Mekhalas. They were Kṣatriyas (warriors) formerly. But they became persons of low caste when they showed jealousy towards the Brahmins.

2. *Mṛttikāvati*, a place of habitation in ancient Bhārata. Bhojas, as a Yādava tribe, dwelt in Kṛṣṇa's kingdom in Su-rāṣṭra and Bhojas inhabited Mṛttikāvati, situated somewhere on this north-eastern limits of the modern Gujarat.

3. *Rkṣavān*—One of the seven principal mountains in India.

4. *Śūktimati*—Identification not certain. Śūktimati range might be the southern portion of the Eastern Ghats and the hills of Mysore. General Cunningham's identification of Śūktimat mountains where the town Śuktimat was laid out, with the high range of mountains to the south of Sehra and Kanker, which gives rise to Mahānadi, Pairi and Seonath Rivers is challenged by F.E. Pargiter (Mar. Pū. p. 285).

17. He gained victory in another battle and captured a virgin thereat: Slightly afraid the king told his wife—"Here is your daughter-in-law".

18-19. On hearing this she said to him—"O lord, pray tell me whose daughter-in-law she is? On hearing it, the noble king Jyāmagha said:—

The king said:

"I have brought this girl as the wife of the son who will be born to you".

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

20. Due to severe penance of that virgin, that fortunate chaste woman Śaibyā, in her old age, gave birth to the son Vi-darbha.

21. Vidarbha begot of this daughter-in-law, a princess, two learned heroic sons Kratha and Kaiśika who became experts in warfare.

22. Bhīma was Vidarbha's son and Kunti was his son. The valorous son Dhṛṣṭa was born to Kunti. He was very bold in battle.

23. Three heroic sons of very great virtue were born to Dhṛṣṭa, Viz., Āvanta, Daśārha and the powerful Viṣahara.

24. Vyoman was the son of Daśārha. It is said that Jīmūta was Vyoman's son. Jīmūta's son was Vikṛti and Bhīmaratha was his son.

25. Navaratha was Bhīmaratha's son and his son was Daśāratha. Śakuni was born to him.

26-27. From him was born Karambha king. Devarāta was the son of Karambha and his son was Devakṣatra. Daivakṣatri, was the son of Devakṣatra. He looked like a divine child. He earned great fame. King Madhu of sweet speech was also born to him. It was he who perpetuated the line of Madhu.

28-29. Purudvān the most excellent man was born of Madhu in his wife Vaidarbī (daughter of the Vidarbha king). Madhu had another wife Aikṣvāki (born of the family of Ikṣvāku). Satvan endowed with good qualities was born of her. He enhanced the glory of Sātvats: After knowing this creation of Jyā-

magha of noble soul one attains pleasure and is always blessed with progeny.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

30-38. Kauśalyā bore many sons to Sātvata richly endowed with pious qualities viz.—Bhāgin, Bhajamāna, the divine king Devavṛdha, Andhaka of mighty arms, Vṛṣṇi and Yadunandana (?) The detailed narrative of the four has been glorified here.

Bhajamāna had two wives viz Bāhyaka Śrīñjayī and Upabāhyaka Śrīñjayī. Many sons were born to him in these two wives. Krimi, Kramāṇa, Dhṛṣṭa and the heroic Purañjaya, these were born to Bhajamāna in Bāhyaka Śrīñjayī.

Ayutajit, Sahasrajit, Śatajit and Daśaka—these were born to Bhajamāna in Upabāhyaka Śrīñjayī.

King Devavṛdha who had performed sacrifices resolved thus—“A son endowed with good qualities should be born to me.” Accordingly he performed an elaborate penance. While performing penance, it was the water of Parnāśā¹ river that he used always (for drinking and bathing purpose). The river did everything to please him. She was worried with thoughts about him. She could not decide what to do. That excellent river thought thus in view of the auspicious nature of that king—“He has not yet found out a woman in whom he can beget such a son (endowed with all good qualities). Hence, I shall myself go and become his wife.”

39. She became a young maiden assuming a fine physical form. She wooed the king and the lord too liked her.

40-41. The liberal king impregnated her with a brilliant foetus. On the tenth month, the most excellent of women gave birth to Babhru Devavṛdha who was endowed with good qualities.

In this context, those who are conversant with the Purāṇic lore are heard singing thus about this race glorifying the good qualities of the noble Devavṛdha.

42-44. Whether we look at him in front or from far or at close quarters, Babhru is the most excellent among men. Devavṛdha was equal to Devas. Seven thousand sixtysix men attained

1. *Parnāśā*, or (*Varṇāśā*) is the modern Banas, there are two rivers of this name, (1) a tributary of the Chambal rising near Udayapur and (2) a stream rising near mount Abu and flowing in the Rann of Kacchh.

immortality due to Babhru Devavṛḍha. He performed many sacrifices, he was the lord of donors, most intelligent, favourably disposed towards the brahmans; he held weapons with a steady grasp. His family was very big. The Bhojas of Mṛttikāvatī belonged to his family.

45-48. The daughter of Kāśya bore four sons to Andhaka—Viz. Kukura, Bhajamāna, Śaśaka and Balabharhis.

Vṛṣṭi was the son of Kukura. Kapotaroman was the son of Vṛṣṭi. His son was Tittiri. Punarvasu was born to him. Abhijit was born to Punarvasu. It is said that twin sons were born to Abhijit. They were known as Āhuka and Śrāhuka. They were the most excellent of all who earned renown.

49-54. In this context they cite the following verses about Āhuka. “The exalted Āhuka resembles a youth, is endowed with eighty coats of mail, goes ahead with attendants in white livery. The following shall not go in front of him—He who has no son, he who has not given one hundred gifts, who is not destined to live for a thousand years, who is not of pure activities and who does not perform sacrifices. To the East ten thousand elephants marched along with ten thousand chariots rumbling like clouds. Their banners scraped the lap of the moon (i.e. they flowed and fluttered at a great height). They were fitted with protective fenders. Twentyone thousand huge boxes filled with silver and gold accompanied them. To the northern quarter as many thousands of these had parched. The Bhojas were the protectors of entire Earth. Their hands are scared with the tinkling bells and bowstrings.”

They say this also—The Andhakas gave their sisters in marriage to Avantis.

55. Two sons were born of Kāśya and Āhuka—Devaka and Ugrasena. Both of them were on a par with divine children.

56. Four sons comparable to Devas were born to Devaka—Devavān, Upadeva, Sudeva and Devarakṣita.

57-61. He had seven daughters who were married to Vasudeva—Devakī, Śāntidevā, Sudevā, Devarakṣitā, Vṛkadevī, Upadevī and Sunāmni.

Ugrasena had nine sons. Kariṣa was the eldest. Others were Nyagrodha, Sunāman, Kaṅka, Subhūṣaṇa, Rāṣṭrapāla, Sutanu, Anāvṛṣṭi and Puṣṭimān.

Five excellent ladies were their sisters—Kāṁsa, Kāṁsavatī, Sutanu, Rāṣtrapāli and Kaṅka.

Ugrasena of the family of Kukura has been described along with children.

A man who retains in memory the race of the Kukuras of unmeasured prowess shall attain an extensive family for himself after being blessed with children.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

How the Syamantaka Jewel was brought back ?

Lomaharṣṇa said :

1. Vidūratha, a prominent chariot-warrior was the son of Bhajamāna. The heroic Rājādhideva was the son of Vidūratha.

2-3. The following valiant sons were born to Rājādhideva viz.—Datta, Atidatta, Śoṇāśva, Śvetavāhana, Śami, Daṇḍaśarman, Dantaśatru and Śatrujit. Śravaṇā and Śravisthā were their sisters.

4. Pratichatra was the son of Śami. Svayambhoja was the son of Pratichatra. Hṛdīka was born to Svayambhoja.

5-6. All his sons possessed great valour. Kṛtavarmā was the eldest among them. Śatadhanvā was the middle one. The other sons were Devānta, Narānta, Vaitaraṇa, who was a physician, Sudānta, Atidānta, Nikāśya and Kāmadambaka.

7-8. The wise Kambalabarhiṣā was the son of Devānta. He had two sons Asamaujas and Nāsamaujas. No son was born to Asamaujas. His brother gave his sons Sudariṣṭra, Sucāru and Kṛṣṇa to Asamaujas.

Thus Andhakas have been described.

9. Gāndhāri and Mādrī were the wives of Kroṣṭr. Gāndhāri gave birth to Anamitra of great might.

10. Mādrī gave birth to Yudhājit (known as) Devamīḍhuṣa. She gave birth to Anamitra who conquered the enemies and who was never defeated in battlefield.

11. Nighna was Anamitra's son. Two sons were born to Nighna: Prasena and Satrājit. Both of them conquered the armies of enemies.

12. Prasena was a resident of Dvāravatī. He came to acquire a great Jewel, named Syamantaka¹ from sun.

13-23. The sun was his close friend, a friend no less than his own vital breath. Once, as the night was about to pass off, the king, the most excellent one among the chariot-warriors, went to the banks of the river in his chariot in order to bathe and worship the deity. Even as he was praying to Sun-god the deity appeared in his presence. The lord revealed his physical form with the halo of brilliant resplendence. The king addressed the sun-god standing before him thus—"O lord of Luminaries I see you standing in front of me with your brilliant disc in the same manner as I see you in the firmament. What special significance has been accorded to me as a result of your being my associate?"

On hearing this, the lord took off the excellent jewel Syamantaka and kept it aside. Then the king saw him in his (bare) physical form. On seeing him he became pleased and chatted with him for a short while. Then Satrājit spoke to him as he rose up to go—"O lord, you illuminate the worlds continuously. Hence, it behoves you to give me this excellent jewel."

Then the Sun gave him the Syamantaka jewel. The king tied it round his neck and entered the city. The people rushed at him shouting "Here goes the sun". The king made his city and the harem wonder-struck. He gave that excellent Jewel to his brother Prasenajit lovingly.

24. The jewel exuded molten gold in the abode of Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas. The clouds showered rains at the proper season. There was no fear from sickness.

25. Lord Kṛṣṇa desired to get the excellent jewel from him.

28. The Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas had come to know that Kṛṣṇa had requested for the jewel. Hence they suspected him to be the cause of Prasena's death.

29. Being suspected thus the righteous Kṛṣṇa who had not

1. *Syamantaka*. The details of this fabulous gem are found in this and the following chapter. It is not possible to identify this gem with the Kohinoor that adorns the British crown.

perpetrated that felony took the vow "I will fetch that jewel" and went to the forest.

30-33. He wandered all over the places where Prasena had been hunting. He got the footsteps of Prasena traced through trust-worthy persons.

Searching through the excellent mountains Rkṣavān and Vindhya he became tired. Then the lofty-minded Kṛṣṇa saw Prasena lying slain along with his horse but did not get that jewel. Then, not far off from the dead body of Prasena the lion was seen killed. A bear was indicated (as the culprit) by the footsteps. Following those footsteps lord Kṛṣṇa went to the abode of the bear.

34-35. In the cave he heard the words uttered by a woman. O brahmins, they had been uttered by the nurse who was holding the boy, the son of Jāmbavān and who was playing with the jewel. The words "Do not cry" had been uttered by her.

The Nurse said:

36. "The lion killed Prasena. The lion was killed by Jāmbavān. O gentle boy, do not cry. This Syamantaka is yours".

37-38. Since the words were clear he hastened to the cave. He placed Yadus along with his brother Balarāma at the entrance to the cave. He himself entered the cave quickly. He saw Jāmbavān staying inside the cave.

39. Then he fought a hand-to-hand fight with Jāmbavān within the cave for twentyone days.

40. After Kṛṣṇa had entered the cave (and did not come out for long) Balarāma and others returned to Dvāravatī and announced that Kṛṣṇa was slain.

41. Kṛṣṇa defeated Jāmbavān of great might and obtained Jāmbavatī the daughter of the king of bears, acclaimed (by all).

42. He took the Syamantaka jewel in order to clear himself (of false accusation). After consoling the king of bears he came out of the cave.

43-45. With humble attendants going ahead of him, Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā. Bringing the jewel and clearing himself of the false charge he gave it to Satrājit in the open assembly of Sātvatas. Thus Kṛṣṇa the slayer of foes who had been falsely accused, redeemed the Syamantaka and cleared himself.

Satrājit had ten wives and hundred sons in them.

46. Three of them were well renowned. Bhaṅgakāra was the eldest. Others were the heroic Vātamati and Vasumedha. O excellent brahmins, his three daughters too were famous in the quarters.

47-50. Satyabhāmā was the most excellent among them. Others were Vratinī of steady holy rites and Prasvāpini. He gave (Satyabhāmā) to Kṛṣṇa. The sons of Bhaṅgakāra were Sabhākṣa and Nāveya, the most excellent men. They were endowed with good qualities, well renowned and richly endued with handsome features. Yudhājit was born as the son of Mādrī and Vṛṣṇi (?). Śvaphalka and Śigraka were born as the sons of Vṛṣṇi. Śvaphalka married the daughter of the king of Kāśi.

51. She was Gāndinī by name. Her father gave him many cows. The mighty son well known as Śrutavān was born of her.

52-59. Then the highly blessed Akrūra who distributed wealth in gift was born. (The other sons were)—Upamadgu, Madgu, Mudara, Arimardana, Ārikṣepa, Upekṣa, Arimejaya the slayer of foes, Dharmabhṛt, Dharma, Gṛdhrabhoja, Andhaka, Āvāha and Prativāha. There was a fair-complexioned daughter Sundarī. She was the crowned queen of Viśrutāśva. His daughter was Vasundharā who was endowed with beauty and blooming youth. She was the most charming among all Sātvatas; Akrūra begot of Ugrasenā two sons Vasudeva and Upadeva. They had divine refulgence and delighted the race. Citraka's sons were—Pṛthu, Vipṛthu, Aśvagrīva, Aśvabāhu, Supārśvaka, Gaveṣaṇa, Ariṣṭanemi, Dharma, Dharmabhṛt, Subāhu and Bahubāhu. He had two daughters Śraviṣṭhā and Śravaṇā.

False accusations never befall him, nay they never touch him who understands false accusation of Kṛṣṇa that has been cited here.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Akrūra Obtains Syamantaka

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. Babhru Akrūra got the excellent jewel Syamantaka which Kṛṣṇa had handed over to Satrājit, stolen through Śatadhanvan of the Bhoja family.

2. Akrūra had sought Satyabhāmā, the uncensured lady. He was waiting for an opportunity to seize Syamantaka jewel.

3. The mighty Śatadhanvā killed Satrājit at night, took away the jewel and handed it over to Akrūra.

4-5. O brahmins, Akrūra took the excellent jewel and contracted alliance with Śatadhanvan—"I should not be exposed by you. If you are attacked by Kṛṣṇa we will come to your support. Undoubtedly the whole of Dvārakā abides by me today."

6-7. When her father was killed, Satyabhāmā became extremely dejected. She rode in her chariot to the city of Vāraṇāvata and informed her husband (Kṛṣṇa) of what had been committed by Śatadhanvan of the Bhoja family. After intimating everything to her husband, the aggrieved lady shed profuse tears.

8. After performing the obsequies and offering libations of water to the Pāñdavas who were (supposed to have been) burned, Hari engaged Sātyaki for the condolence rites for the Pāñdavas.

9. Śrīkṛṣṇa then, hastened to Dvārakā and spoke to Balarama, his elder brother.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

10-11. Prasena was killed by the lion, Satrājit by Śatadhanvan. Syamantaka must come to me. O lord, I am its owner. Hence, O mighty one, get into the chariot quickly. After killing the mighty Bhoja we shall take possession of Syamantaka.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

12-19. Then a tremendous battle took place between Bhoja and Kṛṣṇa. Śatadhanvan searched for Akrūra all round.

On seeing Bhoja and Śrīkṛṣṇa engaged in a duel, Akrūra, though capable did not show sympathy on account of a curse (?). The frightened Bhoja resolved to run away on Hṛdayā (his

mare) who raced a hundred and odd Yojanas. She was known to be capable of running a hundred Yojanas at a stretch, O brahmins, it was the mare he rode when he fought with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. After he had covered a hundred Yojanas he found Hṛdayā exhausted. She was killed. The vital airs went up due to fatigue and misery. Kṛṣṇa said to Rāma.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

"O mighty one, stay here. I have detected some defects in the horse. I shall go on foot and seize the excellent jewel Syamantaka." O Brahmins, Śrīkṛṣṇa who was fully conversant with the excellent missiles went on foot and at the outskirts of Mithilā he killed Satadhanvan.

20-21. But he did not find the Syamantaka jewel on his person. Rāma said to him when he returned after killing the mighty Bhoja "Give me the jewel." Kṛṣṇa said—"It is not with me." Then Rāma became furious, rebuked him vigorously uttering "Fie on you, fie on you" and spoke thus.

Balarāma said:

22. "I excuse you because you happen to be my brother. Goodbye I am going to leave you for ever. I have nothing to do with you, nor with Dvārakā, nor with the Vṛṣnis".

23. Then Rāma, the suppressor of foes, entered Mithilā where he was honoured by the king with coveted gifts.

24. In the meantime Babhru Akrūra the most excellent one among the intelligent persons performed many sacrifices unrestrictedly.

25. For obtaining Syamantaka, the excessively famous son of Gāndin donned the coat of mail in the form of initiation as a protective means.

26. For sixty years the virtuous soul displayed jewels and other precious stones in the sacrifice alone.

27. The sacrifices of that noble soul are known as Akrūrayajñas. Dainty food and monetary gifts were distributed in all of them. Whatever was sought by a person was given to him.

28. It was then that lord Duryodhana went to Mithilā and received training from Balarāma in the exercise of divine missiles.

29. Later on, Rāma was appeased by Vṛṣṇi leaders and

Andhakas as well as by the noble Kṛṣṇa who brought him back to Dvārakā.

30-34. After getting Satrājit killed while he was asleep along with his kinsmen, Akrūra of great might, the leader of men, had also left Dvārakā. He too was persuaded to return along with the Andhakas. Kṛṣṇa condoned his guilt because he was afraid of creating split amongst his own people.

After the departure of Akrūra there had been no shower in that realm. Due to drought the land had become lean. Then the Kukuras and Andhakas appeased and propitiated Akrūra. When that lord of charitable gifts re-entered Dvāravati the thousand-eyed lord (Indra) rained profusely over the Kakṣa region.

O excellent sages, as a token of affection the intelligent Akrūra gave to Śrīkṛṣṇa his sister of approved conduct in marriage.

35. Then, by his Yogic power Kṛṣṇa understood that the jewel was with Babhru Akrūra. In the open assembly Śrīkṛṣṇa said to Akrūra.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

36-37. O lord worthy of honour, hand back that excellent jewel which is in your possession. Do not commit anything ignoble. O sinless one, the fury that has been surging within me for the last sixty years has grown terribly. Much time has elapsed. It brooks no further delay.

38-40. Then, at the instance of Kṛṣṇa, Babhrū handed over the jewel without a strain in the assembly of Sātvatas.

Kṛṣṇa, the suppressor of foes, was delighted in his mind when the jewel was secured by straightforward means from Babhru. But he returned it to Babhru.

Tying the excellent jewel Syamantaka round his neck after it had been handed over to him by Kṛṣṇa the son of Gāndinī shone on earth as the sun shines in the sky.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Seven Continents¹

The sages said:

1-9. A wonderfully great narrative has been related by you. The stories of Bharata kings, of Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, Daityas, Siddhas, and Guhyakas have been narrated; their wonderful exploits, activities and holy rites have been recounted. Different divine stories and excellent nativities have been mentioned. O highly intelligent one, the creation of Brahmā, Prajāpatis, Guhyakas and celestial nymphs has also been narrated by you. How the mobile and immobile beings were born, how the manifold universe originated has been told by you, O highly blessed one. This beautiful narration has been heard by us. The ancient tradition that yields meritorious benefits has been mentioned in sweet and smooth flowing words. It delights our mind as well as our ear. It is on a par with nectar. Now we wish to hear about the entire zone of the earth. O omniscient one, it behoves you speak it out. We are very eager to hear. How many are the oceans, continents sub-continents, mountains, forests, sacred rivers and holy spots of Devas etc. O highly intelligent one, what is the magnitude of each, what is their support? Of what nature are they? It behoves you to narrate the stance of this universe precisely.

1. Seven Continents : (1) Jambū (2) Śāka, (3) Kuśa, (4) Plakṣa, (5) Puṣkara, (6) Śalmali (7) Krauñca. A short description of these continents is as follows: (1) Jambū—It is the central one of the seven continents surrounding the mountain Meru, so called either from the Jambū trees abounding in it or from an enormous Jambū tree on Mount Meru visible like a standard to the whole continent. See S. M. Ali, Op. cit., chapters V-VII on *Jambūdvīpa*.

(2) Śāka can be identified with Malaya, Siam, Indo-China and Southern China or the South-Eastern corner of the land mass of which *Jambūdvīpa* occupied the centre.

(3) Kuśa included Iran, Iraq, the south-western corner of the land mass round Meru.

(4) Plakṣa identified with the basin of Mediterranean since Plakṣa or Pākhara tree is the characteristic of warm temperate or Mediterranean lands identifiable with Greece and adjoining lands.

(5) Puṣkara covered the whole of Japan, Manchuria and the south-eastern Siberia.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

10. O sages, please hear as I succinctly relate it to you. A full detailed description of it is impossible even in the course of a hundred years.

11-12. O brahmins, there are seven continents viz—Jambū, Plakṣa, Śālmala, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śāka and Puṣkara. These are encircled by seven oceans, the briny ocean, sea of the sugar-cane juice, wine, ghee, curds, milk and sweet water.

13. The Jambūdvīpa is situated in the middle. In its centre, O leading brahmins, is the Meru the mountain of gold.

14-15. Its over-all height is eightyfour thousand Yojanas. Sixteen thousand Yojanas of it constitute the portion beneath the ground. The peak portion extends to thirtytwo thousand Yojanas. At its root the extent all-round is sixteen thousand Yojanas. This mountain stands as the pericarp of the lotus of the earth.

16. The Himavān, Hemakūṭa and Niṣadha are the Varṣa mountains to its South. The Nila, Śveta and Śrīṅgin are the Varṣa mountains in the north.

17. The two in the middle extend to a hundred thousand (Yojanas) and others are ten (thousand Yojanas) less. They are two thousand Yojanas in height and girth.

18-24. Bhārata is the first sub continent, then is the Kimpuruṣa Varṣa O brahmins, these and another varṣa viz. Hari-

(6) *Śālmala*—the tropical part of Africa bordering the Indian Ocean on the West. It included Madagascar—the Zenj of the Arab and Persian geographers, the Hariṇa of the Purāṇas and the Śāmkhadvipa of some other writers.

(7) *Krauñca* is represented by the basin of the Black Sea.

(8) *Upadvīpas* (sub-continents): (1) Bhārata (2) Kimpuruṣa (3) Hari-varṣa (4) Ramyaka (5) Hiraṇmaya (6) Uttarakuru (7) Ilāvṛta (8) Bhadrāśva and (9) Ketumāla. According to P.E. (p. 342) there are eight long mountain ranges which divide the island Jambu into 9 countries which look like nine petals of the lotus flower. The two countries of the north and south extremities (Bhadra and Ketumāla) are bow-shaped. Four of the remaining seven are longer than the rest. The central country is known as Ilāvṛta.

varṣa are to the South of Meru. Ramyaka is a northern sub-continent. Next to it, is Hiraṇmaya. The northern Kurus are like Bhārata. O excellent brahmans, each of these extends to nine thousand Yojanas. There is the Ilāvṛta Varṣa. In its centre stands the lofty golden Meru. O highly blessed ones, the Ilāvṛta Varṣa extends to nine thousand Yojanas in all directions from Meru. There are four mountains here which stand as the extensive supporting pillars of Meru. They extend to ten thousand Yojanas. The mountain Mandara lies in the east, Gandhamādana is to the south. Vipula is to the west and the Supārśva is to the north. There stand the following trees—Kadamba, Jambū Pippala and Vaṭa as the flag staff of mountains. They extend to eleven hundred Yojanas. O excellent brahmans, the Jambū tree gives the name Jambūdvīpa to this continent.

25. Each of the fruits of this Jambū tree is of the size of a huge elephant. These fruits fall all over the top of the mountain and get shattered and scattered.

26. By the juice of these, the famous Jambū river flows and it is being drunk by the people staying there.

27. The people there are hale and hearty and sound in mind because they drink it. They never even perspire. No bad odour comes out of their bodies. They do not experience old age or debility of sense-organs.

28. The clay on the banks gets soaked in the juice. When it gets dry by the gentle wind that blows there it becomes gold. It is called Jāmbūnada. The ornaments for Siddhas are made thereof.

29. The Bhadrāśva subcontinent is to the east of Meru, Ketumāla is to the west. O excellent sages, between these two Varṣas lies the Ilāvṛta Varṣa.

30. The park of Caitraratha is in the east; the Gandhamādana is in the south; the Vaibhrāja is in the west and the Nandana is in the north.

31. There are four lakes frequented and enjoyed by Devas—the Aruṇoda, Mahābhadrā, Asitoda and Mānasa.

32. The Kesara mountains to the east of Meru are—Śāntavān, Cakrakumbha, Kurari, Mālyavān, Vaikāṅka and others.

33. Trikūṭa, Śiśira, Patanga, Rucaka, Niṣadha and others are the Kesara mountains to the south of Meru.

34. Śikhivāsa, Vaidūrya, Kāpila, Gandhamādana, Jānudhi etc. are the Kesara mountains to the west.

35-39. They are very proximate to the Meru and are stationed in its belly. Śaṅkhakūṭa, Ṛṣabha, Hamṣa, Nāga, Kālañjara etc. are the Kesara mountains to the north.

O leading brahmins, at a height of fourteen thousand Yojanas on the Meru is the great city of Brahmā. All round it in the eight quarters are the excellent and famous cities of Indra and other guardians of the quarters.

Originating from the foot of Viṣṇu and flooding the disc of the moon Gaṅgā falls down from Heaven to the city of Brahmā and flows all round. Having fallen there it flows into four streams in the four directions.

40-46. They are Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣu and Bhadrā in order.

The Sītā flows along the firmament to the East from mountain to mountain. Then through Bhadrāśva, the Varṣa in the east, it flows into the ocean.

Similarly, O excellent brahmins the Alakanandā flows to the south, approaches Bhārata and splitting itself into seven streams it flows into the ocean.

The Cakṣu crosses the western mountains and reaches Ketumāla the western Varṣa and then flows into the sea.

O excellent brahmins, the Bhadra crosses the northern mountains and the northern Kurus and then flows into the northern ocean.

The mountains Mālyavān and Gandhamādana extend upto Nīla and Niṣadha mountains. The Meru is in the centre of these two. It is stationed in the form of pericarp.

The Bhāratas, Ketumālas, Bhadrāśvas and Kurus are the petals of Loka mountain outside the mountains of boundary.

The Jāthara and Devakūṭa are the two mountains of boundary. They extend from south to north between Nīla and Niṣadha mountains.

47-51. The Gandhamādana and the Kailāsa extend from west to east, to eighty thousand Yojanas. They are stationed in the ocean. Niṣadha and Pāriyātra—the two mountains of boun-

dary—extend from south to north between Nīla and Niṣadha. They are stationed to the east and west of Meru.

The Triśringa and the Jarudhi are the northern Varṣa mountains. They extend from east to west and are stationed within the ocean; they extend from one ocean to another.

Thus, O brahmins, the boundary mountains have been mentioned by me. They are stationed in pairs within the belly of Meru in all the four quarters.

52-53. Around the Meru the Kesara mountains are situated. They have already been mentioned alongwith Śitānta and others. O brahmins, the water troughs amongst those mountains are very charming. They are frequented by Siddhas and Cāraṇas. The forests and the cities in them are very beautiful.

54. There are excellent shrines of Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu, Agni, Sūrya and Indra in them, O excellent sages. They are frequented by men and Kinnaras.

55. Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Daityas and Dānavas sport about in those charming water troughs day and night.

56. O brahmins, these places are heavens on earth. They are abodes of the righteous. Those who commit sins never go there even after hundreds of births.

57. O brahmins, in the Bhadrāśva sub-continent lord Viṣṇu stays as Hayaśiras with the head of a horse; in the Ketumāla he stays in the form of a boar and in the Bhārata he assumes the form of a tortoise.

58. Eternal Govinda stays in the Kurus in the form of a fish. Hari, the lord of all, stays everywhere in his Viśvarūpa (Universal form).

59-62. O brahmins, he is the support of all and identical with all.

O excellent brahmins, in the eight Varṣas, Kimpuruṣa etc. there is neither misery, nor fatigue, neither strain nor fear of hunger.

The subjects are healthy and sound, free from agony and devoid of distress. They live upto ten or twelve thousand years. No earthly worries such as hunger or thirst assail them, O brahmins. In these sports there is no such division of time: Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.

In each of these Varṣas there are seven mountains called Kulācalas.¹ O excellent sages, hundreds of rivers flow there.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Jambūdvīpa

Lomaharsana said:

1. To the north of ocean and to the South of Himālayas is the sub-continent Bhārata. The subjects are called Bhāratis.

2. O leading sages, its extent is nine thousand Yojanas. This is the land of holy rites to those who opt for heavenly pleasure and absolution.

3. The seven Kulaparvatas are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śūktimān, Rkṣa, Vindhya and Pāriyātra

4. It is from here, O brahmins, that the heaven is attained; one attains absolution too from here, men attain the state of different species of animals or fall in hell from here alone.

5. It is from here alone that men go to heaven or realize absolution at the end of their series of birth. Nowhere else on the earth are holy rites prescribed for men.

6-8. Listen to the nine divisions of this sub-continent.² They are Indradvīpa, Kaserumān, Tāmraparṇa, Gabhastimān, Nāgadvīpa, Saumya, Gāndharva and Vāruṇa.

1. *Kulaparvatas*—Kulaparvata is a chief mountain range. Kulaparvatas are seven in number. Any one of these is supposed to exist in each Varṣa or division of a continent. The principal seven ranges of Bhārata Varṣa include (1) Mahendra (2) Malaya (3) Sahya (4) Śūktimat (5) Rkṣa (6) Vindhya and (7) Pāriyātra. (See 17.3)

2. Bhārata itself is a group of nine islands each separated from the other by oceans and not made easily accessible between each other. They are (1) Indradvīpa (2) Kāserumān (3) Tāmraparṇa (4) Gabasti (5) Saumya (6) Gāndharva (7) Vāruṇa (8) Nāga (9) Bhārata. In some of the Purāṇas, Saumya is replaced by Siṁhala; in others Siṁhala is substituted for Gandharva.

S. M. Ali identifies the nine islands as follows:

- (1) *Aīndra*—the Trans-Brahmaputra region.
- (2) *Kāserumat*—the coastal plain between the deltas of Godāvari and Mahānadi.

Bhārata, the ninth among them, is an island encircled by the ocean. This island extends from South to North a thousand Yojanas.

Kirātas stay in the East, Yavanas stay in the West.

9. Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas stay in the centre. Śūdras stay everywhere. These people have their means of subsistence in sacrifice, battle, trade and service.

10. O sage, the Śatadrū, Candrabhāgā and other rivers have their source at the foot of the Himavān. The Vedasmṛti and other rivers originate from the Pāriyātra.

11-14. The Narmadā, Surasā and other rivers flow from the Vindhya. The Tāpi, Payoṣṇī, Nirvindhya, Kāverī and other rivers flow from the foot of the Rkṣa mountain and as it is well known they dispel sin.

The Godāvari, Bhīmarathi, Kṛṣṇaveṇī and other rivers originate from the foot of Sahya. As it is said they dispel the fear of sins. The Kṛtamālā, Tāmraparṇī and other rivers start from Malaya. The Trisandhyā, Rṣikulyā and other rivers have their source in Mahendra. The Rṣikulyā, Kumāra and other rivers flow from the foot of Śūktimān.

15-19. There are thousands of tributaries and branches of these rivers. The people of this land bathe in and drink their waters. They are the Kurus, Pañcālas, the people of middle land, eastern lands, residents of Kāmarūpa; people of southern territories such as Paundras, Kaliṅgas and others. The Parāntyas (westerners) Saurāṣṭras, Śūdras, Ābhīras, Arbudas, Murukas, Mālavas, residents of Pāriyātra, Sauvīras, Saindhavāpannas, Śālvās, residents of Śākala territory, Madrārāmas, Ambaṣṭhas, Pārasīkas and others. They drink waters of these rivers and stay on their banks. They are highly blessed, hale and hearty.

(3) *Tāmraparṇa* or Tāmraparṇa (associated with the river Tāmraparṇī)—the sector of the Indian peninsula south of Kāverī river.

(4) *Gabhartimān*—the hilly belt between Narmadā and Godāvari rivers.

(5) *Nāga*—colonies and kingdoms extended all over the mountainous belt between Narmadā ranges upto Chhota Nagpur.

(6) *Kaṣāya*—Kathiawad region.

(7) *Simhala*—Ceylon, not mentioned in this Purāṇa.

(8) *Vāruṇa*—the western coast of India. The Arabian Sea has long been known as the abode of Varuṇa.

(9) Bhārata is the ninth division.

According to Cunningham Greater India was divided into nine Khaṇḍas.

20. O great sage, the four Yugas, viz. Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali are reckoned only in Bhārata and nowhere else.

21. The ascetics perform penance here; the Yajvins perform sacrifices; people give charitable gifts with devotion to obtain heaven.

22. Here, in the Jambūdvīpa the Supreme Being is worshipped through sacrifices. It is Viṣṇu who is identified with sacrifice that is worshipped. In other Dvīpas he is worshipped otherwise.

23. O great sage, in the Jambūdvīpa, it is the subcontinent Bhārata which is most excellent since it is the land of holy rites and activities. Others are the regions of enjoyment.

24. Here, O excellent one, after thousands and thousands of birth alone does a creature attain human birth sometimes through the accumulation of merits.

25-29. It is said that Devas sing (its praise thus):—“Blessed are they who are born (again and again) as men in Bhārata which is the source of heavenly pleasures as well as liberation.

Holy rites should be performed in utter disregard of their benefits. They must be dedicated to Viṣṇu identical with the Ātman. Those who are pure attain birth in the land of holy rites (i.e. Bhārata) and get merged into that infinite Being (after death). We do know that when the merit that had originally yielded heavenly pleasures subsides, those who are blessed will be re-born in the land of Bhārata and not those who are devoid of intelligence.

O brahmins, this Jambūdvīpa, which consists of nine subcontinents and which extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas has been mentioned by me.

O brahmins, the briny sea that extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas and that is like a bangle in shape encircles the Jambūdvīpa externally.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Magnitude of Oceans and Continents

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

1. Just as the Jambūdvīpa is encircled by the briny sea so also the briny sea is encircled by the Plakṣa dvīpa.

2. The extent of Jambūdvīpa is one hundred thousand Yojanas. O brahmins, twice that is cited as the extent of Plakṣa-dvīpa.

3-4. Medhātithi, the overlord of the Plakṣadvīpa, had seven sons. The eldest was Śāntabhaya by name. Śiśira was the next one. Others were Sukhodaya, Ānanda, Śiva, Kṣemaka and Dhruva. All of them were kings in Plakṣa Dvīpa.

5. The sub-continents are Śāntabhaya, Śiśira, Sukhada, Ānanda, Śiva, Kṣemaka and Dhruva.

6. There are Varṣaparvatas, the mountains demarcating the boundary. They are only seven, O excellent sages. Listen to their names.

7. They are Gomeda, Candra, Nārada, Dundubhi, Somaka, Sumanas and Vaibhrāja.

8. O sinless ones, accompanied by Devas and Gandharvas the subjects live in the charming Varṣa mountains and lands.

9. The countries and territories therein are holy. People are born after long periods (of gestation). Neither mental agony nor ailments afflict them. They feel happy throughout the year.

10. There are seven rivers in these Varṣas which flow into the oceans. I shall name them. Their mention dispels sins altogether.

11. They are Anutaptā, Śikhī, Vipāśā, Tridivā, Kramu, Amṛtā and Sukṛtā. These are seven rivers there.

12. O brahmins, the mountains and rivers mentioned here are the main ones. Small rivers and mountains are in thousands there.

13. The people of the region drink waters thereof and feel delighted. Every river, O brahmins, flows downwards and no river flows up.

14. O excellent brahmins, the different Yugas are not reckoned in these seven climes. The time is perpetually like that of the Tretā-yuga.

15. O Brahmins, in all these continents beginning with Plakṣa and ending with Śaka the people live for five thousand years without any ailment.

16-17. Dharma is of four types among them in accordance with the divisions of Varṇas (castes) and Āśramas (stages of life). The Varṇas are four.

O learned men, I shall mention them to you, O excellent sages, they are Āryakas, Kurus, Vivavats and Bhāvins. They are brahmins, Kṣatṛiyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras.

18. In the centre, there is a big tree of the size of Jambū tree. It is the Plakṣa tree from which O excellent brahmins, the continent derives its name.

19. Hari identical with all, lord of all, creator of the universe is worshipped in the form of Soma (Moon) by those Varṇas, Āryakas and others.

20. The Plakṣa is encircled by the ocean of Sugarcane juice. It is of the same size as the continent Plakṣa and it emulates a halo around it.

21. Thus, O excellent sages, the Plakṣa continent has been recounted to you briefly. Now I shall tell you the history of Śālmaladvīpa.

22-23. O brahmins, the overlord of Śālmaladvīpa is the heroic Vapuṣmān. O excellent brahmins, his sons are Śveta, Harita, Jīmūta, Rohita (Harita ?) Vaidyuta, Mānasa and Suprabha. There are seven Varṣas named after them.

24. The ocean of Sugarcane juice is encircled by Śālmaladvīpa twice its size in extent.

25. It should be known that there are seven mountains there, the source of jewels. They signify the different Varṣas. There are seven main rivers too.

26-27. The mountains are: Kumuda, Unnata, Balāhaka, Droṇa that abounds in great medicinal herbs, Kaṅka the fifth mountain, Mahiṣa the sixth and Kakudmān the seventh. Now, O brahmins I shall mention names of the rivers.

28. They are Śroni, Toyā, Vitṛṣṇā, Cakrā, Śukrā, Vimocanī and Nivṛtti. Merely on being remembered they quell sins immediately.

29-32. The seven Varṣas are Śveta, Lohita, Jīmūta, Harita,

Vaidyuta, Mānasa and Suprabha. These Varṣas contain the four Varnas.

O excellent brahmins, in the Varṣas of Sālmala Dvīpa the Varnas stay. They are Kapilas (tawny), Aruṇas (pink), Pitas (yellow) and Kṛṣṇas (black). They are brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. They worship lord Viṣṇu, the lord of all, the unchanging Ātman, in the form of wind. They worship by performing sacrifices. They worship the lord stationed in Yojanas.

33. In this charming place there live Devas. Sālmalī is the tree which gives the continent its name.

34. This is encircled by the ocean of wine which in extent is equal to Sālmaladvīpa itself.

35. The ocean of wine is encircled by Kuśadvīpa twice the size of Sālmala in extent.

36-38. Jyotiṣmān is the overlord of Kuśadvīpa and has seven sons. They are Udbhida, Venuman, Svairatha, Randhana, Dhṛti, Prabhākara and Kapila. The Varṣa mountains are named after them. Human beings stay there along with the Daityas and Dānavas. So also stay Devas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Kimpuruṣas and others. There also live four Varnas interested in carrying out their duties.

39. O excellent brahmins, they are Damins, Suṣmins, Snehas and Mandehas. They are to be cited in order as brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras here.

40-42. Since their authority declines by the performance of holy rites the people in Kuśadvīpa worship Janārdana as Brahman and dispel Ugra, the fierce deity, the bestower of the benefit of Adhikāra.

O excellent brahmins, the following are the seven Varṣa mountains in that Dvīpa:—Vidruma, Hemaśaila, Dyutimān, Puṣṭimān, Kuśeśaya, Hari and Mandāra mountain.

43-44. The rivers are seven. Listen to their names in order. They are Dhūtapāpā, Śivā, Pavitrā, Sammati, Vidyudambhas, Mahī and unnamed river. All these dispel sins of the worshipper. There are thousands of other small rivers and mountains.

45. There is a stump of Kuśa grass in the Kuśa Dvīpa and this gives the continent its name. This Dvīpa is encircled by an ocean of ghee of an equal size.

46. 'The ocean of ghee is encircled by Krauñca Dvīpa. O excellent sages, Krauñcadvīpa is another great continent. May the account of the same be heard attentively.

47. It extends to twice the size of Kuśadvīpa In Krauñcadvīpa, Dyutimān is the over-lord and the noble Dyutimān had seven sons.

48-54. The king named Varṣas after the names of his sons. They were—Kuśaga, Mandaga, Uṣṇa, Pivara, Andhakāraka, Muni and Dundubhi. O brahmins, these were his seven sons.

O excellent sages, there are Varṣas, mountains very charming and frequented by Devas and Gandharvas. Now, I shall mention their names. They are Krauñca, Vāmana, Andhakāraka, Devavrata, Dama, Puṇḍarikavana and the great mountain Dundubhi. The latter ones are twice in size of the previous ones. Just as one Dvīpa is twice another Dvīpa in size, the mountains also are twice in size. In these charming Varṣas and on these excellent Varṣa mountains the subjects live without agony along with the groups of Devas. O excellent brahmins, they are known as Puṣkalas and Puṣkaras. They are brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras cited in due order. O excellent sages, listen to the names of rivers which they drink from.

55-61. There are hundreds of local rivers but the following seven are chief:—Kumudvatī, Sandhyā, Rātri, Manojavā, Khyāti and Puṇḍarikā. These seven are Varṣa rivers.

The lord Janārdana, in the form of Yogirudra is also worshipped there by the Varṇas, Puṣkara and others at the holding of a sacrifice.

The Krauñca Dvīpa is encircled all round by the ocean of the skin of curds of equal magnitude. O excellent sages, the ocean of the skin of curds is encircled by Śākadvīpa, whose magnitude is twice as that of Krauñca dvīpa.

Bhavya the noble lord of Śākadvīpa had seven sons and he gave them seven Varṣas.

The sons were—Jalada, Kumāra, Sukumāra, Maniraka, Kusumoda, Moaaki and Mahādruma. The seven Varṣas, are named after their names in due order.

62-64. There are seven mountains in that continent which demarcate the boundary of Varṣas. The mountains are Udaya-

giri, Jaladhāra, Raivataka, Śyāma, Ambhogiri, Āstikeya and Kesari the most excellent of all mountains.

Śāka is the great tree here. It is frequented by Siddhas and Gandharvas. On coming into contact with the wind blowing from its leaves, great delight is experienced.

65. Many realms are there consisting of four castes. Noble-souls devoid of agony and calamity stay there.

66-67. There are highly meritorious rivers here. They dispel sins and fears thereof. They are :—Sukumārī, Kumārī, Nalini, Reṇukā, Ikṣu, Dhenukā and Gabhasti. O excellent brahmans, there are ten thousands of other small rivers there.

68-70. There are hundreds and thousands of mountains also. Those who are stationed in clouds etc drink joyously the water of those rivers. The realms in the Varṣas are equipped with the fourth aim of life (i.e. liberation). The rivers too are holy and they descend to Earth from heaven. There is no loss of Dharma, no struggle, no sorrow. Nor is there any action repugnant to the limits of decency in those seven regions.

71-74. The four Varnas are Magas, Māgadhas, Mānasas, and Mandagas. The Magas are brahmias; Magadhas are Kṣatriyas; Mānasas are Vaiśyas and Mandagas are Śūdras.

Viṣṇu, who has assumed the form of the sun is worshipped by the residents of Śākadvīpa by performing appropriate holy rites in the manner they are laid down. The residents have perfect control of their souls and minds.

O brahmans, Śākadvīpa is encircled by the ocean of milk of the size of Śākadvīpa. It is as though encircled by a girdle.

O brahmans, the ocean of milk is encircled by Puṣkaradvīpa.

75-76. Puṣkaradvīpa is twice as much as the Śākadvīpa in size.

In Puṣkaradvīpa the over-lord is Savana and his sons are Mahāvīta and Dhātaki. The two Varṣas are named after them —Mahāvīta and Dhātakikhaṇḍa.

77. O highly blessed ones, there is only one Varṣa mountain named Mānasottara. It is well renowned. It has the shape of a girdle. It is in the centre of Dvīpa.

78. It is fifty thousand Yojanas high and extends to many Yojanas. It is cylindrical in shape.

79. This mountain is so stationed that it appears to divide

the circular Dvīpa in the middle. Hence, the two Varṣas are separated.

80. Each of the two halves is circular in shape and the great mountain is between them. Men there live upto ten thousand years.

81-84. They are devoid of ailments and sorrow. They are free from passion and hatred. O brahmins, there is no distinction of the base and excellent, of the killer and the killed among them. They do not have malice, jealousy, fear, fury, defect or greed and similar base qualities.

The Mahāvīta Varṣa adorned by the Dhātaki-khaṇḍa is frequented by Devas, Daityas and others on the Mānasottara mountain.

In that Dvīpa called Puṣkara there is neither truth nor falsehood. There are neither rivers nor mountains. Men have similar dresses and features. They are similar in form to Devas.

85. The continent is devoid of Varṇas, Āśramas and the conduct of life as such. It is devoid of holy rites. There is neither the Vedic lore, nor the Science of polity, neither business manual nor the code of service.

86. Consisting of two Varṣas, O brahmins, it is called the terrestrial heaven. The time passes happily with everyone devoid of old age and sickness.

87. Such is the situation O brahmins, in the Puṣkara, Dhātakikhaṇḍa and Mahāvīta.

In the Puṣkaradvīpa the holy fig tree is the excellent abode of Brahmā.

88-89. Brahmā stays there, worshipped by Devas and Asuras.

Puṣkara is encircled by the ocean of meat, water equal in size and extent to it.

Thus the seven Dvīpas are surrounded by the seven oceans.

90. The Dvīpa and the ocean that surrounds it are equal. The latter one is twice in size as the earlier one.

The water in each of these oceans remains always the same in volume.

91-94. They do not become less or more in the manner that water in a pot becomes less when heated by fire.

When the moon waxes, the water in the ocean does not

increase. Waters move up or down in the same volume, neither more nor less.

O excellent sages, during the moonrise and moonset in the two halves of the lunar month the waters of the ocean are seen moving up or down one thousand five hundred Āngulas.

The diet of the people in the Puṣkara Dvīpa comes to them by itself.

95-99. O brahmins, there the subjects enjoy foodstuffs of all the six tastes always.

All round the ocean of sweet water a world is seen stationed. It is twice the size of the ocean. The ground is golden but devoid of all creatures.

Beyond that is the mountain Lokāloka extending to ten thousand Yojanas. That mountain is as many thousand Yojanas in height also.

Beyond that is darkness. It has encircled the mountain all round. That darkness is enveloped by the cauldron of the Egg (Aṇḍakaṭāha).

This universe extends to fifty crores of Yojanas along with the Aṇḍakaṭāha, Dvīpas, oceans and mountains.

O excellent brahmins, this earth is the support of all worlds. It is superior to all other creations, it is noble and excellent.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Magnitude of Netherworlds

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

1. O excellent sages, the extent of the Earth has been related. Its height (above the lowermost of the nether worlds) is said to be seventy-thousand Yojanas.

2-8. O excellent sages, each one of the nether worlds is a thousand Yojanas above the lower one. The seven netherworlds are—Atala, Vitala, Nitala, Sutala, Talātala, Rasātala and Pātāla.

The grounds of these nether worlds are black, white, pink, yellow, gravelled, rocky and golden. O leading brahmims, excellent palaces adorn them.

In them the communities of Dānavas, Daityas and kins, men of Nāgas of huge bodies live, O excellent brahmims:

Nārada who entered the heavenly assembly coming straight to heaven from the nether regions said that the nether worlds were more charming than the heavenly world.

There are pure jewels of brilliant lustre which delight the onlookers. The ornaments of the Nāgas, the residents of the nether regions shine splendidly in heaven; there is nothing that is equal to it.

Who is not attracted and delighted by the right of nether regions which are rendered splendid by the lasses of Daityas and Dānavas ? Even a liberated soul is drawn to it. During daytime, rays of the sun spread diffused light but not the glaring sunlight.

9-20. During the night the light of the moon is not utilised for its coolness but only for illumination.

Since that passes away is not taken notice of by the Nāgas who enjoy with gaiety the foodstuffs and the edibles they consume and the great beverages they drink. Nor are Danujas and others aware of it.

O brahmims, the forests, rivers, lakes, and lotus ponds, the cooing of the cuckoo and other sweet birds, the pleasing skies, the unguents and the continuous notes and sounds of musical instruments such as the lute, flute and Mṛdaṅga drums, O brahmims—all these and other beautiful things are enjoyed by virtue of their good luck by Dānavas, Daityas and Nāgas residing in Pātāla. The Tāmasī form of Viṣṇu, named Śeṣa is beneath the lower regions.

Daityas and Dānavas are not capable of recounting his good qualities. He is honoured by Devas and celestial sages. He is spoken of as Ananta. He has a thousand hoods and he is clearly bedecked in Svastika ornaments devoid of impurities. He illuminates all quarters by thousand jewels on his hoods.

For the welfare of the universe he deprives the Asuras of their prowess. His eyes whirl and rove due to intoxication. He has only one earring at all times.

Wearing a crown and garlands he shines like a white mountain aflame with fire.

He is clad in blue garments. He is intoxicated with pride. He is resplendent with white garlands. He is lofty like the mountain of Kailāsa where the celestial Gaṅgā falls. He has placed his hand on the plough-share; he holds an excellent iron club. He is attended upon by the embodied splendour of Varuṇa.

At the end of the Kalpa, Rudra in the form of Saṅkarsana comes out of his mouth, blazing like the flame of poisonous fire and devours the three worlds.

He holds the entire sphere of the world rising above like a peak.

21-27. Worshipped by the entire hordes of Devas Śeṣa is stationed at the root of Pātāla. His prowess, power, form and features cannot be described or known even by the gods. The whole of the Earth is turned into pink by the flames of jewels on his hoods. It acts as a floral garland for Śeṣa. Who will be able to recount his prowess? When Śeṣa with his eyes rolling and roving due to intoxication, yawns and stretches himself, the whole of the Earth along with its rivers, forests and mountains, quakes and moves.

The Gandharvas, Apsaras, Siddhas, Kinnaras, Nāgas and Rākṣasas never reach the end of his good qualities. Hence, he is Ananta. He is unchanging. The Nāga lasses apply red sandal paste on him as unguent. Wafted by the wind of respiration it acts as the perfumed powder for the quarters. It was by propitiating him that the ancient sage Garga understood the luminaries factually and the predictive astrology based on omens.

The Earth is thus held on his head by the noble Nāga. He holds universe including Devas, Asuras and human beings.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Hells in nether regions

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

1. Thereafter, O brahmins, the hells are situated beneath the waters. The sinners are hurled down into them. Now, hear about them attentively, O excellent brahmins.

2-6. They are Raurava, Śaukara, Rodha, Tāna, Viśasana, Mahājvāla, Taptakumbha, Mahālobha, Vimohana, Rudhirāndha, Vaitaraṇī, Kṛmīśa, Kṛmibhojana, Asipatravana, Kṛṣṇa, Lālabhakṣa, Pūyavaha, Pāpa, Vahnijvāla, Adhaḥśiras, Sadamīśa, Kṛṣṇasūtra, Tamas, Avīci, Śvabhojana, Apratiṣṭha and a second Avīci. There are other similar hells extremely terrible which fall under the jurisdiction of Yama. They terrify by means of weapons and fires. The persons who are engaged in sinful activities fall into them.

7. He who commits perjury, he who speaks with partiality and he who utters falsehood falls into Raurava hell.

8. O excellent sages, he who destroys a foetus, he who murders his preceptor, he who slays cows and he who suffocates others—all these fall into terrible Raurava hell.

9. He who drinks wine, he who slays a brahmin, he who steals gold and he who comes into contact with these—all these fall into Śūkara hell.

10. He who murders a king, a Vaiśya and a royal soldier, he who defiles the bed of his preceptor and he who indulges in sexual intercourse with his sister—all these fall into Taptakumbha hell.

11. He who sells his chaste wife, he who keeps wine for sale, he who sells saffron and he who discards a devoted friend or servant—all these fall into Taptaloha hell.

12-13. He who indulges in sexual intercourse with his daughter or daughter-in-law is hurled into Mahājvāla hell. He who insults preceptors and elders, he who reviles at them, he who slanders the Vedas, he who sells the Vedas and he who cohabits with the forbidden women falls into Sabala hell, O brahmins.

14-17. A thief falls into Vimoha hell, so also the person who defiles the line of demarcation of boundary.

He who hates Devas, brahmins and Pitṛs, he who spoils jewels—falls into Kṛmibhakṣa hell.

He who performs an ill-conducted sacrifice falls into Kṛmiśa hell.

The base man who takes food prior to Pitṛs, Devas and guests falls into Lālābhakṣa hell. The maker of arrows falls into Vedhaka hell.

Those who make arrows with knots, those who make swords and other destructive weapons fall into the terrible hell Viśasana.

He who receives gifts from indecent men falls into Adhomukha hell.

18. He who performs a sacrifice on behalf of a person not entitled to that privilege, he who foretells by studying stars and he who partakes of sweet cooked food all by himself falls into Kṛmipūya hell.

19. O brahmins, the brahmin who sells lac, gravy, gingelly seeds and salt falls into the same hell.

20. O excellent brahmins he who rears or eats poultry, goats, pigs and birds falls into the same hell.

21-22. He who subsists on the stage or the trade of fish, he who partakes of food from the hand of the bastard, he who administers poison, he who adopts the profession of a spy or a secret informer, he who rears buffaloes, or being a brahmin indulges in sexual intercourse on Parvan days, he who commits arson, he who hates friends, he who behaves as a deceptive and he who performs a sacrifice on behalf of all and sundry in the village and he who sells Soma juice falls into hell Rudhir-andha.

23-24. He who destroys honey, he who commits multi-murder of villagers falls into hell Vaitaraṇī.

Those who drink semen, those who break boundary lines or flout limits of decency, those who do not observe pollution (i.e. after birth of an infant or death of kinsman) and those who maintain themselves on deception fall into Kṛcchra hell. He who cuts off a forest in vain falls into hell Asipatravana.

25. Those who hunt wild goats, sheep, or deer fall into hell Vahnijvāla. O brahmins, they too who burn things that should not be burnt, fall into hell.

26. He who commits omissions in the observance of holy

rites and he who errs while performing duties of his stage (āśrama) fall into Sandarśa hell and endure its tortures.

27. Those men and religious students who have vowed to celibacy but who discharge semen by day or during dreams, at night and those who are taught by their sons fall into Śvabhojana hell.

28. These are the main hells, there are hundreds, and thousands of similar hells where the perpetrators of heinous crimes are cooked by day and night and tortured.

29. These sins and thousands of similar sins are atoned for by men who are brought to suffering to one or other of these hells.

30. Those who act contrary to the tenets of disciplined life of Varnas and Āśramas mentally, physically or verbally, fall into these hells.

31. The gods in heaven are seen by the people of hells with their heads directed above. The gods see the residents of hells far below, their heads directed below.

32-33. The following beings attain absolution in that order:—the immobile beings, worms, aquatic animals, birds, animals, men, righteous persons and Devas. The latter ones of these constitute a thousandth part of the former ones among them. All these, O highly blessed ones, progress till they achieve salvation.

34. There are as many dwellers in hell as there are creatures in heaven. He who commits sins but is averse to expiate for them, falls into hell.

35. Holy rites of expiation have been mentioned by great sages in proportion to sins. They have mentioned them being fully aware which particular expiation is capable of quelling the particular sin.

36. O leading brahmins, Manu and other sages have mentioned rites of atonement—elaborate ones if the sin is elaborate and minor ones if the sin is minor.

37. The acts of expiations are in the nature of austerities or holy rites. Of all of them the remembrance of Sri Kṛṣṇa is the most effective.

38. After committing a sin if a person repents for it, he should remember Viṣṇu—which is the sole rite of expiation for him. This is the greatest of all holy rites.

39. Remembering Viṣṇu at dawn, night, dusk or midday the man attains Viṣṇu because his sins are immediately quelled.

40. By remembering Viṣṇu his pains and strains perish immediately and they attain absolution. Attainment of heaven is an obstacle into him.

41. O leading brahmins, the benefits such as attaining the status of Indra as a result of Japa, Homa, worship etc are obstacles to a man whose mind is set on Vāsudeva.

42. Where is the attainment of heaven characterised by a return once again to the Earth? Where is the Japa of Vāsudeva which is the most excellent cause of absolution (where there is no return to this earth) ?

43. Hence, no brahmin, no man, who remembers Viṣṇu day and night, falls into hell. If he has incurred sins they perish immediately.

44. That which delights the mind is heaven. That which is contrary in effect is hell. O excellent brahmins, good and evil are given the appellations of heaven and hell.

45. The one and the same object is conducive to misery as well as happiness. It produces malice and wrath. Hence there can never be an object solely of the nature of sorrow?

46. The same object generates pleasure at the outset, but later on, it yields misery. The same object causes pain, wrath but later on gives pleasure.

47. Hence, there is nothing which is solely of the nature of sorrow or solely of the nature of pleasure. It is the changed phase of mind that is characterised by happiness or sorrow.

48. Knowledge alone is the greatest Brahman; knowledge alone is effective for removing bondage. The universe is of the nature of knowledge. There is nothing greater than knowledge.

49-50. O brahmins let this be understood that knowledge alone is learning and ignorance.

Thus the sphere of Earth has been recounted to you by me. Similarly, O brahmins, I have recounted the nether regions, hells, oceans, mountains, continents subcontinents and rivers succinctly. Everything has been mentioned to you. What else do you desire to know ?

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Upper Regions

The sages said :

1-2. Everything has been mentioned to us by you. We wish to know further about the upper worlds Bhūr, Bhuvān, Svar etc. We also wish to know how the planets are stationed and what their magnitude is. O highly blessed Lomaharṣaṇa, mention these precisely.

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

3. That area which is illuminated by the rays of the sun and the moon is known as earth. It consists of oceans, rivers and mountains also.

4. The extent and magnitude of the sky is the same as those of the earth.

5. O brahmins, the disc of the sun is stationed a hundred thousand Yojanas away from the earth. The disc of the moon is stationed a hundred thousand Yojanas away from the sun.

6. Full hundred thousand Yojanas above the moon, the entire sphere of the stars shines.

7. O brahmins, mercury (Budha) is two hundred thousand Yojanas above the sphere of stars. Venus Uśanas is stationed so many Yojanas above Mercury.

8. Mars (Aṅgāraka) is stationed so many Yojanas above Venus. The preceptor of Devas, Jupiter, is stationed two hundred thousand Yojanas above Mars.

9. Saturn (Sauri) is stationed two hundred thousand Yojanas above Jupiter. The sphere of seven sages (the Great Bear), O excellent brahmins, is stationed a hundred thousand Yojanas beyond it.

10. Polestar Dhruva that is the pivot of entire luminaries is stationed a hundred thousand Yojanas above seven sages.

11. O excellent sages, the three worlds have been succinctly mentioned. This is the ground for the benefit of sacrifice. The sacrifice is established here.

12. The Maharloka is a crore of Yojanas above Dhruva. It is here that the Kalpavāsins reside.

13. The Janaloka is two crores of Yojanas above Mahar-

loka. It is here that Sanandana and other sons of Brahmā live. O brahmins, they are pure-minded.

14. Four times that distance above Janaloka (i.e. eight crores of Yojanas) is the Tapas region. It is there that the gods called Vairājas are stationed. They are devoid of physical forms.

15. Six times that distance above the Tapas region (i.e. 48 crores of Yojanas) shines the Satyaloka. This region releases one from the bondage of death (that which does not kill again) and is known as the world of Brahmā.

16. Wherever there is earthly ground or object that can be traversed by foot, it is called Bhurloka. Its extent has been mentioned by me.

17. O excellent sages, the space between the earth and the sun, frequented by the sages, Siddhas and others, is called Bhuvarloka. It is the second of upper worlds.

18. The space between Dhruva and the sun which extends to one million four hundred thousand Yojanas is said to be Svarloka by those who are conversant with the geography of the worlds.

19. This set of three worlds is called Kṛtaka (artificial) by the brahmins. The three worlds Jana, Tapas and Satya are called Akṛtaka (Natural).

20. In between the two, Maharloka is known as Kṛtakā-kṛtaka. At the end of a Kalpa it becomes empty but is not annihilated entirely.

21. O brahmins, these seven upper worlds have been mentioned by me to you as also the seven nether worlds. This is the detailed description of the cosmic Egg.

22. This is enveloped by the cauldron of the Egg (Aṇḍaka-tāha) all round, at the sides above and below like the seeds of an apple fruit.

23. The Egg is enveloped by water ten times its size. The encircling volume of water is enveloped by fire.

24. O brahmins, the fire is enveloped by wind; and the wind is enveloped by Ether. O excellent sages, the Ether is enveloped by Mahat.

25. These seven are such that the outer one is ten times the size of the inner one. The Pradhāna stands enveloping the Mahat.

26. It is infinite and endless. It has no reckoning since it cannot be measured by any unit, nor calculated by any figure.

27. O brahmins, it is the cause of entire creation. It is the great Prakṛti. There are thousands and thousands of such cosmic Eggs.

28-30. There are eggs like these, crores and hundred crores in number.

Just as there is fire in the wood, or oil in the gingelly seed so also the Puruṣa is stationed in the Pradhāna which it provides. He is known as the conscious Ātman.

O excellent brahmins, the Pradhāna and the Puruṣa are sustained by the Energy of Viṣṇu that is the soul of all living beings. They mix together in their activity. Thus the energy of Viṣṇu alone is the cause of separation and integration of Puruṣa and Pradhāna.

31-36. O excellent sages, at the creation of the universe it is the cause of agitation.

Just as wind contains chillness of each and every drop of water so also the Energy of Viṣṇu contains both Pradhāna and Puruṣa together.

A tree with its roots, stem and branches grows out of the first seed. Many seeds come out of that thereafter. From those seeds grow other trees. These have the same characteristics, causes and parts.

In the same manner the Mahat etc are evolved, at the outset from the unevolved Pradhāna. From the Mahat to Viśeṣa this is the process of creation. Therefrom the gods and others are born. Their sons are born, their sons and grandsons. It goes on.

Just as there is no deficiency or decline in the tree due to the growth of another tree from its seeds so also the elements do not dwindle by the creation of other elements.

37. Just as the Ether, time, etc. are as the cause of the tree by their mere presence, nearly so also Viṣṇu is the cause of universe without undergoing transformation.

38-40. In the seed of a grain all these are present in latent form—viz—the root, stalk, sprout, leaf, stem, ovary, flower, milk (soup), rice-grain, husks and the bits of grain. O excellent sages, when all the complements of causes for the growth are present, these parts, already present within manifest themselves.

In the same manner, the physical forms of gods and human beings are already present in the diverse activities. They grow up, by coming into contact with the energy of Viṣṇu.

41-44. That Viṣṇu is the great Brahman from whom this universe evolves, in whom it subsists and in whom it is dissolved.

That Brahman is the greatest abode; and the great region beyond Sat and Asat. The universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings is identical with him.

He alone is the Primordial Nature. He alone is the universe when his form becomes manifest. In him alone everything is evolved and dissolved.

He is the agent of rites; he is worshipped; he alone is the sacrifice and the benefit thereof; he alone is the means of sacrifice. There is nothing which is separate and different from him.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Pole Star

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

1. Pole Star is situated at the tail end of the form of lord Viṣṇu in heaven which consists of constellations and which has the shape of Śiśumāra¹ (the Gangetic porpoise).

2. He himself revolves and he makes the moon, sun and other planets too revolve. The constellations follow him in a circular orbit.

3. Along with the planets, the sun, moon, stars and constellations are tied to Dhruva by gaseous rows and lines.

4-5. Viṣṇu is the greatest abode. He is the support of that luminous form in heaven with the shape of Gangetic porpoise mentioned above.

1. *Śiśumāra* (the Gangetic porpoise) is a constellation, so called because it is in the shape of a crocodile. It is said to be the starry form of Viṣṇu. At the tail-end of it is Dhruva which automatically rotates and also makes planets like the sun and the moon to rotate. Stars follow the self-rotating Dhruva and rotate like a wheel.

(Meditating on the lord) in his heart, the son of Uttānapāda, Dhruva propitiated the Patriarch Brahmā and stationed himself at the tail end of the stellar Gangetic porpoise.

6. The support of Śiśumāra is Viṣṇu the presiding deity of all humanities. The Śiśumāra is the support of Dhruva and the sun is supported by Dhruva.

7. This entire universe including Devas, Asuras and human beings is supported by the sun. O brahmins, now listen, by what method he supports the universe.

8. For eight months the sun absorbs water in the form of juice. Then he showers water in the form of rain. That gives rise to foodgrains. This entire universe rests on food.

9-10. After absorbing water from the universe by his hot rays, the sun nourishes the moon. By the water-essence passing through the gaseous nerves the moon is held aloft over the clouds having their forms evolved out of smoke, fire and wind. The clouds are called Abhras because they hold waters and do not let them fall off.

11. When nudged by the wind the waters in the clouds fall off. O brahmins, they attain the impressions of previous actions activised by the opportune time, and become pure.

12. O brahmins, the sun-god absorbs four types of waters, viz. those of rivers, oceans, earth and those present in the living beings.

13-14. The multi-rayed sun absorbs water from the celestial Gaṅgā and immediately discharges it on to the earth without allowing it to get entangled with the clouds.

O excellent brahmins, the man who has washed the dirt of all sins due to his contact with it never falls into hell. Indeed, it is said to be a divine bath.

15. On seeing the sun, that water falls from heaven without the clouds acting as intermediary. That water from the celestial Gaṅgā is absorbed and cast off by the rays of the sun.

16. The water that falls from heaven on seeing the sun during Kṛttikā and other stars should be known as the water of Gaṅgā poured out by the elephants of quarters.

17. The water that falls down during the even numbered (i.e. Rohiṇī, Ārdrā etc) from heaven after being absorbed by the sun is immediately scattered by the rays of the sun.

18. O brahmins, both of them are extremely meritorious to human beings. They dispel sins. O excellent brahmins, one can have divine absolution with the waters of celestial Gaṅgā.

19. O brahmins, the water that is showered by the clouds nourishes living beings and makes the medicinal herbs grow well. It is the nectar that enlivens all.

20. All kinds of medicinal plants increase thereby. Until they are mature and ripe they continue to be the means to the people.

21. Day by day men with the sacred scriptures as their guides perform sacrifices in the manner they have been laid down and thereby nourish the gods.

22-23. The entire universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings is supported by rain. Thus the sacrifices, Vedas, castes beginning with the brahmins, Devas, animals and the rest of living beings—everyone is supported by rain. O excellent sages that rain is generated by the sun.

24. O excellent sages the support of the sun is the Polar Star and that of the Polar Star is Śiśumāra and that support of Śiśumāra is Viṣṇu.

25-26. Viṣṇu is stationed in the heart of Śiśumāra. He maintains all living beings. He is the primordial cause and eternal.

Thus, O excellent sages, the cosmic egg has been cited by me along with the divisions of the earth, oceans etc. What else do you desire to know ?

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Holy Centres : Their Greatness

The sages said :

1. O Sūta conversent with piety, it behoves you to narrate the tale of holy shrines and centres over the earth. We are inclined to hear the same.

Lomaharṣaṇa said:

2. He whose hands and feet are clean, whose mind is fully restrained and who has learning, penance and fame, enjoys the benefit of visiting holy shrines.

3. The pure mind is the holy centre unto men. So also the control over speech and the restraint on the sense-organs. There are holy centres present in the physical body itself. They make the man understand the path of heaven.

4. The wicked mind situated within does not become purified by ablutions in the sacred water in the holy centres, like the unclean mudpot of stale liquor which cannot become pure even when washed with water a hundred times.

5. Neither holy centres, nor charitable gifts nor holy rites, nor penance groves can purify the man whose mind is wicked, who takes delight in arrogance or who has not conquered his sense-organs.

6. Wherever a man stays after keeping his sense-organs fully under his control—the holy centres of Kurukṣetra, Prayāga and Puṣkara are present there.

7. Hence listen. I shall mention holy centres and sacred shrines—whatever there are on the earth, O excellent sages.

8-9 They cannot be explained in detail even in the course of hundreds of years.

O excellent brahmins I shall mention holy centres of Puṣkara, Naimiśa forest, Prayāga and Dharmāraṇya as the foremost among holy spots.

There are Dhenuka, Campaka and Saindhava forests.

10. The meritorious Sagarāraṇya forest, Daṇḍaka forest, Gaya, Prabhāsa, Śrītirtha, and the divine Kanakhala.¹

11. Bhṛgutūṅga, Hiranyaśā, Bhīmakanyā, Kuśasthali Lokārgala, Kedāra and Mandāra forest.

12. Mahālaya, Koṭitirtha, that dispels sins, Rūpatirtha, Śūkara and Cakratirtha of great benefit.

13. Vyāsatirtha, Somatirtha, Śākhoṭakatirtha, Kokā-mukha tīrtha and the holy Badari mountain.

1. *Kanakhala*—A holy place of pilgrimage on the bank of Gaṅgā. Kālidāsa refers to this place in his Meghadūta. This is the place where Dakṣa Prājāpati performed the sacrifice.

14. Somatīrtha, Tuṅgakūṭa, Skandāśramatīrtha, Sūryaprabha, Dhenuṣaras and the seventh āyuṣmika. ?
15. Koṭitīrtha at Dharmodbhava, the Sārva-kāmika-tīrtha, Sūryaprabha, Mahākuṇḍa and Somābhiseṭecanatīrtha.
16. Mahāśtota, Koraka, Pañcadhāras Tridhāra, Sapta-dhāra, Ekadhāra and Amarakanṭakatīrtha.
17. Śālagrāma, Cakratīrtha, the excellent Kadalihrada, Vidyutprabha, Devahradatīrtha, and Viṣṇuprabha.
18. Śankhaprabha, Devakuṇḍa, Vajrāyudhatīrtha, Vas-trāpada, Barhapada and Lokārohaṇa.
19. Svayamvāṭa, Bhadrabala, Kauśāmba, Divākara, Sāras-vata Dvīpa, Vijayadvīpa, and Kāmaja Dvīpa.
20. (?) Sollayāṅgopacāra, Cavarambana, Pūrṇavat (?) Snānakuṇḍa, Prayāga and Guhā Viṣṇupada.
21. Kanyākuṇḍa, Vāyukuṇḍa, Jambūmārga the excellent holy centre, Gabhastitīrtha and the clean Yayāti Pattana.
22. Bhadravaṭa Koṭitīrtha, Mahākālavana, the great Narmadātīrtha, Tīrthabīja and Arbuda.
23. The Pañcatīrtha including Vasiṣṭhatīrtha, Priyasam-jñaka, Vārṣika and the splendid Pañjiraka.
24. Sutīrtha, Brahmarudra, Kanyākumārika, Śakratīrtha, Pañcanada and Reṇukātīrtha.
25. The pure Paitāmahatīrtha, the excellent Raudrapāda, Maṇimanta, Kāmākhya, Kṛṣṇatīrtha and Kuliṅgaka.
26. Śrīśakrayajana, Brahmavālukā, the holy Vyāsatīrtha, Puṇḍarīka and the excellent Maṇimantha.
27. Dīrghamantha, Harisapādatīrtha, Śayana, Daśāśva-medha, Kedāra and Tamasodbheda.
28. Rudrakūpa, Saṃyamanītīrtha. Saṃtrāvanāśika, Sya-mantapañcaka, and Brahmatīrtha very pleasing to look.
29. Pṛthivītīrtha, Pāriplava, Pṛthūdaka, Daśāśvamedhika, Sākṣida and Vijaya.
30. The Koṭitīrtha at Pañcanada, Varāha, Yakṣinīhrada, Puṇḍarīka, Somatīrtha, and the excellent Muñjāvaṭaratha.
31. The Babūravanatīrtha situated in the forest Badari-vana, Svarlokadvāraka and Kapilātīrtha.
32. Sūryatīrtha, Varuṣṭhāna, Bhavābhavana, Yakṣarākṣa-satīrtha, and Brahmatīrtha the excellent holy centre.

33. Kāmeśvara, Mātṛtīrtha, Śātavana, the abode of the earthly Hamsa (swan) and the Sārasatīrtha.

34. Daśāśvamedha, Kedāra, excellent Brahmajña Saptarśikunda and the well-delimited tīrtha of the goddess.

35. Ihāspada (the support here, on earth) Koṭikṛta, Kimvāna, Kimjaya, Kāraṇḍava, Viśvatīrtha and another Triviṣṭapatiṛtha.

36. Pāñikhātatīrtha, Miśrakatīrtha, Madhukantatīrtha, Manomayatīrtha, the divine Kauśikitīrtha and the excellent Kanyātīrtha.

37. The Brahmatīrtha, Manastīrtha, the sacred holy centre, Saugandhika the holy forest, Maṇitīrtha and Sarasvatītīrtha.

38. The most excellent holy centre Iśānatīrtha, the holy Pañcayajñaka, Triśūladhara, Mahendra, and the divine abode Mahālaya,

39. The divine holy centre Śākambharitīrtha, Suvarṇākhyā, Kapimada, Kṣireśvara, Virūpākṣa, Bhṛgutīrtha and Kuśodbhava.

40. Brahmāvarta, Brahmayoni, the mountain Nilaparvata, the eddy Bhadrakarṇa and the eddy Śakrakarṇa.

41. Saptasārasvata, the holy centre of Auśanasatīrtha, Kapālamocana, Avakīrṇa and Pañcakatīrtha.

42. Catussāmudrika, Satkāñcanasahasrika, Renuka, Pañcakaṭaka and Ainasa-Vimocanatīrtha.

43. Sthāṇuthīrtha, Tīrtha of Kuru, Svargadvāra, Kuśadhvaja, Viśveśvara, Vāmakara and the hermitage of Nārāyaṇa.

44. Gaṅgāhrada, the holy Vaṭa and Badari, Indramārgaṇakṣetra and Jirikāvāsa.

45. O brahmins, Somatīrtha, the meritorious Koṭitīrtha, the holy spot of Koṭitīrthasthalī, an eddy by Bhadrakālī.

46. The holy forest of Arundhativana, the excellent Brahmāvarta, Aśvadevī, Kubjavana and Yamunāprabhava.

47. Vīra-Pramokṣa, Siddhārtha, Māyāvidyodbhava, Mahāhrada, Vetasikārūpa and Sundarikāśrama.

48. Brahmāṇītīrtha, which is very great, Gaṅgodbhavasarasvatī, Bāhukātīrtha and Vimalāśokatīrtha.

49. Gautamītīrtha, Airāvatītīrtha, Śatasahasrikātīrtha, Koṭitīrtha in the abode Bhartṛsthāna and the excellent Kāpili-tīrtha.

50. The Pañcanadatīrtha of the intelligent Mārkaṇḍeya, Somatīrtha, Śivoda and Matsyodaratīrtha.

51. Sūryatīrtha having the lustre of the sun, the holy forest Somakavana, Aruṇāspada, Vāmanaka and the Sūryatīrtha abounding in sands.

52. The Tīrtha called Avimukta, the Nilakanṭhahrada, Piśācamocana, and Subhadrāhrada.

53. Vimalakuṇḍa, Tīrtha of Caṇḍīvara, Śreṣṭhasthāna-hrada and Samudrakūpa.

54. The forest of Jaigīṣavya, the forest of Hṛṣikeśa, Ajāmu-kharasa, and the whirlpool of Ghaṇṭākarna.

55. Puṇḍarikahrada, the tank of Kāṣṭhaka, Śmaśāna-stambha, Kumbhatīrtha and the Vināyakahṛada.

56. The well born of the Siddhas, the holy lake Brahma-saras Bhadrāvāsa, Nāgatīrtha and Somatīrtha.

57. Bhaktahrada, the lake of milk, Pretādhāra, Kumāra-katīrtha, Brahmāvarta Kuśāvarta and the holy centre Dadhi-karnodaya.

58. The great holy centre of Śṛṅgatīrtha, the excellent holy centre of Mahānadi, the divine lake Brahma-saras, and the holy Akṣayavaṭa at Gayāśīrṣa.

59. Gomayatīrtha in the South, Hayaśāntika in the north, Kapilāhrada, Gṛdhrakūṭa and Sāvitrihrada.

60. The forest Gitavana that destroys sins, Yonidvāra, Dhainuka, Dhanvaka, Lohika and Mataṅgahrada.

61. Pitṛkūpa, Rudrakūpa, Matitīrtha, Sumālin, Brahma-sthāna, Saptakuṇḍa, and Maṇiratnahṛada.

62. The hermitage of Mudgala, the whirlpool of Mudgala, the holy centre Janakakūpa, and the holy Tīrtha Vinaśana.

63. The holy centre Śoka, Bhāratatīrtha, Jyeṣṭhālikā, Viśveśvara of hundredfold merits, and Kanyāśarīvedha.

64. Nidhitīrtha, Rāmabhavatīrtha, the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, Devakūṭa, Devakūpa and the hermitage of Kauśika.

65. Kulakarṇahrada, Kauśikidruma, Dharmatīrtha, Kāñ-canatīrtha and the holy centre Uddālaka.

66. Daṇḍātmā, Mālinītīrtha, Vanacāṇḍikātīrtha, Sandhyātīrtha, Kālatīrtha, Kapilatīrtha and Lohitārṇava.

67. Śopodbhava, Vaiśagulma, the centre of Rāma Bhaṇ-

gika, Puṇyāvartahrada, Śrīmattīrtha and the hermitage Badarikāśrama.

68. Rāmatīrtha, Vitastā, Merujātiya, the Rohiṇī and the lake of Indradyumna.

69. Avasarga, Mahendra, Śrītīrtha and the holy centre Iṣutīrtha, Vārṣika, and the abode of Kubera.

70. Kanyātīrtha, Gokarṇa, the abode, of Gopati Samvarta, Viśvāsa and the group of seven deep pools named Sapta-godāvarihrada.

71. Another Badarihrada, Brahmasthānavivardhana, Jātihrada, Devahrada, and Kuśaprathana.

72. Sarvadevavrata, Kanyāśramahrada, Mahārājahrada, the holy Śakratīrtha and Kundaka.

73. Āṅgāratīrtha, the forest Rudrāranyakā, Medhāvin, Devahrada and the holy centre Amaravartana.

74. The holy Mandākinīhrada, Kṣama, Māheśvara, Gaṅgātīrtha, Tripuruṣa, and Bhimatāṇḍavamukha.

75. Pṛthukūṭa, Śālvakūṭa, Śoṇa, Rohitaka, Kapilahrada, Mālyā and Kapilāhrada belonging to Vasiṣṭha.

76-79. The eddies, the holy waterspots of Vālakhilyas, the seven sages, other great sages and the Akhaṇḍita-hrada.

The man who is endowed with faith who takes his bath duly in these sacred water spots and holy centres should observe fast and control his sense-organs. He should perform Tarpaṇa rites for Devas, sages and Pitṛs. After worshipping the deities he should stay there for three nights.

O brahmins, benefits are derived severally from each of these holy centres. Undoubtedly, the man obtains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice by making journeys to these places.

He who listens to this narrative daily, or who narrates this greatness of holy centres is liberated from sins.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

A Dialogue between Brahma and Sages

The sages said :

1. O Sūta the most excellent among the eloquent ones, tell us about the most excellent place on earth, that bestows virtue, love, wealth and salvation and that is the most excellent of all holy centres.

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

2. O excellent brahmins formerly, the great sages asked my preceptor this very question that you ask me just now. I shall mention it.

3-8. My preceptor Vyāsa, the holy sage was seated in his hermitage in Kurukṣetra. The hermitage was rendered splendid by different varieties of flowers. It abounded in different kinds of trees, creepers and herds of different animals. There were the following trees—Punnāga, Karṇikāra, Sarala, Devadāru, Śāla, Tāla, Tamāla Panasa, Khadira, Pāṭala, Aśoka, Bakula, Karavīra, Campaka and other trees, all in full bloom. My preceptor was an expert in sacred scriptures. He had composed the great Mahābhārata. He was the foremost among intellectuals. He was omniscient and engaged in activities conducive to the welfare of all living beings. He was engrossed in spiritual quests. He had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He had expounded the Purāṇas and Āgamas. He was the son of Parāśara. He was handsome with eyes as wide as the petals of the lotus.

The sages of holy rites came there to see the calm sage.

9-14. The following were the sages who came viz.—Kaśyapa, Jamadagni, Bharadvāja, Gautama, Vasiṣṭha, Jaimini, Dhaumya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Vālmīki, Viśvāmitra, Śatānanda, Vātsya, Garga, Āsuri, Sumantu, Bhārgava, Kaṇva, Medhātithi, Guru Māṇḍavya, Cyavana, Dhūmra, Asita, Devala, Maudgalya, Tṛṇabāhu, Pippalāda, Akṛtavraṇa, Samvarta, Kauśika, Raibhya, Maitreya, Hārīta, Śāṇḍilya, Agastya, Durvāsas, Lomaśa, Nārada, Parvata, Vaiśampāyana, Gālava, Bhāskari, Pūrani, Sūta, Pulastya, Ulūka, Pulaha, Vāyu, Devasthāna, Tumburu, Sanatkumāra, Paila, Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇānubhautika.

15. The intelligent sage, son of Satyavati surrounded by these and other excellent sages shone like the moon surrounded by the stars.

16. The sage, the knower of the Vedas honoured those sages who came there. They too honoured him in return. Thereafter, they engaged themselves in conversation.

17. At the end of their preliminary talk the excellent sages, the residents of the penance-groves asked Kṛṣṇa (Dvaiḍāyana), the son of Satyavati to clarify their doubts.

The sages said :

18. O sage, you know the entire range of sacred lore, viz. the Vedas, Purāṇas, Āgamas and Bhārata. You know the past, present and future.

19-21. O excellent sage, tell us. We ask you the highly pleased soul, the following things on seeing the universe submerging in the ocean of worldly existence without any support and (miserably) unconscious (of the same). This ocean of worldly existence is painful and utterly full of misery. It has no real substance. It is terrible with passions acting like crocodiles, the objects of sense-organs acting like flood waters, the sense-organs like a blended mass of whirlpool, the visible objects like hundreds of confused masses of waves, delusion making it turbid like mud. It is impassable, grave and difficult to be crossed due to covetousness.

22. What is it that is conducive to welfare in this terrible world that causes hairs to stand on end. It behoves you to uplift the worlds by offering advice.

23. It behoves you to recount that rare and extremely great holy centre which bestows liberation, We wish to hear about the land of holy rites on this earth.

24-25. It is only by perfectly performing the holy rites on this earth in the manner they have been laid down that a man attains the greatest perfection. By repugnant activities he falls into hell. The intelligent man attains absolution in the holy centre of salvation. Hence, O highly intelligent one, recount what you have been asked by the excellent brahmīns.

26. On hearing the words of those sages of purified souls the intelligent Vyāsa, conversant with the past and future said:

Vyāsa said :

27-30. Listen O sages. I shall mention as you ask, the conversation that formerly took place between the sages and Brahmā on the summit of Meru that is spacious and bedecked with variety of jewels. It abounds in many trees and creepers rendered splendid by diverse kinds of flowers. There the atmosphere is full of chirping sounds of various birds. It is literally scattered with animals with a confusing mass of their offsprings. Many wonderful and mysterious things are present there. Rocks and pebbles of different colour lie scattered embellished with minerals and metals of all kinds. It contains several hermitages thronged with sages.

31-33. The four-faced lord of the universe was seated there. He is the source of origin of the universe. Being the lord and support of worlds, he is worthy of being saluted by all. He was then surrounded by Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Yaksas, Vidyādharaś, serpents, sages, Siddhas, Apsarāś and other heaven-dwellers. Some of them were eulogising him. Some were playing on musical instruments and singing songs in his praise. Others were dancing.

34-35. Thus, when the time was joyous and the living beings had gathered together, when the gentle southern breeze served them wafting the sweet odour from different kinds of flowers, Bhṛgu and other sages bowed to lord Brahmā. O brahmins, those excellent sages asked the father this very same topic.

The sages said :

36-37. "O lord, we wish to hear about the land of holy rites on the surface of the earth. O lord of Devas, it behoves you to recount the most inaccessible centre of absolution"

Vyāsa said :

On hearing their words, Brahmā, the lord of Devas, said to them in reply to the questions they asked, O excellent sages.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Bhārata Subcontinent

Brahmā said :

1. O sages, you listen to what I am going to say now. It is a splendid ancient traditional account connected with the Vedas. It grants worldly pleasures and salvation.

2. The Bhārata sub-continent is the land of holy rites in the whole of the earth. Heaven and hell are the lands for reaping the fruit of those holy rites.

3. O brahmins, by committing sins or performing holy rites in that subcontinent a man necessarily attains the fruit thereof whether auspicious or inauspicious.

4. There is no doubt that by performing their ordained duties in that sub-continent, the brahmins and others of perfect self-control attain the highest success.

5. O excellent brahmins, in that Varṣa, a person of self-control attains everything viz. virtue, wealth, love and liberation.

6. O excellent brahmins, Indra and other Devas have attained the status of a deity after performing splendid holy rites in that sub-continent.

7. Other men too had attained salvation in that Varṣa. They had control over their organs. They were devoid of passion and indecent rivalry.

8. Those persons who are devoid of ailments and who stay in heaven with aerial chariots had previously performed splendid holy rites in that land of Bharata and had attained heaven thereby.

9. Devas do always wish for a residence in Bhārata that yields the benefit of heavenly pleasures and liberation. They often spoke "O when shall we visit Bhārata".

10-13. O most excellent one among Devas, it has just been stated by you that except in Bhārata, rites holy or unholy are not conducive to meritorious or sinful results. But it seems likely that holy rites are not enjoined on men elsewhere. Hence, O Brahmā, recount Bhārata to us in detail, if you are kind to us. O lord, mention everything, how this sub-continent is situated. What are the continent mountains here ? What are its divisions.

Brahmā said :

14. Listen, O brahmins, the Bhārata sub-continent has nine sub-divisions which are separated by oceans. They are equal to one another.

15-16. They are Indradvīpa, Kaseru, Tāmravarṇa (? Tāmravarna), Gabhastimān, Nāgadvīpa, Saumya, Gandharva and Varuṇa. Bhārata surrounded by the ocean is the ninth among them. The island extends from south to north and is one thousand Yojanas long.

17. In the east of it, the Kirātas stay. The Yavanas stay in the west. O brahmins, the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras stay in the middle.

18-20. They are sanctified by holy rites and worldly pursuits as sacrifice, warfare, trading. Their general behaviour is intelligible through their activities, which cause heavenly pleasures and liberation. They incur merit and sin thereby.

There are seven Kula mountains viz., Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śūktimān, Rkṣa, Vindhya and Pāriyātra. There are thousands of other mountains nearby.

21-24. They are vast, lofty and beautiful. They are immense. Their ridges are of wonderful and variegated nature. They are Kolāhala, Vaibhrāja, Mandara, Dardala, Vātādhvaga, Daivata, Maināka, Surasa, Tuṅgaprastha, Nāga, Godhana, Pāṇḍura, Puṣpa, Vaijayanta, Raivata, Arbuda, Rṣyamūka, Gomantha, Kṛtaśaila, Śrī Cakora and hundreds of other mountains. The populated realms are interspersed with these mountains. The Mlecchas live in parts of this territory.

25-27. Excellent waters of these rivers are drunk by those people. O excellent brahmins, know these rivers.

The following rivers rise from the foot of the Himavān :— Gaṅgā, Sarasvatī, Sindhu, Candrabhāgā, Yamunā, Śatadrū, Vipāśā, Vitastā, Airāvatī, Kuhū, Gomati, Dhūtapāpā, Bāhudā, Drṣadvatī, Devikā, Cakṣu, Niṣṭhīvā, Gaṇḍaki and Kauśiki.

28-29. The following rivers originate from the Pāriyātra mountain :—Devasmṛti, Devavatī, Vātaghni, (Kāli) Sindhu, Venya, Candana, Sadānīrā, Mahi, Garmaṇvatī, Vṛṣi, Vidisā, Vetravatī, Śiprā and Dravanti.

30-32. The following rivers originate from the foot of Rkṣa mountain :—

Śoṇā, Mahānadi, Narmadā, Surathā, Kriyā, Mandākini, Daśārṇā, Citrakūṭā, Citrotpalā, Vetravatī, Karamodā, Piśācikā, Atilaghuśronī, Vipāśā, Śaivalā, Samerujā, Śuktimati, Śakunī, Tridivā and Kramu.

33-34. The following rivers have their source in the foot-hills of the Vindhya mountain :—Śiprā, Payoṣṇī, Nirvindhyā, Tāpi, Venā, Vaitaraṇī, Sinivāli, Kumudvatī, Toyā, Mahāgaurī, Durgā and Antahśilā. These rivers are splendid and their waters are holy.

35-40. The following excellent rivers originate from the foot of Sahya mountain :—Godāvari, Bhīmarathī, Kṛṣṇavāṇī, Tungabhadrā, Suprayogā, and Pāpanāśinī.

The holy rivers of cool waters rising from the Malaya mountain are Kṛtamālā, Tāmraparnī, Puṣpavatī and Utpalavatī.

The following rivers originate from the Mahendra mountain: Pitṛsomā, Ṛṣikulyā, Vañjulā, Tridivā, Lāṅgalinī and Varṇśakarā.

The following rivers take their source from the mountain Śuktimān :—The Suvikālā, Kumārī, Mandagā, Mandagāminī, Kṣayā and Payoṣṇī.

These rivers are holy. They are on a par with Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā. They fall into the sea. They are the mothers of the universe. They may dispel sins. O excellent brahmins, there are thousands of other small rivers too.

41-42. Some of them flow during the rainy season (with plenty of water). Some of them are perennial rivers.

The Middle lands consist of the following climes :—Matsyas, Kumudamālyas, Kratulas, Kāśi, Kośalas, Āndhras, Kaliṅgas, Maśakas and Vṛkas. These are the main realms.

43. That spot of land to the north of Sahya where the river Godāvari flows is the most charming in the entire earth.

44-50. The city of Govardhana, the residence of the noble Bhārgava is, indeed, very beautiful.

The following lands contain Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras :—Vāhiṇas,¹ Rāṭadhānas, Sutīras, Kālatoyadas, Aparāntas, Śūdras,

1. *Vāhiṇa-Bāhīta*. The term refers to the people of Punjab who were shut out by the Sarasvatī, Kurukṣetra and other natural features from the central country which remained true to Brahmanism. The term is also applicable to

Bāhlikas¹, Keralas, Gandhāras, Yavanas, Sindhus, Sauvīras, Madrakas, Śatadruhas, Kaliṅgas, Pāradas, Haribhūṣikas, Maṭharas, Kanakas, Kaikeyas, Dambhamālikas.

The following realms comprise the northern lands :—

O brahmins, they are Kāmbojas, Barbaras, Laukikas, Viras, Tuśāras, Pahlavas, Dhāyatas (?) Ātreyas, Bharadvājas, Puṣkalas, Daśerakas, Lampakas, Śunaśokas, Kulikas, Jāngalas, Oṣadhis, Calacandras, Kirātas, Tomaras, Harisamārgas, Kāśmiras, Karuṇas, Śūlikas, Kuhakas, and Māgadhas—These are the northern climes. Now understand the eastern climes.

51-53. Andhas, Vāmānikurakas, Vallakas, Makhāntakas, Aṅgas, Vaṅgas, Maladas, Mālavartikas, Bhadratūṅgas, Prati-jayas, Bhāryāṅgas, Apamardakas, Prāgjyotiṣas, Madras, Videhas Tāmraliptakas, Mallas, Magadhakas, and Nandas—these are the eastern realms.

54-57. There are other climes, those of the Southern region : The Pūrṇas, Kevalas, Golāṅgulas, Ṛṣikas, Mūśikas, Kumāras, Rāmaṭhas, Śakas, Mahārāṣṭras, Māhiṣakas, Kaliṅgas, Ābhīras, Vaishikyas, Aṭavyas, Sarvas, Pulindas, Mauleyas, Vaidarbhas, Daṇḍakas, Paulikas, Maulikas, Aśmakas, Bhojavardhanas, Kaulikas, Kuntalas, Dambhakas and Nilakālakas.

These are the Southern realms. Now understand the Western climes :—

58-62. The Śūrpārakas, Kālidhanas, Lolas, Tālakaṭas etc are the residents of Western climes.

Listen to the residents of Vindhya mountains :—The Malajas, Karkaśas, Melakas, Colakas, Uttamarṇas, Daśārṇas, Bhojas, Kiṣkindhakas, Toṣalas, Kośalas, Traipuras, Vaidiṣas, Tumburas, Caras, Yavanas, Pavanas, Abhayas, Rundikeras, Carcaras, Hotravartis.—these are the realms and peoples residing on Vindhya mountains.

Henceforth, I shall mention the climes founded on mountains.

the people who were thought to be impure and contemptible for not observing the rules prescribed for the fourfold society of Aryan people.

1. *Vāhika*—Bāhika—Bāhika. Balkh or ancient Bactrians. But there were two tribes of Vāhikas—one settled in the plains of Punjab between Chenab and Sutlej rivers and the other among the lower slopes of the Himalayas between Chenab and Bias.

63-66. They are the Nīhāras, Tuṣamārgas, Kurus, Tungaṇas, Khasas, Karṇapṛāvaraṇas, Urṇas, Darghas, Kuficakas, Citramārgas, Mālavas, Kirātas and Tomaras.

The Yugas, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali are followed here. The injunctions befitting the four Yugas are strictly adhered to :

Such is the Bhārata subcontinent situated with its subdivisions. There is a great ocean to its South West and East. The Himālaya mountain stands to its north like the string of a great bow.

O excellent brahmīns this Bhārata is the seed of everything.

67-68. It is the cause of different states such as the state of Brahmā, the state of Amareśa (Indra), the state of Devas, Maruts, animals, Yakṣas, Apsaras, serpents, reptiles, and immobile beings. O brahmīns, people attain these states as a result of their merits or demerits. O brahmīns, there is no other holy place of rites in all these worlds.

69. O brahmīns, this is the perpetual desire of all Devas—“If we are to fall off from the status of Devas onto the Earth may we attain Bhārata as the place of our birth”.

70. What men do cannot be done by Devas and Asuras. Men are engaged in holy rites while Devas and Asuras are eager to obviate their Karman.

71. O brahmīns, in the whole of the Earth there is no other sub-continent equal to Bhārata where different Varṇas—Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and others attain their cherished goal.

72. Excellent men who are highly blessed are born in Bhārata. They derive the benefits of virtue, love, wealth and liberation.

73-78. O brahmīns, who is competent to narrate the excellent qualities of Bhārata? It is there that the rare benefit of austerities is attained. The fruit of all charitable gifts, all sacrifices, pilgrimage to holy centres, service to the elders and preceptors, rites of propitiation of Deities, the benefit of life of a householder, different holy rites, different sacred scriptures, practice of the virtue of non violence, the benefit of all cherished desires, the fruit of a celibate life, the benefit of self-study of the Vedas, the fruits of residence in the forest, that of the life of a recluse, the benefit of digging wells, etc. and performing sacri-

fices and the benefit of other holy rites—these are attained only in Bhārata, nowhere else. O excellent brahmins, Devas are always delighted in wishing for a splendid life there.

79-80. Thus the excellent Bhārata sub-continent has been adequately recounted by me. It dispels all sins; it is holy and is conducive to the attainment of wealth. It enhances intellect and wisdom.

He who controls his sense-organs and listens to this account or repeats the same shall be liberated from sins and shall attain the world of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

The Glory of Kondītya

Brahmā said :

1-9. There in the Bhārata subcontinent is a land that bestows heavenly pleasures and liberation. It is situated on the southern ocean and it is well known as Oṇḍadeśa. The region to the north of the ocean is the beautiful Viraja Maṇḍala. This is the land of those who are habituated to the attainment of good qualities. It is embellished with good attributes. The brahmins born in that land have perfect control over their sense-organs. They are always engaged in penance and study of the Vedas. They are worthy of being honoured and saluted. They are famous for their ability to officiate in the rites of Śrāddha, charitable gift, marriage rites and sacrifices. They are experts in sacred rites. They are of divine origin. The brahmins therein are regularly engaged in performing the six types of holy rites. They are masters of Vedic lore. They are conversant with mythology and Ancient Historical tradition. They are experts in all scriptures. They perform sacrifices regularly. They are devoid of indecent rivalry. Some are engaged in sacrificial rites and some are interested in maintaining holy fires ordained in the Smṛtis. The residents of that land are endowed with sons, wives and riches. They are truthful in speech.

They perform homas. They live in the holy land of Utkala rendered beautiful by sacrifices and festivals. The people belonging to the other three castes, Kṣatriyas and others are righteous. They control their sense-organs. They are calm. They are engaged in their respective duties. Sun-god known as 'Konāditya' is the lord in that land. Those who visit lord Bhāskara there are liberated from sins.

The sages said :

10. O excellent one among Devas, we wish to hear further. Tell us now about the holy shrine of the sun in that land where lord sun is stationed.

Brahmā said :

11-17. The holy shrine of the sun is situated on the holy and beautiful shore of the briny sea. The land is endowed with all good qualities. It is full of sands. It abounds in varieties of trees such as Campaka, Aśoka, Bakula, Karavīra, Pāṭala, Punnāga, Karṇikāra, Nāgakesara, Tagara, Dhava, Bāṇa, Atimukta, Kubjaka, Kadamba, Lakuca, Śāla, Panasa, Devadāru, Sarala, Mucukunda, white and red sandal trees, Aśvattha, Saptaparna, Āmra, Āmrātaka, Tāla, Arka, coconut, wood apple and many other trees all round. There are flowering plants such as Mālatī, Kunda, Mallikā, Ketakī, etc. which shine with blossoms in all seasons. The shrine of lord sun is famous in the whole world. The region all round to the extent of a Yojana yields worldly pleasures and salvation.

18. The thousand-rayed lord sun is directly present there. He is well known, as Konāditya. He is the bestower of worldly pleasures and liberation.

19-27. On the seventh day in the bright half of the Māgha month the devotee should observe fast. After performing purificatory rites he shall take bath in the ocean in the presence of lord Sun. With a pure mind he shall remember him with concentration. After performing Tarpaṇa rites for Devas, sages, mortals and Pitṛs, he shall come out of the sea and wear a pair of cloths free from dirt. They should have been washed and kept dry the previous day itself. With complete purity he shall perform Ācamana after sitting on the seashore. As the

Sun rises up in the morning he shall sit facing him. He shall draw the mystic diagram of a lotus with the red sandal paste. It should have eight petals, filaments and be circular with the pericarp moving upwards. The intelligent devotee shall put gingelly seeds, rice, grains, red flowers, Darbha grass, and red sandal into a copper vessel and pour water therein. If a copper vessel is not available he shall put gingelly seeds in a cup made of the leaf of Arka plant. O excellent sages, he should cover this vessel with another vessel and keep it down. He should then perform Nyāsa rites of hands and limbs. With the heart and other organs he should meditate on the sun as his own self with sincere faith. The intelligent devotee should worship the deity in the petals in the middle as well as in south-east, south-west, north-east and north-west. He shall then worship (once again) in the middle.

28-33. After propitiating the lord for attaining supreme happiness he should worship the mystic lotus. From the sky he should invoke lord Sun and establish him on the pericarp. He should show mystic gestures. After performing the rite of ablution he should meditate on Sun with concentration thus :—He is stationed in the resplendent disc, his eyes are tawny; he is red with two arms, wearing garments pink like the lotus; he is endowed with all characteristics and he is decked in all ornaments. He is calm bestowing boons, bedecked in a halo of great brilliance. After seeing the rising Sun resembling thick paste of saffron he should take that vessel and keep it on the head. Kneeling on the ground he should silently offer Arghya into the Sun. He should concentrate his mind on the lord and repeat the three-syllabled Mantra.

34. He who has not received proper initiation should merely repeat the name of the Sun god and make water offerings with faith and fervour since lord sun can be made favourable through devotion.

35. He should make water offering, in the south-east, south-west, north-east, middle and in the four directions beginning with the east. He shall repeat the following Mantras and make water offerings in the direction indicated :—Hrām, obeisance to the heart (south-east); Hrim, obeisance to the head (south-west); Hrim, obeisance to the tuft of hair

(north-west); Hraim, obeisance to the coat of mail (north-east), Hraum, obeisance to the three eyes (in the middle); Hrah, obeisance to the missile. (in the four quarters).

36. After the water offering he should offer sweet scents, incense, light and food. After repeating prayers and holy names he should bow to the deity, show mystic gestures and discharge the deity ritualistically.

37-38. Whether Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, or Śūdras men or women whoever make water offerings to Sun with perfect control over their sense-organs and mind, with great devotional favour and pure conscience, enjoy the desired pleasures and attain the greatest goal.

39. Those who remember him as the illuminator of three worlds traversing firmament will obtain happiness.

40. The devotee should not worship Viṣṇu, Śiva or the lord of Devas (Indra) unless the water-offering has been made to the Sun-god in the manner prescribed in the Śāstras.

41-42. He who makes water offerings with great concentration to Sun-god on the seventh day after taking bath and remaining pure will obtain the desired benefit. Hence, one should strenuously endeavour to make water offering every day to Sun-god along with sweet scents and beautiful flowers. He shall remain pure too.

43. The ailing man is liberated from sickness, he who seeks wealth will attain wealth; he who seeks learning will obtain learning and he who seeks sons shall be blessed with sons.

44. Whatever desire he may cherish in his mind, the intelligent man shall fully obtain that desire and benefit by offering libation of water.

45. The devotee, whether a man or a woman shall take bath in the ocean, offer libation of water to Sun-god and bow down to the deity. He or she will obtain the desired benefit thereby.

45-A. The man who has taken bath in the waters of Gaṅgā, shall sprinkle water on the head of Sun-god by means of Kuśa grass. Thereby liberated from all sins he passes on to heaven.

46. Thereafter, the devotee shall proceed to the temple of Sun-god taking flowers with him. After entering the shrine he shall circumambulate thrice and worship Sun-god.

47. O excellent sages, on the day of Sun-god the devotee shall worship Koṇārka reciting Vedic Mantras and Tāntrika texts, with great devotion. He shall offer scents, sweet and fragrant flowers, lights, incense and food-offerings.

48-52. He shall prostrate before the deity lying flat on the ground like a long pole. He shall eulogise the lord and shout cries of victory unto him. By worshipping thus the thousand-rayed lord of the universe, a man obtains the benefit of ten horse-sacrifices. He will be liberated from all sins and assume a youthful divine form. O brahmins, he will redeem seven ancestors and successors in his family. He will go to the world of Sun-god on an aerial chariot that has solar lustre and colour that is excessively resplendent and that can go wherever one likes it to go. He will be sung about by Gandharvas. After enjoying excellent pleasures there till the final dissolution of all living beings, when his merits have been exhausted, he will return to the Earth and be born in the excellent family of Yogins. He will become a pure brahmin learning all the four vedas and engaged in holy rites. After becoming united with the sun he will attain liberation.

53-55. In the bright half of the month of Caitra the devotee should make the holy pilgrimage to *Damana-bhañjakā*. He who makes pilgrimage to that place will obtain the benefit as mentioned before.

During the period of going to bed and rising up of the Sun i.e. during the tropical and equinoctial transits, O brahmins, persons of perfect control over their sense-organs shall perform holy pilgrimage on Sundays, the seventh day of the month or on Parvan days. They go to the world of Sun-god on the aerial chariot having solar lustre and colour.

56-59. Lord Mahādeva is also present on the shore of the ocean. He is known as *Rāmeśvara*. He is the bestower of desired benefits. The devotees should have a dip in the vast ocean and visit the lord, the enemy of lust (*Kāma*). They should propitiate the lord with sweet scents, fragrant flowers, incense, lights, excellent food-offerings, prostrations, eulogies, songs of prayer and sweet musical instruments. They will become noble souls and attain the benefit of Rājasūya and horse sacrifices. They will attain great success.

60. They will go to the world of Śiva on an aerial chariot that can travel as it pleases and that has clusters of tinkling bells suspended from it. Gandharvas will sing songs in their praise.

61. They will enjoy charming pleasures until the dissolution of all living beings and when their merits have been exhausted they will return to the Earth and be born as brahmins learning the four Vedas.

62-63. Being united with Brahman they will attain liberation.

He who passes away in the holy centre of the Sun will reach the world of Sun-god and rejoice in heaven together with Devas. Reborn as a man he will become a virtuous king.

64-65. Becoming united with the Sun-god he will attain salvation.

Thus, O excellent sages, the rare holy centre of Koṇārka on the shores of the ocean has been recounted by me. It yields worldly pleasures and salvation.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Efficacy of Devotion to Sun-god

The sages said :

1-6. O most excellent one among Devas, what has been cited by you about the holy centre of the Sungod that yields worldly pleasures and salvation, has been heard by us. Listening to the pleasing stories coming through your mouth—the holy stories of the sungod that dispel sins—we have not reached the point of contentedness. O most excellent one among Devas, the foremost among the eloquent ones do enlighten us on the following points :— the benefit from the worship of the lord, the benefit of charitable gifts, the benefits of prostration, kneeling down, circumambulation, and the offerings of lights and incense, the rite of scrubbing and cleaning, the benefits of observance of fasts and the merits of taking food only at night. Of what form is water libation and where is it to be offered? How is

devotion to be pursued ? How is the lord pleased ? O excellent one among Devas, we wish to hear.

Brahma said :

7. O excellent brahmins, understand even as they are being recounted, the procedure of water libation of worship, devotion to the Sun-god, and the faith as well as concentration of mind.

8. Devotion is a pure mental feeling; faith is a favourite feeling. Meditation is a perfect concentration. Now listen to what I am going to say.

9. He who narrates the story of the lord with devotion, he who worships him, he who maintains the holy fires, is called the eternal devotee.

10. He is an eternal devotee whose mind dwells on the lord, who thinks about him, who is engaged in the worship of the lord and who renders service unto him.

11. He who praises or permits the holy rites that are performed for the furtherance of the Vedas, O brahmins, is the real devotee. He is really a great man.

12. The man who performs the holy rites of the Sun is a devotee of the higher type. But he should not censure other deities nor be jealous of the devotees of those deities.

13. The man who constantly remembers the Sun-god whether staying or moving about, whether sleeping or waking, while smelling or keeping the eyes closed or open is indeed the greatest devotee.

14-15. The devotion of this nature should be practised by one who knows. All holy observances are performed with devotion and concentration with the mind dwelling on reality. A charitable gift should be given to a brahmin (with devotion) and actually Devas or the Pitṛs accept it.

16. Devas accept whatever is offered with devotion whether it be a leaf or a flower, a fruit, or water. They avoid atheists.

17. Purity of mind, good conduct and due observances should be applied to everyone. Whatever is performed with purity of mind becomes fruitful.

18. One is liberated from sins by the prayer, repetition of

holy names, offerings of presents and the worship of Sun-god together with observance of fast with devotion.

19. There is no doubt about this that he who keeps his head on the ground and performs obeisance is liberated from all sins instantaneously.

20. The devout man who circumambulates the Sungod circumambulates in effect the whole of the earth consisting of seven continents.

21. If a man keeps Sungod in his mind and circumambulates ether, know that Devas have been circumambulated by him.

22-25. O highly blessed ones, the devotee shall take food only for once on the sixth day of the lunar fortnight. Maintaining the holy regulations and restrictions and endowed with devotion, the man shall worship sun-god on the seventh day. He shall attain the benefit of performing horse-sacrifice.

He who worships sun-god after observing fast for day and a night goes to the world of sun-god by means of a vehicle of fiery lustre. One who performs this holy rite on the sixth or seventh day of the lunar fortnight attains the supreme goal.

The devotee who observes fast on the seventh day of the black fortnight and conquers his sense-organs and who worships the sun-god offering all precious stones, goes to the world of the sun-god on a vehicle that has the lustre of a lotus.

26-32. The devout man shall observe fast on the seventh day of the bright fortnight. He shall worship the sungod with the offerings of all white substances. Freed from all sins he goes to the world of sun-god.

On the first day of the following holy rite the devotee shall drink a palmful of water held in a leaf cup of the Arka plant. He shall increase it by one every day for twentyfour days. Then he shall decrease the number by one every day. This process continues for two years and the holy rite is concluded then. This holy rite Arkasaptami bestows all cherished desires. It is a praiseworthy holy rite.

If a Sunday coincides with the seventh day of the bright lunar fortnight it is called Vijaya Saptami. Whatever is offered as a charitable gift on that day yields a great benefit. Ablution,

charitable gift, penance, sacrifice or fast—everything observed on Vijayasaptami is destructive of all great sins.

Those men who perform Śrāddha on Sundays and worship the deity Mahāśveta derive great benefits. Their holy rites directed to the Sungod are fruitful. No impoverished or sick member is born in their families.

33-37. He who plasters the walls of the temple with white, yellow or red clay,

He who observes fast and worships the Sungod with different fragrant flowers will obtain all cherished desires.

By lighting lamps for the Sun-god with ghee or gingelly oil the devotee will attain longevity and beautiful form. He will never have the deficiency of vision.

A person who is engaged in making charitable gifts of lamps continuously, shall make the lamp of perfect knowledge blaze. With the intellect and the sense-organs clear, the man will be liberated sometimes. The gingelly seeds are extremely sacred. Charitable gift of gingelly seeds is very excellent. Gingelly seed used in holy rites in fire or in lamps is destructive of great sins.

38. He who makes perpetual offerings of lamps to temples, quadrangles and highways shall become blessed and handsome.

39. The first preference should be given to lamps with ghee. The second preference should be given to the juices of medicinal herbs. It should never be offered with the extracts from fat suet or bones.

40. The lamp shall always burn with the flame leaping upwards. It shall never be directed downwards. Thus the person who offers lamps becomes resplendent. He shall never attain the state of an animal.

41. The burning lamp should never be taken away nor should it be destroyed. The remover of a burning lamp may attain imprisonment, destruction, wrath or darkness.

42-45. The donor of lamps shines in the heavenly world like an array of lamps.

He who adorns lamps with saffron, agallochum and sandal paste shall become an excellent man with riches, fame and glorious splendour.

By offering perpetual libations of water at sunrise accom-

panied by red flowers mixed with red sandal paste, the clean man shall attain success in the course of a year.

The holy rite of the Sun-god should be observed as follows:—

The devotee shall stand facing the sun from sunrise to sunset turning when the sun changes direction. He shall continuously repeat some Mantra or hymn of prayers. This Ādityavrata is destructive of all sins.

46. He who offers everything along with its ancillaries together with the libation of water at the time of sunrise, endowed with faith, is liberated from all sins.

47. He who offers water-libation accompanied by gold, cow, bull, plot of land or cloths will derive benefits lasting for seven births.

48. The libation of water shall be assiduously offered into the fire, water, atmosphere, clean ground, idol or ball of rice.

49. The libation of water shall not be offered to the left or right. It shall be offered straight in front along with ghee and Guggula (Aromatic resin) by one who is endowed with devotion to Sun-god.

50-55. The devotee shall offer all worship in front of the Sun-god. He is instantaneously liberated from all sins undoubtedly.

By offering Śrīvāsa (turpentue) Devadāru (cedar oil), Sarjaka (exudation of the Śāla tree), camphor, agallochum and incense, devotees will go to heaven.

By worshipping Sun-god during his transit to the tropics of Capricorn and Cancer in particular, the devotee is liberated from all sins.

By worshipping Sun-god particularly during the Equinoctical Visuva transits, Saḍasīti (i.e. transit to Virgo, Sagittarius, Pisces or Gemini) transits and eclipses, one is liberated from sins.

By worshipping Sun-god with devotion whether it is the proper time or otherwise on the seashore or elsewhere, a man is honoured in the world of Sun-god.

By offering oblations to Sun-god with Kṛṣṇas (cooked gingelly seeds), milk puddings, sweet pies, fruits, roots or rice cooked in ghee he will obtain his cherished desires.

By performing libation of ghee, a man will become excellent of men.

56. By performing libation with milk the devotee is never afflicted by mental distress.

By performing libation with curds, the man attains fruition in his affairs.

57. He who is mentally and physically pure and fetches water for the ablution of sungod from a sacred river or a holy pool attains the supreme goal.

58. By offering an umbrella, banner canopy, flagstaff and chowries to Sun-god with faith, one will attain his desired goal.

59. Whatever article a man dedicates to Sun-god with devotion will be returned to him by Sungod a hundred thousand times more.

60. The devotee wipes off his sin, be it the physical, verbal or mental by offering obeisance to Sun-god.

61. Even by hundreds of sacrifices with adequate monetary gifts as laid down in scriptures one does not attain benefit which is obtained in a single day by the worship of Sungod.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Glory of Sun-God

The Sages said:

1-6. The wonderful glory of Sun-god, lord of the universe, has been heard, O most excellent one among gods, even as you are recounting the most rare and inaccessible tales among them. O lord of Devas, O lord of universe, tell us again what we are anxious to know. O brahmā, we wish to hear the same. We are extremely eager. Which deity shall a devotee desiring liberation worship, no matter whether he be a householder or a religious student or a forester or a recluse? Whence can his celestial attainment be assured? Wherefrom is the supreme welfare gained? What shall he do, while in the heaven, to

prevent his falling off therefrom? Who is the god of gods? Who is the father of manes? O lord of Devas, tell us that than which there is no greater Being. O Brahmā, whence is this universe of mobile and immobile beings originated? Whom does it resort to at the time of dissolution? It behoves you to mention that.

Brahmā said:

7. O excellent brahmins, rising up, Sun-god makes the universe by his rays free from darkness. There is no other lord greater than him.

8. He has neither beginning nor death. He is eternal, unchanging and force. With his rays he scorches the three worlds revolving round.

9. He is identical with Devas. He is the most excellent among the scorchers. He is the lord of entire universe. He is the witness unto every activity, auspicious or inauspicious.

10. He makes the living beings shrink. He creates them once again. With his rays he illuminates and scorches the earth. He causes rain too.

11. He is the creator and dispenser of destiny. He is the first cause of living beings. He purifies all living beings. He never faces decline nor does his disc ever dwindle.

12. He is the father of Manes and the deity of gods. He is known as the steady and steadfast abode from which one never falls off.

13. They say that, at the time of creation, the entire universe is evolved from Sun-god and at the time of dissolution reverts to him.

14. Abandoning their abode—the physical body—innumerable Yogins turn into gaseous state and retire to Sungod who is a mass of fulgence.

15. Just as the birds of sky resort to the branches of trees, the sages and the liberated souls along with the gods resort to his thousands of rays and stay there.

16-17. Householders, Janaka and other kings possessing Yogic virtue, Vālakhilyas and other sages who expound Brahman, others who are forest-dwellers and Vyāsa and other mendicants or recluses—all these acquire Yogic power and enter the disc of the Sun.

18. Śuka, the glorious son of Vyāsa attained Yogic virtue, entered the rays of the Sun-god and got union with him never to be separated again.

19. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and others are mentioned in the Vedas as the bestowers of happiness and the Vedas are only words. But lord Sun who destroys darkness is the visible god.

20. Hence devotional pursuits should not be directed elsewhere by him who longs for auspicious benefits, since what is not seen never nullifies what is seen.

21. Hence, Sun-god should always be worshipped by you. Indeed, he is the mother, father and preceptor of the universe.

22-27. The lord without beginning, lord of worlds, lord of universe possessing garlands of rays, stationed in the form of Sun, blazes, O excellent brahmins. Brahmā, devoid of beginning and end, permanent lord devoid of decline, created oceans, continents and the fourteen worlds. For the welfare of the world he stayed on the banks of the river Candrasarit after creating lords of subjects, Prajāpatis and other subjects. Therefore, the unmanifest hundred thousand rayed Sungod divided himself into twelve Ādityas. They are :—Indra, Dhāṭr, Parjanya, Tvaṣṭr, Pūṣan, Aryaman, Bhaga, Vivasvat, Viṣṇu Amśa (?) (Amśumān Varuṇa and Mitra).

O excellent brahmins, this entire universe has been pervaded by the Sungod the supreme soul by these twelve-physical forms.

28. The first form of Āditya named Indra is the king of Devas. It destroys the enemies of Devas.

29. His second form glorified by the name Dhāṭr is Prajāpati who creates different kinds of subjects.

30. His third form well known as Parjanya is stationed amongst the clouds. It causes rain through the rays.

31. His fourth form well known by the name Tvaṣṭr is stationed amidst trees, plants and medicinal herbs all around.

32. His fifth form well known by the name Pūṣan is stationed in grains and edible foodstuff. It accords perpetual nourishment unto the subjects.

33. His sixth form well known as Aryamā is the outer covering of the Wind. It is stationed among Devas.

34. His seventh form well known as Bhaga is stationed

among the elements, living beings and the physical bodies of the embodied souls.

35. His eighth form well known as Vivasvān is established fire; it digests the food-in-take of the embodied souls.

36. His ninth form well known as Viṣṇu incarnates and destroys the enemies of Devas.

37. His tenth form well known as Arīśumān is established in the Wind; it delights the subjects.

38. His eleventh form called Varuṇa is stationed in the waters; it protects subjects continuously.

39. His twelfth form known as Mitra is stationed on the Candrasarit river for the welfare of the world.

40. Stationed there he performed a penance having air alone as his food.

By the benign glance of his eyes he blessed his devotees bestowing several boons.

41. This first abode was well established later on by the lord. Since Mitra (the Sun-god) stayed there it is known as Mitravana (forest of Mitra).

42. O excellent brahmans, this universe is pervaded by the supreme being Sungod through these twelve forms.

43. Hence, the Sungod should be meditated upon and worshipped by men with devotion as stationed in the twelve forms and their mind shall dwell upon him.

44. Thus, by bowing to the twelve forms of Sun-god, by listening to their accounts and by reading (this account), a man is honoured in the world of Sungod.

The Sages said :

45. If this sun is the primordial eternal lord wherefore did he perform penance desirous of boons like a common person ?

Brahma said :

46. I shall mention the secret of (Sun-god). This was asked by Nārada the noble-souled sage and explained to him formerly by Mitra.

47. The twelve forms of Sungod have been mentioned to you before. Two of them viz Mitra and Varuṇa performed penances.

48. Among them, Varuṇa performed penance in the Western ocean with water alone as his food-in-take. Mitra performed penance in Mitravana with air alone as his food-in-take.

49-50. Descending from the peak of *Meru* during his sojourn through the worlds, Nārada the Yigin of self-control reached *Gandhamādana*. He came to the place where Mitra was performing penance. Seeing him engaged in penance Nārada's curiosity was aroused.

51-52. He thought thus—"This Mitra is devoid of decline and is unchanging. He is manifest and unmanifest. He is eternal. The whole of the three worlds has been held as one unit by this noble-souled Being. He is the father of all Devas. He is greater than the greatest Being. Which deity did he worship then? Which ancestors did he propitiate?" After reflecting thus Nārada spoke to the lord.

Nārada said :

53. "In Vedas and their ancillary (subsidiary) sections and in the Purāṇas you are glorified as the unborn, perpetual creator of great and excellent form.

54-56. Everything whether past, present or future is founded in you, O lord, the four stages of life worship you every day. You have assumed different forms. You are the father and mother of everyone. You are the ever-present deity. We do not know which forefather or lord you worship."

Mitra said :

57. This eternal great secret cannot be adequately expressed, even if it should be explained. O brahmin, I shall mention it precisely to you since you are endowed with devotion and piety.

58-61. That which is subtle, incomprehensible, unmanifest, steady and devoid of sense-organs, sensual objects and elements is the immanent soul of all living beings. He is called the knower of shrine, the immortal soul. He is the being that lies latent in the mind conceived of as separate from three attributes. He is known as lord Hiranyagarbha. In the Yoga treatises he is known as the cosmic intellect, great principle and the chief Being. In the systems of Sāṃkhya and Yoga he is said to

be of various natures and names. He has three features; he is the soul of the universe; he is known as One and Imperishable.

62. As a matter of fact the whole of the three worlds is one unit. Himself unembodied, he is present in all the bodies.

63. Though he stays in different bodies he is not tarnished by physical activities. He is your immanent soul, mine too, as well as of all those others stationed in bodies.

64. He is the witness unto all living beings. He cannot be comprehended by anyone at any place. He is identical with the universe, with attributes and without attributes. He is known as comprehensible through perfect wisdom.

65. He has the extremities of feet, hands, eyes, heads and mouths all round; he has ears all round; he stands enveloping everything.

66. The universe is his head; the universe constitutes his arms, feet, eyes and nose. He moves about in the body happily and comfortably as he wills.

67. The body is meant by the word Kṣetra. The Supreme being, the Yogic Ātman, comfortably knows everything concerning the body. Hence, he is called the knower of the body.

68. He is called Puruṣa because he lies latent in the unmanifest city—the cosmic mind. The word Viśva connotes the knowables of diverse kinds. It is called sarva (the composite whole), pervading the universe.

69. Since he has many forms he is known as Viśvarūpa. The ultimate greatness belongs solely to him. He is called Puruṣa.

70. The sole, eternal Being, holds the title Mahāpuruṣa. Endowed with Sattva quality, intelligence and efficiency he creates his own soul by his own self.

71. By his own soul he creates many souls hundredfold, a thousandfold, in hundred thousands, in crores.

72. Just as the water that falls from firmament undergoes a change in taste by virtue of diverse tastes present in the Earth so also the soul undergoes change in attributes due to its various contacts.

73. Just as the singular air within the body functions as five organic airs, so also the supreme Being has unity and diversity undoubtedly.

74. Just as fire undergoes changes in name by virtue of particularity of different sects so also the individual souls undergo different titles such as Dhruva, Brahmā etc.

75. Just as a single lamp lights up thousands of lamps, so also he, though single, gives birth to thousands of forms.

76. When he realizes his self he becomes alone and single. When singleness dissolves, diversity and multiplicity begin to function.

77. There is no living, mobile or immobile, who is permanent in this universe. The supreme self alone is called indeclinable (immeasurable, incomprehensible) and omnipresent.

78. O excellent sages, the unmanifest consisting of three attributes originated from him. That which is unmanifest, that the form of which is not clear, is called primordial nature.

79. Understand that primordial nature is the womb of Brahman; he who is of the nature of existent and non-existent is worshipped in the world, in the holy rites pertaining to Devas and manes.

80. O brahmins, there is none greater than he; therefore he the father or lord is greater than every being. He is comprehensible through the soul. Hence I worship him.

81. The embodied beings who are present in heaven make obeisance to him. Thereby, O celestial sage, they attain the benefit and goal as directed.

82. Devas who have assumed different forms, who are stationed in their respective stages of life, devoutly worship that primordial Being. He bestows salvation on them.

83. He is called omnipresent and devoid of attributes. Having heard thus and having understood it, I worship the lord.

84. Those who are sanctified by him resort to the sole and single entity. This is a further achievement unto them that they enter the sole and single entity.

85. Thus, O Nārada, the secret doctrine has been narrated to you. O celestial sage, by virtue of your devotion to us, the greatest fact has been revealed to you.

86. All those sages who imbibed this ancient knowledge devote themselves to the worship of Sungod.

Brahmā said :

87. Thus, this had been formerly recounted to Nārada by Sun-god—through his form—Mitra. O excellent brahmins, thus, the story of sun-god has been mentioned to you.

88. O excellent brahmin this narrative recounted by me should be mentioned only to the good. This should never be imparted to one who is not a devotee of the solar deity.

89. There is no doubt that the man who listens to this account and narrates the same to another, will enter the lord of thousand brilliant rays.

90. The agonized will be liberated from ailment by listening to this story from the beginning. Those who are desirous of knowing shall derive perfect knowledge and the desired goal.

91. O sage, he who reads this account obtains the path of salvation instantaneously. Whatever one wishes for, one undoubtedly attains it.

92. Hence, lord Sun should be worshipped by you all. He is the creator, dispenser of destiny and the preceptor of all.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

Name of Sun-god

Brahmā said :

1. O excellent sages, the three worlds have the sun as their source of origin. The entire universe including Devas, Asuras and human beings originates from him.

2-3. The brilliance of the deities viz—Rudra, Upendra and Mahendra, the splendour of the leading brahmins and heaven-dwellers of great resplendence, nay the resplendence of all the worlds is lord Sun—the soul of all, the lord of all—Devas as well as human beings. The sun alone is the root cause of three worlds. He alone is the greatest deity.

4. The ghee offerings duly consigned to the fire produce clouds which in turn generate rain. Rain originates food-grain whereby the subjects are nourished.

5. Everything is born of him; everything is dissolved in him. He is the cause of origin and destruction of the universe.

6. The meditation of those who meditate, the liberation of those who are liberated centre round Sungod. They are absorbed in him but are reborn of him. This happens frequently.

7-8. The following units of time have their origin in the Sun-god—moments, Muhūrta (units of 48 nets), days, nights, fortnights, months, years, seasons and Yugas. These cannot be reckoned without him; without calculation of time there is no holy observance, there is no holy rite in the sacrificial fire.

9-10. Without sun-god who steals water and then showers it, how can the seasons be classified? How can fruits and flowers occur? How can vegetation be produced? How can grasses and medicinal herbs grow? It is due to his power that these occur in the universe. Otherwise, there will be an absence of all dealings among the creatures here and hereafter.

11. The sun does not blaze if there be no rain; the sun is not happy if there be no rain; the sun has no halo if there is no rain; the sun blazes due to water.

12-13. The sun is tawny in spring; during summer he resembles gold, he is white during rainy season; he is pale, grey during autumn; he is copper-coloured in early winter; he is red during late winter. Thus the colours of sun-god caused by the seasons have been recounted.

14-18. With colour naturally belonging to the season, the sun causes welfare and prosperity. There are twelve general names of Sun-god and there are twelve other names severally. I shall mention all of them.

The following are the twelve general names :—Āditya, Savitā, Sūrya, Mihira, Arka, Prabhākara, Mārtanda, Bhāskara, Bhānu, Citrabhānu, Divākara and Ravi. The Sungod is known by these twelve general names.

The following are the twelve Ādityas reckoned separately :—

Viṣṇu, Dhātṛ Bhaga, Pūṣan, Mitra, Indra, Varuṇa, Aryamā, Vivasvān, Amṛsumān, Tvaṣṭṛ and Parjanya. They are separate forms rising in twelve months respectively :—

19. Viṣṇu blazes in the month of Caitra. Aryamā in Vaiśākha; Vivasvān in Jyeṣṭha and Amṛsumān in Āṣāḍha.

20. Parjanya blazes in the month of Śrāvaṇa, Varuṇa in Prauṣṭhapada, Indra in Āśvayuja and Dhāṭṛ in Kārttika.

21. Mitra blazes in the month of Mārgasīrṣa; Puṣā, Bhaga in Māgha and Tvaṣṭṛ in Phālguna.

22. Viṣṇu blazes with one thousand two hundred rays. Aryamā with one thousand three hundred rays.

23-26. Vivasvān with one thousand four hundred rays; Amśumān with one thousand five hundred rays; Parjanya and Varuṇa like Vivasvān; Bhaga is like Mitra one thousand and four hundred rays; lord Tvaṣṭṛ with one thousand and one hundred rays; Indra with one thousand and two hundred rays; Dhāṭṛ with one thousand and one hundred rays; Mitra with a thousand rays and Pūṣan with nine hundred rays.

During the northern transit of the sun, the rays increase; during the southern transit the rays decrease. Thus, sun-god sustains worlds by thousands of rays.

27. The means of protection in different seasons is manifold.

The sun has a set of twentyfour names. They have been mentioned already. The sun has another set of one thousand names. They have been glorified in detail.

The sages said :

28. O Prajāpati, O great lord, what is the merit and the goal of those who eulogise the sun-god with those thousand names ?

Brahmā said :

29-30. O leading sages, listen to the eternal truth. Enough of those thousand names, should one recite the following auspicious prayer. Listen, I shall relate to you those secret, sacred and splendid names of the Sun-god.

31-33. *The Prayer of Twentyone names.*

The twentyone names of Lord sun are Vikartana, Vivasvan, Mārtanda, Bhāskara, Ravi, Lokaprakāśaka, Śrīman, Lokacakṣuś, Maheśvara, Lokasākṣi, Trilokeśa Kartā, Hartā, Tamisrahā, Tapana, Tāpana, Śuci, Saptāśvavāhana, Gabhastihasta, Brahmanya and Sarvadevanamaskṛta. These are twentyone names of the Sun-god. This prayer is always liked by Sun-god.

34. This prayer is called 'Royal'. It is well known in the three worlds. It is conducive to the health of body. It causes increase in riches and enhances glory.

35. O excellent brahmins, he who remains pure and eulogises the Sun-god with this hymn at the two junctions viz sunrise and sunset, is liberated from all sins.

36. By repeating this hymn but once in the presence of the sun all sins perish whether they are mental, physical or verbal or caused by other activities.

37. Repetition of this hymn for once is the Mantra for Homa, and worship during the twilight, it is the mantra for incense, for Arghya and for oblations too.

38. If this great Mantra is accompanied by the gift of cooked rice, or obeisance or circumambulation it dispels all sins. It is splendid.

39. Hence, you all should eulogise the lord, the bestower of boons, one who grants all cherished desires, assiduously, by reciting this hymn, O brahmins.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Nativity of Sun-god

The sages said :—

1-2. The sun-god has been mentioned by you as the eternal lord who is devoid of attributes. What is heard by us as mentioned by you now is that he was born in twelve forms. How was that lord of great lustre, the mass of resplendence born of womb of a woman ? Our doubt in respect to this is very great.

Brahma said :—

3. Dakṣa had sixty excellent splendid daughters viz:—Aditi Diti, Danu, Vinatā and others.

4. Dakṣa gave thirteen of his daughters to Kaśyapa. Aditi gave birth to Devas the lords of three worlds.

5. Diti gave birth to Daityas; Danu to Dānavas who were

haughty on account of their strength. Vinatā and others gave birth to mobile and immobile beings.

6. O sage, with the sons and daughters and their sons and grandsons, the entire universe is pervaded.

7. Devas were important among the sons of Kaśyapa. They are purely of Sattva quality. The other sons were of Rajas and Tamas qualities.

8. The creator Paramesṭhin, the most excellent one among those conversant with the Brahman, Prajāpati made Devas the partakers of shares in sacrifices and the lords of the three worlds.

9-10. Due to enmity, Daityas and Dānavas harassed them collectively.

The Rākṣasas too joined them. The combat raged furiously, continued for a thousand years according to divine calculation. Devas were tortured. Daityas and Dānavas were victorious, in the battle.

On seeing the sons routed by Daityas and Dānavas and the three worlds destroyed, O excellent sages, Aditi was afflicted. On seeing her sons deprived of shares in sacrifices and afflicted by hunger she became distressed.

11. She endeavoured much for propitiating the sun. Restraining her diet and concentrating her mind she resorted to the holy observances of regulations. She eulogised Sun-god stationed in the firmament as a mass of refulgence.

Aditi said :

12-15. Obeisance to you who bear inimitable lustre, that is very subtle and worthy of homage. O lord of rays, I bow to you, the eternal support of refulgence, lord of refulgent ones. I bow to that fierce form which you have, while taking up the juice at the proper time for rendering service to the worlds. I bow to that fierce form you have when you hold the watery juice taken during eight months. I bow to that form of yours that is combined with Rajas during the two junctions (i.e. at dawn and at dusk). Obeisance to you, that soul with attributes that will bestow on me what I desire in my mind. I bow to that blazing form you have by virtue of unification of Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman (the three Vedas).

16. Obeisance to you, the lustrous one that scorchest the three worlds. The form that is beyond it is meditated upon by uttering Om. It is gross and non-gross. It is free from impurities, O eternal lord, obeisance to that form.

Brahmā said :

17. O brahmins, desirous of propitiating Sun-god, that gentle lady eulogised thus day and night. She maintained the observance of all holy rites. She abstained from taking food.

18. O excellent brahmins, after a long time, the sun-god became visible to that daughter of Dakṣa.

19. She saw a massive peak of resplendence enveloping the sky and standing on the ground. She saw the sun-god extremely unbearable by virtue of dense mass of flames.

20. On seeing him, the gentle lady became excessively awe-struck.

Aditi said :

21-23. O lord of rays, the original cause of the universe, I am unable to look at you. O sun-god, be pleased with me; let me see the form you possess. O lord, sympathetic with devotees, protect my sons, your devotees.

Thereupon, the sun-god came out of that mass of resplendence. The lord sungod was then seen resembling copper.

The sun-god said to that gentle lady who bowed to him reverentially.

“Choose any boon from me; whatever you wish”

24. Touching the ground with her knees she bent her head and replied to Sungod the bestower of boons who stood near her.

Aditi said :

25. O lord, be pleased. The three worlds that belonged to my sons and their shares in sacrifices, have been taken away by Daityas and Dānavas of superior valour and might.

26. On that account, O lord of rays, grant me a favour. With a part of yours adopt their brotherhood, my son, and destroy their enemies.

27-28. O sun, be pleased and favour them with sympathy,

O lord, so that they may once again be the partakers of their shares in sacrifice and be overlords of the three worlds. O unsevering lord, the remover of distress of those who resort to you, you are one who can do this work.

29. Thereafter, O brahmins, lord Sun the thief of waters, the lord who had a pleasant gentle face, spoke to Aditi who bowed to him.

30. "With the thousandth part of mine I shall be born in your womb. Efficient that I am, I shall, ere long, kill the enemies of your sons and become delighted".

31. Having spoken thus, lord Sun vanished thereafter. Having secured everything she had desired she ceased from her activities in pursuit of penance.

32-34. In order to fulfil her desire, at the end of a year thereafter, the Sungod took up his residence in the womb of Aditi by means of one of his rays Suṣumnā amongst a thousand. With great concentration and mental purity she performed several holy rites: Kṛcchra, Cāndrāyana, etc. O brahmins, it was with this viz. "I shall conceive this divine foetus with great purity" that she performed those holy rites. Thereupon Kaśyapa spoke to her, with words full of wrath.

35-37. "Why do you destroy the Egg of the foetus by observing a perpetual fast?" Provoked by his query she spoke furiously to him—"See the foetus for yourself. It is not killed. He will certainly cause a death-blow to the enemies". Infuriated by the utterance of her husband she uttered these words and discharged the terrible foetus that was dazzling with splendour. On seeing that the foetus had the fulgence of the rising sun, Kaśyapa bowed and eulogised respectfully in words of high order.

38. Even as he was eulogised the lord revealed himself out of the Egg of the foetus. He had the lustre and colour similar to those of the petals of a lotus. He pervaded the quarters by means of his splendour.

39. Addressing Kaśyapa the excellent sage and his wife from the firmament an unembodied voice as grave and majestic as the rumbling sound of the cloud uttered thus :—

The Voice said :

40. O sage, since this foetus of Aditi was pronounced slain by you, this son of yours will come to be called Mārtanda.

41-42. He will slay Asuras, the enemies who took away shares from sacrifices.

On hearing the voice from the firmament, Aditi felt excessively delightful since without a war Dānavas had their prowess crippled, Indra challenged Daityas for a fight.

43. In the company of Devas he felt very joyous: Dānavas rushed against him. The battle of Devas with the Asuras was terrible.

44-46. With the intervening spaces between the worlds brightened up by the continuous shower of weapons and missiles the combat raged furiously. On being stared at by sungod, Asuras were burnt by his refulgence and were reduced to ashes in the course of that battle making the heaven-dwellers attain unparalleled delight. They eulogised Aditi and the sun-god, the source of the mass of refulgence. They regained the lost rights and their due shares in the sacrifice.

47. Lord Sun too exercised his rights. Enveloped by his rays beneath and above like the blossoms of Kadamba he resembled a ball of fire. His physical form appeared clearly.

The sages said:

48. How did the sun-god, later on, attain the shining form like the globular blossoms of the Kadamba? O lord of the universe, recount it to us.

Brahmā said:

49. After bowing to him and propitiating him, the Prajāpati Tvaṣṭṛ Viśvakarmā, gave his daughter Samjñā to the Sun-god.

50. The lord of the rays begot three children of her, two highly blessed sons and a daughter, Yamunā.

51. The sun-god scorched the three worlds consisting of the mobile and immobile beings with his abundant refulgence.

52. Seeing the form of the sun-god like a ball of fire and

unable to bear the excessive splendour, Samjñā spoke to her shadow—Chāyā.

Samjñā said:

53. O splendid lady, welfare unto you. I shall go to my father's house. At my bidding you stay there itself without being affected in the least.

54. These two boys of mine and this faircomplexioned daughter should be brought up by you. This secret should not be divulged to the lord at any rate.

Chāyā said:

55. Unless I am seized by tresses, until I am cursed I shall never reveal your secret. You may go wherever you have desire to go.

56-57. Assured thus Samjñā went to the abode of her father. She continued to stay in her father's house for a thousand years. Frequently pressed by her father to return to her husband she assumed the form of a mare and went to the northern Kurus.

58-61. O excellent brahmins, desisting from food the chaste lady performed a penance there.

When Samjñā had gone off to her father's place, Chāyā who had assumed her form abided by her instructions and approached the sun-god. Taking her to be Samjñā, the sun-god begot of her two sons and a daughter. The Earthly Samjñā (i.e. Chāyā) did not show as much affection to the children born before as she showed to her own children. Manu (the elder son) did not mind it but Yama (the younger son did not brook it).

62. Afflicted in many ways by his step-mother he became extremely sad. Whether it was due to anger or to childishness or to the force of his inevitable future he threatened her with his lifted foot but he did not let it fall on her form.

Chāyā said:

63. Since you have threatened your father's wife senior to you (in age), this foot of yours will undoubtedly fall off.

Brahmā said:

64. Yama became extremely afflicted in mind due to that curse. Accompanied by Manu, that righteous soul intimated everything to his father.

Yama said:

65-66. O lord, our mother does not treat us with equal affection. Leaving off the elder ones she desires to nourish the younger ones with devoted love. Of course the foot was lifted up but it did not touch her body; whether this was due to my childishness or delusion it behoves you to forgive the same.

67. O father, I, the son, have been cursed by this mother in great anger. Hence, O foremost one among those who blaze, I do not consider her as my true mother.

68. O lord of rays, think of the ways and means whereby, your grace, my foot may not fall off as a result of my mother's curse.

The Sun-god said:

69. O son, certainly a great reason must lie behind this affair since you, conversant with virtue and holy rites, have been swayed by wrath.

70. There are remedies for all curses but there is none to ward off the curse of one's mother.

71. It is not possible to negative the curse of your mother. But I shall do something to attenuate the effects of the curse.

72. Worms will take off flesh from your foot and go down to the earth. Thereby your mother's curse will be carried out and you will also be saved.

Brahmā said:

73-74. Āditya said to Chāyā:—"When the sons are equal why did you treat one with more affection? Certainly, you are not the real mother: Samjñā has gone away somewhere. A real mother will not curse her children even if they are worthless fools.

75. Afraid of being cursed by Sungod she who had been avoiding it so far, revealed herself to him.

76. On hearing that, the sun-god went to his father-in-law. (Tvaṣṭṛ) of holy rites, honoured the sun-god of great splendour. As the god appeared at the point of burning him up in his wrath, he pacified him.

Viśvakarmā said:

77. This form of yours, permeated by excessive refulgence is unbearable. Unable to bear it, Saṃjñā is performing a penance now in the forest.

78. Today you will see her. Of auspicious conduct she is performing a penance for your gentler forms and features, in the forest.

79. Brahmā's statement has been heard by me. O lord, if it pleases you, I shall make your form more lovely and glossy, O lord of heaven.

Brahmā said :

80-81. Thereupon the sun-god said to Tvaṣṭṛ 'So be it'. Permitted by the sun-god Viśvakarmā mounted him on his lathe in the Śākadvīpa and began to whet the disc that had been originally circular and rough.

82. When the sun, the central pivot of the worlds, began to rotate, the Earth along with the oceans, mountains and forests rose up into the sky.

83. O brahmins, O highly blessed ones, the entire firmament including the moon, planets and stars came tumbling as if pulled down and agitated.

84. Waters of oceans splashed up. The great mountains crumbled down with their rows of ridges broken up and scattered.

85. The abodes having Dhruva the Pole Star for their support came down, O excellent sages, as the cords of rays that held them together, snapped.

86. Thousands of huge clouds were tossed up by gusts of wind as they fell and whirled about with great velocity. They rumbled terribly as they were shattered to pieces.

87. O excellent sages, with the Earth, sky and nether regions whirling about along with the rotating Sungod the entire cosmos became excessively agitated at that time.

88. On seeing the three worlds thus whirled about, the celestial sages and Devas eulogised the sun-god alongwith Brahmā.

89-92. "You are the primordial lord of Devas. You are born for the prosperity of Earth. You stand by in three forms at the time of creation, sustenance and dissolution. Hail to you, O lord of Universe, O Sun-god, O bestower of virtue."

As the lord was being whetted and scraped Indra and other Devas eulogised thus :—

"O lord, O lord of the universe, be victorious. O lord of cosmos, be victorious".

The seven sages, Vasiṣṭha, Atri and others eulogised him by various hymns. They said: "Hail, Hail".

The Vālakhilyas¹ too eulogised sun-god by their excellent worlds and passages of the Vedas.

93-96. Aṅgiras and others were extremely joyous and they eulogised Sungod who was being whetted.

"O lord, you bring salvation to those who are desirous of liberation. You are the object of meditation for those who meditate. You are the goal of all living beings following the section of the Vedas on Rituals. O lord of Devas, you are worthy of being worshipped. O lord of worlds, may we achieve welfare. May we the bipeds have welfare. Let welfare befall the quadrupeds."

The Vidyādharaś, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Nāgas joined their palms in reverence. With heads bent they made obeisance to Sun-god. They uttered different words pleasing to ears and minds.

97-100. "May your splendour be bearable to the living beings. O sanctifier of living beings."

Then Hāhā, Hūhū, Nārada and Tumburu² all experts in the art of music—began to sing in praise of Sun-god. They were experts in Śadja, Madhyama and Gandhāra notes. Their

1. *Vālakhilyas*—sixty thousand hermits of the size of half a thumb live in the solar region. Wearing hides of animals they travel in front of the sun in the shape of birds.

2. Hāhā Hūhū, Nārada and Tumburu were distinguished musicians in Ancient World. Puranic literature is full of their anecdotes. Similarly, Viśvāci, Ghṛtāci, Urvaśi, Tilottamā, Menakā, Sahajanyā and Rambhā were celestial courtesans highly skilled in the art of instrumental music.

songs were pleasing by virtue of their soft Modulation, intonation (beating of time and mode of performance).

While Sungod, lord of the worlds, was being whetted, the celestial damsels danced. They were Viśvāci, Ghṛtāci, Urvaśi, Tilottamā, Menakā, Sahajanyā and Rambhā, the most excellent one among the celestial nymphs.

101-102. They showed various gestures and dancing tricks. Emotions were tickled by their poise, elegant movements and seductive twists.

Various musical instruments such as lutes, flutes, gongs, drums of diverse kinds such as Paṇavas, Puṣkaras, Mṛdaṅgas, Paṭahas, Ānakas and Dundubhis, and hundreds and thousands of conches were played.

103. A great tumult arose as they were singing, dancing and playing on instruments such as Turyas and Vāditras. Gandharvas and Apsaras raised their pleasing sounds everywhere.

104. Then, with their palms joined in reverence, with their bodies bending low with devotion, the deities made obeisance, even as the thousand-rayed Sun-god was being whetted.

105. Amidst that sonorous din, in the assembly of living beings, Viśvakarmā went on whetting slowly and steadily.

106. The Sun-god was whetted carefully and skilfully up to the knees by Viśvakarmā. He did not approve of further whetting. Hence, he was brought down from the lathe.

107. As the surplus resplendence was shed off, the unbearable form vanished. It increased in pleasing lustre and attractive shape.

108-109. By listening to this story of whetting of Sungod who is the cause of seasons when snow falls, clouds shower water and heat increases and who is praised by Śiva, the lotus-seated Brahmā and Viṣṇu, one goes to the world of Sungod at the final departure from this world.

Thus it was, O excellent sages, that Sun-god took birth formerly. His excessively beautiful form has already been recounted by me.

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

One Hundred and Eight Names of Sun-God

The sages said :

1-2. Please tell us more stories about Sun-god. Listening to the pleasing stories we never reach the point of satiety. The Sungod is brilliant. He has great resplendence like that of mass of fire. O lord, we wish to know this—whence is the greatness and power of that god ?

Brahma said :

3-4. When the worlds were enveloped in darkness, when mobile and immobile beings perished at the outset, the cosmic intellect was born of Primordial Nature. It was the cause of the attributes. Ego, the activiser of great elements, was born thereof. Then wind, fire, waters, Ether and Earth originated. Thereafter, the (Cosmic) Egg was born.

5. It is in this Egg that these seven worlds are founded. The Earth is inclusive of seven continents and seven oceans.

6. Lord Viṣṇu, lord Śiva and I (Brahmā) were stationed there alone. All of us were deluded by all-enveloping darkness. We were meditating on the supreme god.

7. Thereafter, Sun-god the dispeller of darkness, the deity of great brilliance, appeared. Then he was recognized as Savitṛ (Sun-god) by us by our Yogic power of meditation.

8. After realising him as the Supreme Soul we eulogised him by means of divine hymns.

9. Prayer: You are the primordial lord of Devas. By your power of lordship you are called Iśvara. You are the first maker of all living beings. You are the cause of daylight and the lord of Devas.

10. You are the enlivener of all living beings. Devas, Gandharvas, Rākṣasas, sages, Kinnaras, Siddhas, Nāgas and birds.

11. You are Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu. You are Prajāpati. You are the wind god, Indra, Moon, Sun-god and Varuṇa.

12. You are time, the creator, annihilator and sustainer.

You are the lord. You are the rivers, oceans, mountains, lightning and Rainbow.

13-14. You are (the cause of) dissolution and origin. You are Eternal, manifest and unmanifest. Beyond Iśvara is Knowledge. Beyond Knowledge is Śiva. You alone are the lord greater than Śiva. You are Parameśvara. You have the extremities of feet and hands all round. You have eyes, hands and mouths all round.

15. You have thousand rays, thousand faces, thousand feet and thousand eyes. You are the cause of Elements. You are the worlds Bhū, Bhuvaḥ, Svaḥ, Mahar, Satya, Tapas and Jana.

16. The form that the leading Devas praise is divine, brilliant, and difficult to comprehend. It dazzles, it illuminates the world. Obeisance to you.

17. The form that you possess is resorted to by Devas and Siddhas. You are eulogised by Bhṛgu, Atri, Pulaha and others. Your form is extremely unmanifest. Obeisance to you.

18. The form that you possess is comprehensible to those who know the Vedas. It is accompanied by omniscience. You are the overlord of all Devas. Obeisance to you.

19. The form that you possess is identical with the world. It is the creator of Universe. It is worshipped by Fire-god and Devas. It is stationed everywhere, yet incomprehensible. Obeisance to you.

20. The form that you possess is greater than sacrifice, greater than the Veda, greater than the world, greater than heaven. It is famous as the supreme soul. Obeisance to you.

21. The form that you possess is unrealisable, unobservable and unchanging. It is not realized in meditation. It has neither a beginning nor an end. Obeisance to you.

22. Obeisance to the causes. Obeisance to you who liberate from sins. Obeisance to you honoured by Aditi. Obeisance to you who dispel ailments.

23. Obeisance, obeisance to you who bestow boons. Obeisance to you who bestow happiness. Obeisance, obeisance to you who bestow riches. Obeisance, obeisance to you who bestow intellect.

24. When eulogised thus, the lord assuming the brilliant

form expressed inauspicious worlds—"what boon shall be given to you?".

Devas said :

25. "O lord, none will be tempted to bear this excessively brilliant form of yours. For the welfare of the world, may that form become bearable."

26. Saying "Let it be so," the Sungod the cause of all creation began to bestow heat, rain and snow for the fulfilment of all worldly affairs.

27. Ever since, the adherents of Sāṅkhya, Yoga and other systems of thought who seek salvation meditate on you who are seated in heart.

28. Even if a man is devoid of good traits, even if he is imbued with heinous sins, he surmounts all by resorting to your feet.

29. The holy rite of Agnihotra, Vedas and sacrifices wherein much wealth is distributed as gifts do not deserve even a sixteenth part of devout obeisance of the devotee being offered to you.

30. Devotees resort to you who are on a par with the greatest of all holy centres, the most auspicious of all auspicious things and the holiest of all holy objects.

31. Those who bow down to you, who are eulogised by Indra and others are liberated from sins and go to your world.

The sages said:

32. O Brahmā, for a very long time we had been cherishing this desire to hear. Tell us the hundred and eight names of Sun-god which had previously been mentioned by you.

Brahmā said:

33. O brahmins, even as I recount to you the hundred and eight names of the Sungod, they constitute a great secret which yields celestial pleasures and salvation.

One Hundred and Eight Names of Sun-God

34-45. (1) Sūrya (2) Aryaman (noble-splendoured) (3) Bhaga (fortune) (4) Tvaṣṭṛ (5) Pūṣan (nourisher) (6) Arka (7)

Savitr (one who begets subjects) (8) Ravi (9) Gabhastimān (possessed of rays) (10) Aja (unborn) (11) Kāla (Time) (12) Mṛtyu (Death) (13) Dhātṛ (creator) (14) Prabhākara (cause of lustre) (15) Identical with Earth (16) Water (17) Fire (18) Ether (19) Wind (20) Parāyaṇa (the greatest resort) (21) Soma (Moon) (22) Br̥haspati (Jupiter) (23) Śukra (Venus) (24) Budha (Mercury) (25) Aṅgāraka (Mars) (26) Indra (27) Vivasvān (possessing riches) (28) Diptāṁśu (having bright rays) (29) Śuci (pure) (30) Śauri (31) Śanaiścara (Saturn) (32) Brahmā (33) Viṣṇu (34) Rudra (35) Skanda (36) Vaiśravaṇa (Kubera) (37) Yama (38) Vaidyuta (lightning) (39) Jāthara Agni (gastric fire) (40) Aindhana (fuel fire) (41) Tejasāṁ Pati (Lord of brilliance) (42) Dharmadhvaja (banner of Virtue) (43) Vedakartā (creator of the Vedas) (44) Vedāṅga (ancillary of the Vedas) (45) Vedavāhana (having Vedas for Vehicle) (46) Kṛta (47) Tretā (48) Dvāpara (49) Kali (50) Sarvāmarāśraya (support of all immortal beings) (51) Identical with time units such as Kalā, Kāṣṭhā, Muhūrta, Kṣapā (night) Yāmas, and Kṣaṇas (52) Saṁvatsarakāra (cause of the year) (53) Aśvattha (holy fig tree) (54) Kālacakra (Wheel of Time) (55) Vibhāvasu (having lustre as riches) (56) Śāśvatapuruṣa (permanent Being) (57) Yogin (58) Vyaktāvyakta (Manifest and Unmanifest) (59) Sanātana (Eternal) (60) Kālādhyakṣa (Presiding deity of Time) (61) Prajādhyakṣa (lord of subjects) (62) Viśvakarmā (of universal activities) (63) Tamonuda (dispeller of darkness) (64) Varuṇa (65) Sāgarāṁśa (part of the Sea) (66) Jīmūta (cloud) (67) Jivana (enlivener) (68) Arihā (destroyer of enemies) (69) Bhūtāśraya (support of Elements) (70) Bhūtapati (Lord of living beings) (71) Sarvalokanamaskṛta (bowed by all the worlds) (72) Sraṣṭṛ (creator) (73) Vivartaka (transformer) (74) Yajñī (Possessor of sacrifices) (75) Sarvasya Ādi (cause of all) (76) Alolupa (non-greedy) (77) Ananta (without an end) (78) Kapila (79) Bhānu (80) Kāmada (bestower of desires) (81) Sarvatomukha (having faces all round) (82) Jaya (Victorious) (83) Viśāla (extensive) (84) Varada (bestower of boons) (85) Sarvabhūtarata (engaged in the welfare of all living beings) (86) Manah (mind) (87) Suparṇa (88) Bhūtādi (cause of elements) (89) Śighraga (moving fast) (90) Prāṇa-

dhāraṇa (sustainer of life) (91) Dhanvantari (92) Dhūmaketu (comet) (93) Ādideva (first lord) (94) Aditeḥ Sutaḥ (Son of Aditi) (95) Dvādaśātmā (having twelve forms) (96) Ravi (97) Dakṣa (Efficient) (98) Pitā, Mātā, Pitāmaha (father, mother, grandfather) (99) Svargadvāra (gateway to heaven) (100) Prajādvāra (entrance to the Subjects) (101) Mokṣadvāra (entrance to Salvation) (102) Triviṣṭapa (heaven) (103) Dehakartā (creator of the body) (104) Praśāntātmā (of calm soul) (105) Viśvātmā (soul of the universe) (106) Viśvatomukha (having faces all round) (107) Carācarātmā Sūkṣmātmā (the subtle soul of the mobile and immobile beings) (108) Maitreya Karuṇānvita (son of Mitra endowed with mercy).

46. O excellent sages, this is the beautiful hymn of one hundred and eight names of the Sungod of unmeasured splendour. He is worthy of being glorified. It has thus been recounted by me.

47-49. For the welfare of all I make my obeisance to the sun-god who is served by Devas, manes and Yakṣas, who is saluted by Asuras, moon and Siddhas, and who has the lustre of gold and fire.

The man who reads this hymn with great concentration at sunrise shall obtain sons, wives, riches, heaps of precious gems, faculty of remembering previous birth, perpetual memory and the finest of intellects.

The man who repeats this prayer of the most excellent of Devas, with pure mind and concentration, is liberated from conflagration of miseries and ocean of sorrows. He obtains all objects of his desire.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Penance of Umā

Brahmā said:

1-3. The omnipresent lord Rudra who was famous as the enemy of the three cities¹ the three-eyed, beloved of Umā, and

1. *Tripurā*—Śiva who destroyed three cities of gold, silver and iron in the sky, air and earth built for Asuras by Maya.

moon-crested drove out all Devas, Siddhas, Vidyādharaś, Gandharvaś, Yaksas, Nāgas and sages who had assembled at Dakṣa's sacrifice. The lord destroyed sacrifice which was in progress, which had all the requisite materials fully stocked, including precious gems (as gifts to the priests).

4. O brahmins, Indra, and other gods were frightened by his valorous exploits. They could not desire peace and tranquility. They sought refuge in heart.

5-6. O excellent sages, it is this lord who is present in the holy centre, Ekāmraka in the land of Utkala. He is the trident-bearing full-bannered lord who bestows boons. He is the Pināka-armed lord who destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa. He is clad in the hide of Elephant and bestows all desires.

The sages said:

7. Why did lord Śiva who is interested in the welfare of all living beings, destroy Dakṣa's sacrifice adorned by Devas, Yaksas, Gandharvaś and others?

8. O lord, we think that the reason thereof cannot be insignificant. We wish to hear this account. Our eagerness is inordinate.

Brahma said:

9. Dakṣa had eight daughters who were living with their husbands. The father once invited them at house and honoured them.

10-13. O brahmins, honoured well by him, they stayed on in the house of their father. The eldest of them was Satī, the wife of lord Śiva. Dakṣa had not invited her because lord Śiva never bowed to Dakṣa. As he stood in natural brilliance he never offered obeisance to his father-in-law. Satī came to know that her sisters had arrived at their father's house. Although she was not invited she too went to her father's abode. The father accorded her a welcome less ardent than that extended to others because she was not liked by him. The gentle lady who was infuriated on this count said to her father in anger.

Sati said:

14. O Lord, indeed, I am more excellent than my younger sisters. Why don't you honour me? Considering my position, you have totally neglected me and I stand despised. Being the eldest and the most excellent I deserve welcome from you.

Brahma said:

15-19. Addressed thus, Dakṣa spoke to her with his eyes turned red.

Dakṣa said:

My younger daughters are more excellent, greater and more worthy of welcome than you. O Satī, their husbands are honoured and respected by me. They are far greater than the three-eyed lord. They have realized Brahman. They perform holy rites. They are great Yogins and righteous. They are superior to Śiva and more worthy of praise. My excellent sons-in-law are—Vasiṣṭha, Atri, Pulastya, Anūgiras, Pulaha, Kratu, Bhṛgu and Marīci. Śiva contends with them always and they too vie with him. Śiva indeed is antagonistic to me. Hence, I do not encourage you."

20. So said Dakṣa with a deluded mind which provoked her curse on him and the sages. Thus addressed, the infuriated Satī spoke to her father:

Sati said:

21. Since you rebuke and disrespect him who is undefiled verbally, mentally and physically I eschew this body, O father, that has originated from you.

Brahma said:

22. Due to that insult Satī was infuriated. She felt miserable. After bowing to the self-born lord Sati uttered these words:

Sati said:

23. Where I am going to be reborn, may I be born righteous and undeluded with a resplendent physical body. I should

attain the status of the virtuous wife of the intelligent three-eyed lord.

Brahmā said:

24-25. The infuriated gentle lady seated herself there alone and entered into self-meditation. She performed the rite of Āgneyī Dhāraṇā¹ within her soul. The soul being raised from all limbs, went out of the body. Urged by the wind, fire emerged from all limbs and reduced her body to ashes.

26. On hearing about the death of Satī and the factual cause thereof, the trident-bearing lord Śiva was very angry and prompted to destroy Dakṣa.

Siva said:

27-28. Since Satī who had come suddenly was insulted and since the other daughters were praised along with their husbands, these great sages, O Dakṣa, will be born in the Vaivasvata Manvantara in your second sacrifice as persons not born of a womb.

29-32. After pronouncing the curse on the seven sages he cursed Dakṣa:

You will become a human king in the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara as the grandson of Prācīnabarhis and the son of Pracetas.

You will be born of Māriṣā the daughter of the trees when Cākṣuṣa Manvantara arrives. You will be known as Dakṣa. O Suvrata, I shall frequently put obstacles in your way at that time also

33-35. Dakṣa who was thus cursed, cursed Rudra in return.

Dakṣa said:

O ruthless one, since you have cursed even the sages on account of my activities, the brahmins will not worship you in

1. *Āgneyī Dhāraṇā*. A yogi could reduce his body to ashes by the process of Yoga. Compare Kālidāsa. "Yogenānte tanūtyajām". The kings of Raghu dynasty used to burn up their bodies by taking recourse to Yoga. In this process, the yogi feels no pain while his body is afame with fire. It is said that the fire becomes as cool as the moon till his whole body is reduced to ashes.

any sacrifice along with Devas. After pouring ghee for you in the holy rites, O cruel deity, they shall touch water. Abandoning heaven, you will stay here alone in the world till that age comes to a close. Thereafter, you will never be worshipped on the Earth together with Devas.

Rudra said:

36-38. Devas and others who partake of shares in sacrifice will be bound by the discipline of four castes. Hence, I shall not take food with them. I shall take food separately. The world of the Earth is the first among the worlds. Alone and single-handed I sustain it at my will and not at your behest. When it is supported the other worlds abide perpetually. Hence I stay here always out of my own accord and not at your bidding.

Brahmā said:

39. Thereafter, Dakṣa who was cursed by Rudra of unmeasured splendour left off his body as the son of the selfborn lord and was reborn among human beings.

40. At that time, lord Dakṣa, the lord of sacrifices performed all sacrifices along with the gods. He worshipped them by means of sacrifices as a householder.

41. The king of mountains begot of Menā, a daughter called Umā, in the Vaivasvata Manvantara. She had previously been Satī.

42. That girl had been Satī formerly. Later on, she was born as Umā. She became the wife of Rudra.

43-49. Rudra is never left off by her as long as he wishes for an abode in the course of Manvantaras.

The following gentle ladies never forsake their husbands:— Goddess Aditi always follows Kaśyapa, son of Marīci. Śrī is always with Nārāyaṇa. Sacī follows Indra, Kīrti follows Viṣṇu, Uṣā follows Sun. Arundhatī follows Vasiṣṭha.

Similarly, in the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara Dakṣa was born as the son of Pracetas and grandson of Prācīnabarhiṣ. He was born as a king. He was born of Māriṣā and Pracetas. It is heard by us that he took his second birth due to the curse of Rudra. The great sages, Bhṛgu and others were born at first in the

Tretā Yuga in the Vaivasvata Manvantara in the course of sacrifice of the great lord who had assumed the body of Varuṇa. They repented remorsefully in the course of their subsequent birth as a result of the mutual curse of Dakṣa and lord Śiva.

50. Never can a creature gain glory by enmity. It is never conducive to prosperity even if he takes another birth because he is always affected by both auspicious and inauspicious things. No enmity should be pursued by one who knows this.

The sages said:

51-54. How did Satī the daughter of Dakṣa come to be born in the abode of the lord of the mountains after casting off her body in anger? How did she have a body in the later life? How was she united with Rudra? How did they converse together? How did the Syayamvara marriage happen in that hoary past? O lord of the universe, how was that marriage full of wonderful incidents, celebrated? O Brahmā, it behoves you to narrate all this in detail. We wish to hear that meritorious story which is extremely delightful to the mind.

55. O leading sages, listen to the story that is destructive of sins. Listen to the story of Umā and Śiva. It is a story that bestows desirable benefits.

56. Once Himavān asked Kaśyapa the most excellent of human beings who had arrived at his abode, about the various happenings in the world, conducive to welfare and glory.

57. “By what means are the ever-lasting worlds and great glory obtained? How is the state of being worthy of worship by good men attained? Mention it to me, O sage.”

Kaśyapa said:

58. O mighty one, all this is obtained through a child. My all-round glory is due to my children. So also in regard to Brahmā and the sages.

59. Don’t you see this yourself, O lord of mountains, wherefore do you ask me? O lord of mountains I shall recount what happened previously in the manner it was seen by me.

60. While I was once going to Vārāṇasi I saw a brand new and divine aerial chariot stationed in the sky. It was unparalleled and magnificent.

61. Beneath it in a hollow spot I heard the shout of agony. I knew it by my power of penance. I stood there hiding myself.

62. Then, O leading lord of mountains, a brahmin who was pure and who observed virtuous rites came there. He was purified by ablution in the holy waters. He was in the midst of a great penance.

63. As he was going along, the brahmin was extremely frightened by a tiger. O lord of mountains, he entered the spot where there was a hollow pit.

64. That distressed brahmin then saw his departed ancestors hanging by a Virāṇa reed beneath the pit. He asked them who seemed to be highly dispirited.

The Brahmin said :

65. O sinless ones, pray, who are you ? You are hanging down suspended upside down in the Virāṇa reed. You are dispirited. By what means, is your liberation possible ?

The Pits said :

66. We are your forefathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers. You had performed meritorious deeds. But we are afflicted by your wicked action.

67. O highly blessed one, this is a hell stationed here in the form of this hollow pit. You are the Virāṇa reed, we hang on to you.

68. O brahmin, we can stay, only as long as you live. When you are dead we will be falling into the hell; we are sinful.

69. If you marry and beget a virtuous son, we will be liberated from this sin thereby.

70. O son, it cannot be by any other means whether penance or the fruit of pilgrimage to holy centres. O highly intelligent one, do this and redeem us, your forefathers, from our fear.

Kasyapa said :

71-73. He promised, saying—"So be it." He propitiated the bull-bannered lord, redeemed his forefathers from their fear and became the lord's attendant. By the name of Suveśa he became a favourite of Rudra. He became the chief of Ganas of Rudra, approved of by all and devoid of dirt.

Hence, O lord of mountains, perform a severe penance and beget a virtuous child, a fair-complexioned daughter.

Brahmā said :

74. Thus advised by the sage, the lord of mountains took up holy observances and performed an unparalleled penance. I was pleased thereby.

75. I rushed to him and said :—“I am the bestower of boons. O lord of mountains, of good holy rites, I am delighted at this penance. Tell me what you want.

The Himavān said :

76. O lord, if you are pleased with me grant me this boon. I wish for a son adorned by all good qualities.

Brahmā said :

77. O brahmins, on hearing those words of the king of mountains, I granted him the boon the object of his wish.

Brahmā said :

78-81. O lord of mountains of good holy rites, a daughter will be born to you as a result of this penance. By virtue of your favour you will obtain splendid fame. You will be worshipped by all Devas. You will be surrounded by crores of holy centres and sacred rivers. She will be your eldest daughter. Two other splendid daughters shall follow her.

Brahmā said :

After saying this I vanished there itself. In due course of time the lord of the mountains begot of Mena three daughters Aparṇā, Ekaparṇā and Ekapāṭalā.

82-86. These daughters performed great penance. Ekaparṇā ate a leaf of the holy fig tree in the course of a thousand years. Ekapāṭalā ate one leaf of the Pāṭala tree in the course of a thousand years. Their penance continued for a hundred thousand years. It was such a penance as could not be performed by either Devas or Dānavas.

Aparṇā completely abstained from food. Her mother said to her forbidding such a course. She was distressed due to her

motherly affection. She said "U mā" (O, not). The gentle lady who performed such a difficult penance was thus addressed by her mother. Hence, she became known by that name. She was honoured by Devas.

87. Thus the universe of mobile and immobile beings had this noble set of the three virgins. The story of the austerities of these virgins will be told as long as the Earth lasts.

88. All those three maidens adopted Yogic means. Penance itself sustained their bodies. All of them were highly blessed. All of them had perpetual youth.

89. They are the mothers of worlds and celibate ladies. By means of penance they bless the worlds.

90. The fair-complexioned Umā was the eldest and the most excellent among them. She was endowed with great Yogic power. She went over to Great Lord as his spouse.

91. (?) Dattaka was the son of Uśanas. His son was a scion of family of Bhṛgu. Ekaparṇā bore a son Devala to him.

92. The third of those girls Ekapāṭalā approached Jai-gīṣavya, son of Alarka as his spouse.

93-94. Śaṅkha and Likhita are known as her two sons not born of the womb.

Umā the fair-complexioned lady performed penance. Observing that all the three worlds were fumigated by her penance and Yogic practice I spoke to her :

95. "O goddess, O splendid lady, why do you scorch all worlds by austerities ? This entire visible world has been created by you. Once you have made it do not destroy it.

96. Indeed, you sustain these worlds by your own splendour. O mother of the universe, be pleased with us. Tell me what is it that is sought by you ?

The goddess said :

97. O Sire, you know whatfor I am engaged in the performance of this penance. Then why do you ask ?

Brahma said :

98. Then I spoke to her—O splendid lady, he for whom you perform this penance, will approach you here itself and will woo you.

99. O splendid lady, Śiva the most excellent of the lords of all worlds is your husband. All of us are his servants the most submissive ones.

100-101. O goddess, that lord of Devas himself will approach you. He is the self-born lord of elegant form. His external features may seem deformed but there is no one equal in handsome features to him. My lord is a resident of the world of mountains. He is the primordial lord of mobile and immobile beings. He is incomprehensible and immeasurable. Without the crescent moon whose lustre is like that of Indra he appears to have assumed a terrifying form.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Testing of Pārvati

Brahmā said :

1-8. Devas rushed to Pārvatī and said : "O goddess, Śiva, that lord of Devas, by whom you have been created and who cannot remain without you, shall be your husband. Do not perform penance." Thereafter, O brahmins, Devas circumambulated her and vanished. She stopped her activities of penance and resorted to the Aśoka tree that grew at the entrance of her hermitage.

At that time, lord Śiva who dispels the agony of Devas came there. The moon constituted the ornamental mark on his forehead. He had assumed a deformed body short in stature and simian in features. His nose was split and the hair was tawny. He was hump-backed too. With twisted contracted face he said— 'O gentle lady, I woo you'.

Umā who had achieved Yogic power knew that it was Śiva who had come. She honoured and worshipped him with Arghya, Pādya and Madhuparka¹ (water for washing the feet

1. *Madhuparka*. A mixture of honey, milk, curd and butter as an offering to a guest specially to a bridegroom when he first arrives at the bride's house.

and materials of greeting). Respectful to brahmins she offered flowers to that brahmin. With her mind purified by inner emotional fervour and desirous of obtaining his mercy through her activities she spoke :

The goddess said :

9-10. “O lord, I am not free. I have my father and mother. O leading brahmin, I am only a simple girl. My father alone is competent to give me away. Go to my father, the prosperous lord of the mountains and request him. O brahmin, if he gives me to you that is acceptable to me also”.

Brahma said :

11. Then the lord approached the king of mountains with the same deformed body and said, “O lord of mountains, give me your daughter.”

12. At the sight of his deformed body he understood that he was the eternal Rudra. Dispirited because he was afraid of his curse he spoke :—

The lord of mountains said :

13-14 O lord, I do not insult or disrespect the brahmins. They are gods on the Earth². O highly intelligent one, hear what had already been thought of and desired by us. I am arranging *Svayamvara*³ of my daughter. My plan has been approved by the brahmins.⁴ Whomsoever she may choose he will become her husband.

2. The lines indicate the position which the Brāhmaṇas had attained during the age of Purāṇas. The term Bhūdeva as the synonym of a Brāhmaṇa supports the view that like the consecrated monarch the Brāhmaṇa was considered to be a deity. Compare verse 48 of this chapter where Pārvati tells the crocodile to spare the Brāhmaṇa boy because Brāhmaṇas were favourite to her, and again in verse 55 where she says, “I consider Brāhmaṇas to be most excellent among castes.”

3. *Svayamvara*—Self-choice, the election of a husband by a princess or daughter of a Kṣatriya at a public assembly of suitors.

4. This shows that the consent of Brāhmaṇas (clergymen) was necessary for holding *Svayamvara* where a princess could select a husband of her own choice.

15. On hearing the words of the mountain lord, the lofty-minded, full-bannered lord came near the goddess and said :—

Siva said :

16. O gentle lady, I hear that your Svayamvara has been approved by your father. O sinless lady, it is said that he whom you choose therein will be your husband.

17. Hence, O good-faced lady, I shall take leave of you and go. You are inaccessible to me. Leaving off a handsome person how can you woo one like me ?

Brahmā said :

18-20. Thus addressed by him she pondered over what he had said. Realising her mental emotion directed towards Rudra, as well as the clarity of her mind, she said to the lord of Devas— “Do not misunderstand me. I shall woo you. It is by no means surprising. O lord, if at all you have feelings of suspicion about me, I shall woo you here itself, O highly blessed one. You are already present in my mind.”

Brahmā said :

21-22. Pārvatī stood there with a bunch of flowers in her hands, placed it on Siva’s shoulders and said “You have been chosen.”

Thereupon, the lord, who was chosen by Pārvatī spoke as if resuscitating the Aśoka.

Siva said :

23-28. Since I have been wooed with holy bunch of flowers you will have no old age. You will become immortal. Your form is loveable. Your flowers are lovely. You bestow love. You are my favourite. You will be a steadfast beloved of Devas. You will always possess flowers that will serve as your ornaments. You will be having flowers that will yield fruits which you will eat as food. You will smell as nectar. You will have sweet scents. You will be devoid of fear. Extremely happy you will traverse worlds. Henceforth, the hermitage will be known as Citrakūṭa. The seeker of merit who comes to this hermitage will attain the benefit of a horse-sacrifice. He who dies here

will go to the world of Brahmā. He who performing holy rites casts off his life here shall reap the benefit of your performing penance. He shall be the lord of Ganas.

Brahmā said :

29. After saying this, the lord, the creator of the universe, the lord of all living beings took leave of the daughter of Himavān and vanished.

30. When the lord of unmeasured soul had gone, Pārvatī sat on a rock with her face turned to the direction where he had gone.

31. With her face turned to Śiva the great lord, the lord of worlds, she became dispirited like the night devoid of the moon.

32. Then the daughter of the mountain-lord heard the cry of an unhappy boy in a lake near the hermitage.

33. Śiva the lord of Devas had assumed the form of a boy who had gone to the centre of the lake for playing. He was then caught by a crocodile.

34. Adopting the Yogic Māyā the cause of origin of the universe, he assumed that form in the middle of the lake and spoke thus :

The boy said :

"

35-38. Let some one protect me. I have been seized by a crocodile. Fie on this misery, even as a boy who has not yet realized his cherished desire and purpose. I am courting death in the jaws of this wicked crocodile. Although I am very sad on being seized by the crocodile I am not bewailing for myself, I am bewailing for my parents. On knowing that I am dead after being devoured by the crocodile, they who are fond of me, their only son, will surely cast off their lives. Alas, it is tragic that I, a mere boy who have not yet entered the main stage of life will die after being seized by a crocodile.

Brahmā said :

39. On hearing that cry of the distressed brahmin the splendid lady stood up and proceeded to that place where that brahmin boy happened to be.

40. That moon-faced lady saw the boy of handsome features caught in the jaws of a crocodile and trembling with fear.

41. On seeing Pārvati approaching, that massive, splendid and glorious crocodile hastened to the middle of the lake taking the boy along with him.

42. On being dragged thus, the lustrous boy cried aloud in distress. On seeing the boy in this miserable state that lady of great holy rites was distressed and spoke thus :

Pārvati said :

43. O king of crocodiles of great power, huge fangs and terrible exploit, leave of this boy who is the only son of his parents. Leave him off immediately.

The crocodile said :

44-45. O madam, he who comes within my grasp at the outset on the sixth day is ordained as my prey by the creator. O highly blessed daughter of the king of mountains, this boy has come to me on the sixth day. Certainly, he has been urged by Brahmā. By no means will I release him.

Pārvati said :

46. In exchange of the penance that has been performed by me on the peak of the Himavān, release this boy, O king of crocodiles, obeisance be to you.

The crocodile said :

47. O splendid-faced gentle lady, let there not be any wastage of your penance over a small boy. O excellent one, do what I say. I shall release him then.

48. O lord of crocodiles, speak out quickly. What is not repugnant to good men shall be done. Entertain no doubt about this, since brahmins are very favourites to me.

The crocodile said :

49. Offer me quickly whatever penance has been performed by you whether it be very little or much more. Offer the same to me in entirety. He shall be released then.

The lady said :

50. O great crocodile of powerful grasp, everything has been granted to you, every thing of the merit that has been acquired by me ever since my birth, leave off the boy.

Brahmā said :

51. Then the crocodile blazed on being enveloped by that penance. Like the sun at midday he became too dazzling to be seen. Delighted in mind he spoke to her.

The crocodile said :

52-53. O gentle lady of great holy rites, should this much have been done without thinking deeply ? Gathering the power of penance together is a sad affair. Its eschewal is not commendable. O lady of slender waist, take back your penance as well as this boy. I am pleased with your devotion to brahmans. Hence, I grant this boon unto you. Thus urged by the crocodile, the lady of great holy rites said :—

Pārvati said:

54. O crocodile, even with my body, the brahmin should be assiduously protected by me. Penance can be acquired by me once again. But the brahmin cannot be secured once again.

55. O great crocodile, it is after pondering over it deeply that the liberation of the boy has been effected by me. Penance is not more valuable than brahmans. I consider brahmans to be most excellent among castes.

56. O leader of crocodiles, after giving away I shall never retake it. It has already been bequeathed to you. No man shall take back what has already been given away, crocodile.

57. This has already been given to you by me. I am not going to take it back, let it rejoice within you. But, let this boy be released.

Brahmā said:

58. (Decisively) told thus, that crocodile praised her, released the boy and bowed down to her. After taking leave of her he vanished there itself.

59. Released near the bank of the lake by the crocodile, the boy too vanished there itself like an object acquired in dream.

60. Considering that her penance had dwindled down, the gentle lady the daughter of the great mountain Himavān began to perform the same once again with strict observance of regulations.

61. Knowing that she was desirous of performing penance once again, O brahmins, Śiva appeared before her and asked her not to perform penance.

62. O gentle lady of great holy rites, as your penance has been granted to me alone, you will get it back a thousand times more and it shall never dwindle down.

63. Thus acquiring the everlasting excellent penance Pārvatī was pleased and delighted. She stayed there eagerly awaiting the Svayamvara celebration.

64. The man who always reads this episode of the daughter of the king of mountains will acquire a change of form. He will become the chief of Ganas and be equal to Kumāra.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Pārvati weds Śiva

Brahmā said:

1-6 In due course, the Svayamvara of the daughter of the mountain was celebrated on the lofty peak of the Himavān filled with hundreds of lofty chambers. The Himavān, the king of the mountains, an expert in meditation came to know of the secret talk of his daughter with the lord of Devas. Even after knowing it, with a desire to conform to the traditional procedure he proclaimed the Svayamvara celebration of his daughter all over the world. He thought thus—"If my daughter woos Śiva in the presence of Devas, Dānavas and Siddhas, residing in all parts of the world, that alone will be proper, praiseworthy and suitable to my dignity". After thinking thus and keeping lord Śiva in heart, the king of mountains announced Svayamvara amongst Devas ending with Brahmā. The most excellent

king of the mountains littered his land with precious gems and organized the Svayamvara ceremony very carefully.

7. Immediately after the Svayamvara of his daughter had been announced, Devas and others, the residents of all the worlds came there assuming divine forms and dresses.

8. Informed by the king of mountains I went there accompanied by Devas. I was seated on my full blown lotus seat and surrounded by Siddhas and Yogins of immeasurable spiritual power.

9-12. Riding on his Airāvata, the chief of the leading elephants, which exuded profuse currents of ichor, the lord of immortal beings (Indra) came there at the head of Devas holding his thunderbolt. The lord of Devas had a thousand eyes and his features were elegant by virtue of his divine unguents and garlands.

Seated on his golden chariot with waving flags the son-god came there hurriedly. He brightened the quarters so that he appeared to be equal in lustre to them though he was superior to them in refulgence and power.

One of the sons of Kaśyapa viz. Āditya came there in his chariot equal in lustre to fire and solar splendour. His rays were those of the midday. His ear-rings brightened up by jewels, dazzled all.

Riding on his terrible buffalo, the god of Death Yama hastened to that place. He was holding his sceptre (rod of chastisement). His physical body was yellow in colour. In prowess he was comparable to none. He was unparalleled in brilliance, strength and power of demanding obedience. His limbs were well developed and he wore garlands.

13-16. Riding in his chariot, wind god who sustains the world, came there, beautiful in dress and demeanour. Gold and jewels enhanced his elegance. In height and stoutness his body vied with great mountains.

Coming in the centre of the leading Devas, the fire-god wearing grand apparel, stood there, blazing. Superior to all in splendour, and steeped in excessive brilliance he warmed the leaders of Devas and Asuras.

Riding in an excellent divine aerial chariot, the most excellent in the universe, Kubera the lord of all chiefs of wealth

came there in a hurry with his slender staff-like body brightened by different sorts of jewels.

Riding in an aerial chariot of wonderful form studded with great shining precious gems the Moon god arrived there instilling enthusiasm in the leaders of Devas and Asuras by means of his splendour and grand apparel. He was elegant in form and dress.

17-21. Riding on Garuda who resembled a mountain, the macebearing lord Viṣṇu hurried to that place. Garlands of sweet scent were tied round his limbs; his dress was wonderful and his slender body was dark-complexioned.

Āsvins, the excellent physicians were seated in the same aerial chariot. Charming in their brilliant and elegant apparel, the two bold and excellent Devas hastened to the venue of the marriage rites.

The noble-souled Nāga king of fiery solar splendour rode in an aerial chariot along with the other Nāgas and arrived there. He had the colour of fire-emitting sparks.

The sons of Diti the great Asuras, resplendent like fire, sun, Indra and the wind-god came there even before Devas clad in nice apparel befitting their excellent features.

At the bidding of Indra the king of Gandharvas arrived there along with Gandharvas and Apsaras. Bedecked in shoulderlets and riding in a divine chariot he had a handsome form wonderful to behold.

22-26. Several other Devas, Gandharvas, Yaksas, Serpents and Kinnaras too came there, riding in aerial chariots. They were clad in different sorts of beautiful apparel.

The overlord of mountain kings, Himālaya shone amidst the leading Devas, superior to some, equal to others in beauty of form. Delighted himself and delighting others by his power of command and prosperity he beautified the spot of Svayamvara ceremony.

It was for accomplishing the task of heaven-dwellers that Satī protested against Dakṣa, died of herself and was reborn in the abode of Himavān. Being the cause of worlds, she gave birth to the universe. She was the mother of Devas and Asuras. She had formerly been the wife of Śiva, the intelligent Puruṣa and she had been praised as the great Prakṛti in the Purāṇas.

Now as Umā she was seated in an aerial chariot covered with gold and studded with jewels. She was fanned (on either side) by the waving chowries. She held a garland of sweet-scented flowers of all seasons. She stood ready to proceed ahead quickly.

Brahmā said:

27-28. As the Umā stood there in the assembly of Devas, holding the divine garland, as Indra and other Devas had come there ready for Svayamvara, Śiva assumed the form of an infant (with five tufts of hair) with a desire to test her again. The lord of great lustre lay asleep in the lap of Umā.

29. All of a sudden, Umā saw the infant lying (asleep in her lap). By means of meditation she understood who it was and took him up with great delight.

30. She of pure thoughts attained a husband of her choice. Holding him to his bosom she turned round and sat down.

31. On seeing the infant lying in the lap of Umā Devas were completely deluded. "Who is this infant?" They muttered to one another and then shouted loudly.

32-33. This slayer of Vṛtra (Indra) seized his thunderbolt and lifted up his hand against the infant. The raised hand of Indra remained in that position stunned by Śiva the lord of Devas in the form of the infant. The slayer of Vṛtra could not hurl his thunderbolt. He could not even move.

34. Then the powerful son of Aditi and Kaśyapa named Bhaga, who too was deluded, lifted up his bright weapon, desirous of cutting up the infant.

35. His hand too was stunned; his strength, splendour and yogic power became ineffective.

36-37. Viṣṇu looked at Śiva shaking his head. When those angry Devas stood thus, I was extremely agitated. By means of meditation I understood that it was Śiva, the lord of the chiefs of Devas who was lying on the lap of Umā.

38-44. On realising that it was lord Śiva, I stood up immediately with reverence. I saluted the feet of Śiva. O brahmins, then I eulogised him with ancient songs and secret names conducive to merit. "You are the unborn lord. You are never old. You are the lord who created the greater and smaller

beings. You are the primordial Nature (Prakṛti) as well as Puruṣa. You are the Brahman worthy of meditation. You are the imperishable and undying Being. You are the supreme soul. You are the lord and great cause. You are the creator of Brahmā. You are the maker of Prakṛti. You are beyond Prakṛti. This gentle lady is Prakṛti the permanent instrument unto you in the process of creation. She has assumed the form of your wife and has come to you as the cause of the universe.

O lord, obeisance to you as well as to your glorious consort. O lord of Devas, it was at your bidding and by your favour that these Devas and subjects had been created by me. They are now deluded by your Yogic Māyā. Be pleased with them. May they be as they were before.

O brahmins, after submitting this to the lord I spoke at this occurrence to all those Devas who were stunned.

45-49. "O ye deities, you are confounded. You don't understand lord Śiva. You immediately seek refuge in lord and his divine consort. He is the unchanging great Soul."

Then all those heaven-dwellers who were stunned, bowed to lord Śiva with their minds purified by emotional fervour.

Śiva, the lord of Devas was pleased with them. He immediately restored Devas to their former self. When this process of reviving Devas was going on, the lord of Devas assumed a wonderful body possessed of three eyes.

50-56. Devas, eclipsed and dazzled by the brilliance of Śiva closed their eyes. The lord granted them powerful eyes competent to behold him. Then they looked at the lord of Devas. On seeing the third eye Indra and other Devas recognized him as Śiva.

In the presence of heaven-dwellers the delighted goddess placed garland at the feet of the lord of unmeasured lustre. Saying "Well done, Well done." Devas, once again, bowed to the lord along with the goddess, with their heads resting on the ground.

In the meantime O brahmins, I spoke to Himavān the great mountain of massive splendour. I was accompanied by Devas.

You are worthy of being praised and honoured by all. You are really great. Since you have the alliance with Śiva your prosperity will be great. Let the auspicious marriage rite be performed. There shall be no delay in this matter?

Then after bowing to me Himavān replied:

Himavān said:

57. O lord, you alone are the cause of my all-round rise and prosperity. The favour has come about suddenly and the reason thereof can be you alone. O sire, conduct celebration of marriage after fixing up the programme.

Brahma said:

58. On hearing the words of the king of mountains, O brahmins, I said thus to the lord—"O lord, let the marriage rite be celebrated".

59-63. Śiva, the lord of the worlds said to me—"As you like". O brahmins, instantaneously I created a city for the marriage. It was made splendid by different sorts of jewels, precious stones and gems of various colours; gold and pearls came in their embodied form and decorated that excellent city. The ground was wonderfully paved with Emerald. It was adorned with columns of gold. Shining crystals constituted the walls. Pearl necklaces were suspended from them. At the entrance to that beautiful city, raised platform was constructed for the marital rites. That place of noble Śiva, lord of Devas, shone well. The moon and the sun (assumed the form of) two brilliant gems and rendered the place warm and cool.

64. Wafting sweet fragrant smell, very pleasing to the mind, the wind-god came there, evincing his devotion to lord Śiva. He was gentle to the touch.

65-68. The four oceans, Indra and other Devas, the celestial rivers, the great terrestrial rivers, Siddhas, sages, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Nāgas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, aquatic and Sky-bound birds and animals, Kinnaras, Cāraṇas, Tumbaru, Nārada Hāhā, Hūhū and the singers of Sāman hymns brought with them other sorts of gems and came to the city. Ascetics and sages, experts in singing vedic Mantras chanted holy Mantras of marriage rites with delighted minds.

69. Mothers of the universe and the celestial virgins began to sing joyously in the course of that wedding ceremony of the lord.

70. The six seasons were simultaneously present in their

embodied forms at the marriage function. They spread pleasing scents everywhere.

71-79. In the course of marriage celebration of the daughter of the mountain, the rainy season was present with the following characteristics:—

Resembling the blue clouds, delighted at the chanting sound of the Mantras, the peacocks danced about everywhere producing their crowing notes called 'Kekā'.

It was highly elegant with dangling, rolling tawny, clear like lightning streaks. It was made splendid by the white cranes with lilies for their crest-jewel.

It became resplendent as the freshly grown mushrooms, plantain trees and trees and creepers of other sorts had sprouts coming out. It was rendered noisy by countless frogs that woke up longing for flourishing currents of clear water and that were rendered lethargic by intoxication.

It was accompanied by the delightful crowing Kekā sounds of the peacocks that brought about a break in the haughty anger excited by jealousy in lovely maidens, though lofty-minded. These maidens bore a grudge against their lovers and their anger made them haughty in their minds.

The rainy season shone with the rainbow that was present very near the rainy clouds. The beautiful form of the crooked rainbow shone with various colours. It spread golden splendour everywhere.

In the rainy season the pleasing winds shook the splendid forelocks of celestial damsels. The winds were fragrant because they were blowing against flowers of diverse colours. They were cool by their contact with the waters of fresh and dense clouds.

The disc of the moon was concealed by the rumbling cloud. The beautiful Durvā grass near water-logged spots was sprinkled with fresh water. The rainy season that arrived with such traits was respectfully looked at by the yearning and pining harlot maidens who had been heaving deep sighs rendering the atmosphere as it were filled with smoke.

The rainy season was like a maiden. The cackling sound of the swans was like that of the anklets. The clouds were lifted up and raised. The rolling lightning streaks were the necklaces. The clear lotuses were the eyes.

The black layers of clouds supported the swans in the waters of different colours. The downpour of water made the lilies bend down, the lilies that served the purpose of eyes. Their beauty was enhanced by the fragrant pollen dust.

The Autumn

80-88. The season of autumn was present at the marriage function of Pārvatī, the daughter of lord Himavān.

The quarters looked very beautiful. The autumn was like a lady who had taken out her bodice in the form of a cloud. Buds of lotuses that resemble the breasts made their appearance. The cackling sound of swans was like the tinkling of anklets.

The banks of rivers were like buttocks ample and extensive. The chirping Sārasas served as the girdle. The blue lotuses in full bloom were charming like the dark-coloured eyes.

The ripe red Bimba fruits were like the lower lips. She smiled with Kunda flowers appearing like teeth. The lady of autumn had dark-coloured curly umbilical hairs with the spreading fresh green creepers.

The lady of autumn was sweet-voiced with the humming sound of intoxicated swarms of bees. The rolling clusters of lilies were the charming earrings that heightened her beauty. The lady of autumn had the sprouts growing from the branches of red Aśoka tree for her fingers. She was embellished in garments constituted by its bunches of flowers.

The red lotuses were the tips of her feet. The Jasmine Jāti flowers were her nails. The stems of the plantain trees were her thighs. The moon was her face.

The lady of autumn appeared like a charming beloved full of love. She was richly endowed with all characteristics. She was bedecked in all ornaments.

Divested of her bodice covering, in the form of black cloud, the full moon represented her lovely face; the blue lotuses were her eyes; the lotuses, which blossomed by the rays of the sun, acted as her breasts delighting the mind through the soft winds, rendered fragrant by the pollen dust of different flowers. With the sweet cackling sounds for her tinkling anklets the lady of Autumn was present at the wedding function of Umā.

Hemanta and Śisira

89. The two seasons Hemanta and Śisira (the early winter

and the later winter) of great lustre came there flooding the quarters with excessively chill waters.

90. The Himavān the most excellent of mountains was approached by the two seasons. They are showering flakes of snow in quick succession. Enveloped by a shower of flakes Himavān appeared to be as it were an attendant.

91. With the dense shower of snow flakes that fell deep below, the Himālaya shone like the ocean of milk.

92. That great mountain was approached by successive seasons, like a prejudiced person who is gratified by the service of the great.

93. With his peaks covered with layers of snow the mountain shone like a ruler of the Earth with large and white umbrellas.

94. The winds frequently enhanced the passionate love of Devas and their maidens. The lotus ponds were filled with clear water. The lotuses and lilies grew in abundance. With these they appeared to be charming like women who reveal the tips of their breasts slightly.

The Spring season:

95-117. At the marriage of the daughter of the mountain lord Spring was also present.

The celestial elephants full of delight entered the lake filled with waters which were neither too hot nor too cold. They were rendered tawny by the particles of pollen. With the cackling of ruddy geese the atmosphere became resonant. The mango and the Priyaṅgu trees were in full bloom vying with each other. With their bunches of flowers one appeared to threaten the other. Both of them looked admirably splendid.

On the white snow-clad peaks, the Tilaka trees with their blossoms appeared like elderly guests accompanied by infants. They appeared as though they had come for some specific purpose.

The Aśoka creepers in full bloom supported by the big Śāla trees shone like loving maidens with their arms twined round the necks of their lovers.

The following trees were laden with fruits and flowers : They were the mango, Kadamba, Nipa, Tāla, Tamāla, Sarala,

Kapittha (Wood apple), Aśoka, Sarja, Arjuna, Kovidāra, Punnāga, Nāgeśvara, Karṇikāra, Lavaṅga, Kālāguru (Agal-schum), Saptaparna, Nyagrodha, Śobhāñjana and Cocoanut. There were other trees also. They were seen everywhere. There were beautiful water reservoirs with waters sparkling like gold. They were filled with blue lilies and fishes. Aquatic birds and animals like ruddy geese, Kāraṇḍavas, swans, Koya-ṣṭis, Dātyūhas (water crows) and cranes abounded in them. Birds were seen on the tops of trees with wings of diverse colours and the limbs of various forms. They appeared to be embellished as it were.

Birds and animals with their passion roused and their bodies excited produced cries and sounds as if they were threatening those engaged in amorous sports.

On that mountain, in the course of marriage celebration of the daughter of the mountain-lord winds blew making the limbs delighted and cool. The winds originating from the Malaya mountain slowly blew down the white flowers from the trees.

All reasons of meritorious nature shone with their respective traits intermingled. Those seasons whose special traits have been recounted looked very charming at that place.

The Mālatī creepers shone with their bunches of flowers. Intoxicated swarms of bees were humming amongst them. These creepers appeared as if they were terrifying one another.

The petals of flowers were resorted to by the intoxicated swarms of bees. The waters were rendered blue by the blue lotuses, white by the white lotuses and red by the red lotus stalks.

There were clusters of golden lotuses in lakes of extensive water surface, in some, beautiful flowers grew continuously; in some there were lotuses with stalks like lapis lazuli.

The ponds were very beautiful with lotuses, lilies and other flowers. The rows of golden steps were rendered resonant by various birds O brahmins, the lofty peaks of that mountain, thickly overgrown with Karṇikāra trees in full blooms shone like golden peaks.

The quarters shone pink in colour on account of the Pāṭala trees with their flowers slightly opened. They were gently shaken by the wind.

There were Kṛṣṇārjuna trees and the blue Aśoka trees on that mountain, ten times their number. They were in full bloom. They appeared to compete with one another in their growth.

Forests of Kimsuka trees resonant with sweet sounds shone on all ridges of that mountain.

With groves of Tamāla trees, the Himavān had a special beauty as though groups of clouds were lying hidden in its joints.

With tall sandal and Campaka trees with their branches spreading extensively, and profusely laden with flowers, and with the cooing sounds of intoxicated cuckoos the Himālaya shone very well.

On hearing the low sweet intoxicating cooing sound of the cuckoos the peacocks fluttered their wings and grew sweetly. Lord Kāma found his strength enhanced by their sounds. He stood ready to pierce the celestial maidens in their limbs, keeping his hands fixed to the bow and arrow.

The summer :

118-124. At the time of marriage the summer season came to the Himālaya with the power of sunshine melting water. There remained very little water in the reservoirs.

The summer season too brightened the peaks of the snow-clad mountain all round by means of many trees profusely in bloom.

During that season the winds were very pleasant. They blew and wafted the fragrance of (the flowers of) Pāṭala, Kadamba and Arjuna that grew extensively.

The tanks were made pink in colour due to the pollen dust full blown lotuses. The banks were resonant due to the cackling of swans.

The Kurabaka trees were covered with flowers on the peaks. They were resorted to by swarms of bees.

On the wide side-valleys and ridges of the mountain the Bakula trees put forth lovely flowers all round.

Excellent sages accompanied by various seasons came there to increase the prosperity of the marital rites of Umā and Śiva. The trees abounded in flowers of various sorts. The lands were beautiful by virtue of sweet sounds of different sorts of birds.

125-126. When the living beings had begun to assemble thus, when hundreds of musical instruments were played, I got the daughter of the mountain embellished with befitting ornaments and led her myself into the city, O brahmins.

127-128. Thereafter, I spoke thus to the lord Iśa. "I am present in the capacity of the preceptor. I shall pour the holy ghee into the fire. If you grant permission, holy rites can be carried out immediately."

Saṅkara, the lord of Devas, the lord of the universe said to me.

Siva said :

129. "O lord of Devas, O Brahmā, whatever has been thought of, whatever is desired, do it. I shall carry out your directions, O lord of the universe."

130-135. Thereafter, delighted in my mind I took up Kuśas immediately and bound the hands of Śiva and Pārvatī together in the Yogic knot. The fire-god stood there with palms joined in reverence. The auspicious Mantras of Vedas assumed physical forms and were present at the marriage. I performed sacrifice in the manner laid down. The ghee-like nectar was poured as offering. I made the lord (and the goddess) circumambulate the fire. The binding knot was untied. Along with Devas, my mental sons and Siddhas, I was delighted within myself. As the marriage rites were over I bowed to the bull-bannered lord. O brahmins it was due to their Yogic power that the marriage of Umā and Śiva was effected.

That great marriage was concluded in this way. Devas did not know how it happened at all.

Thus the details of marriage have been recounted to you. Listen further about the marriage of the lord. It is very wonderful.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

Hymn in Praise of Śiva

Brahmā said :

1. When the marital ceremony of lord Śiva of unmeasured splendour was performed, Indra and other Devas were highly pleased. They eulogised the lord in glorious words and paid obeisance in reverence, in the following way.

Devas said :

2. Obeisance to the lord whose symbol is the mountain. Obeisance to the lord who is the wind in velocity. Obeisance to the lord, the destroyer of pain and the bestower of splendid riches.

3. Obeisance to the lord who has the blue tuft. Obeisance to the lord, husband of Umā. Obeisance to the lord in the form of the wind. Obeisance to the lord of one hundred forms.¹

4. Obeisance to the deity of terrible form, of deformed eyes, one thousand eyes and one thousand feet.²

5. Obeisance to the deity in the form of Devas; obeisance, obeisance to the lord, the ancillary of the Vedas. Obeisance to the deity who stunned the arms of Indra,³ obeisance to the germinating sprout of the Vedas.

6. Obeisance to the overlord of mobile and immobile beings; obeisance, obeisance to one who suppresses sinners. Obeisance to the deity whose symbol is a water reservoir; obeisance, obeisance to one who annihilates the Yugas.

7. Obeisance to the deity with skulls for garlands; obeisance to the deity who wears skulls for the sacred thread; obeisance to the deity with a skull in his hand; obeisance to the deity holding a staff; obeisance to the deity holding the iron-club.

1. *Rudra of one hundred forms.* P. E. has a long anecdote on Śatarudra. The Veda declares emphatically that there is a single Rudra: *Eka eva Rudro vatasih na dvitīyah* but at the same time it speaks of numerous Rudras that exist on earth: *asamkhyata sahasrapi ye rudra adhibhūmydm.*

2. *Sahasrakṣaḥ Sahasrapāt*—Thousand-eyed, thousand-footed. These epithets are applied to primeval being (*Puruṣa*) in RV X.90.

3. Cf. Ch. 84, VV 33-34. The slayer of Vṛtra (Indra) lifted up his arm to strike Śiva in the form of an infant lying in the lap of Pārvati but his right hand remained stunned and he could not hurl his thunderbolt.

8. Obeisance to the lord, the master of three worlds; obeisance to the deity, interested in the world of mortals. Obeisance to the deity with the iron club in hand; obeisance to the lord who dispels the agony of those who bow down to him.

9. Obeisance to the destroyer of the head of sacrifice; obeisance to him who removed Kṛṣṇa's tresses; obeisance to him who plucked the eyes of Bhaga;¹ obeisance to the deity who removed the teeth of Pūṣan.²

10. Obeisance to the wielder of Pināka,³ trident, sword, dagger and iron-club. Obeisance to the destroyer of the god of Death, obeisance to the deity with the third eye.

11. Obeisance to one who annihilated the god of Death,⁴ obeisance to the deity who resides on the mountain; obeisance to the deity with the necklace of gold; obeisance to one wearing ear-rings.

12. Obeisance to the destroyer of Yogic power of Daityas; obeisance to the Yigin; obeisance to the preceptor; obeisance to the deity with the moon and the sun for eyes; obeisance to the deity with an eye in the forehead.⁵

1. *Who plucked the eyes of Bhaga*—Bhaga is one of the twelve Ādityas. Devas assembled together and decided upon the share of Yajñas due to each of them and in thus fixing up shares they left out Rudra. Enraged at this neglect Rudra made a bow and fought against Devas. During the fight he extracted the eyes of Bhaga and the teeth of Pūṣan. Ultimately Devas satisfied and pleased Rudra who returned to Bhaga and Pūṣan the eyes and teeth which had been extracted.

2. *Who removed the teeth of Pūṣan*. Pūṣan—one of the twelve ādityas born as sons of Kaśyapa Prajāpati, by his wife Aditi.

In a sacrifice which Śiva attended uninvited there was a fight between Devas and Śiva. In this fight against Śiva Pūṣan lost his teeth (Mbh. Sauptika Parva Ch. 18).

3. *Pīndaka*—name of Śiva's bow.

4. *Annihilated the god of death*. Śiva gave Mrkaṇḍu a boon that a pious son would be born to him but he would live only for sixteen years. The child was born and named Mārkaṇḍeya. He was educated in Vedas and Śāstras. When the hour of his death arrived, the boy embraced the liṅga idol of Śiva. When Yama, the god of death came to fetch him, the angry Śiva arose out of the idol and killed Yama. At the request of gods Yama was revived to life but Mārkaṇḍeya was granted youth for ever.

5. *An eye in the Forehead*... The two eyes of Śiva represent the Sun and the Moon; the third eye in the forehead is the eye of wisdom. But it emits fire when it opens at the time of Dissolution or even earlier when Śiva is angry.

13. Obeisance to one taking delight in cremation-ground; obeisance to the bestower of boons (staying) in the cremation ground; obeisance to the destroyer of the rude and the impolite. Obeisance to the deity devoid of garment; obeisance to the deity who laughs as boisterously as hundred thunderbolts; obeisance to the lord of mountain.

14. Obeisance to the householder saint, obeisance to the perpetual wearer of matted hair; obeisance to the celibate one; obeisance to one with shaven head, obeisance to one with partially shaven head; obeisance to the lord of Paśus.¹

15. Obeisance to one who performs penance in the water; obeisance to one who bestows Yogic lordship and prosperity; obeisance to one who is calm and tranquil; obeisance to one who has controlled his sense-organs. Obeisance to one who causes dissolution.

16. Obeisance to one who causes blessings; obeisance, obeisance to one who sustains the world. Obeisance to Rudra; obeisance to Vasu, obeisance to Āditya; obeisance to Aśvin.

17. Obeisance to the father of all; obeisance to the supreme being of perfect knowledge; obeisance to Viśvedevas; obeisance to Śarva, Ugra, Śiva, the bestower of boons.

18. Obeisance to the terrible one; obeisance to the commander-in-chief; obeisance to the lord of Paśus; obeisance to the pure; obeisance to the destroyer of enemies; obeisance to Sadyojāta.

19. Obeisance to Mahādeva; obeisance to the wonderful, obeisance, obeisance to the trident-bearing deity; obeisance to Pradhāna; obeisance to the incomprehensible; obeisance to the effect; obeisance to the cause.

20. Obeisance to you—Puruṣa; obeisance to one who causes the wish of Puraṣa; obeisance to one who causes the contact of Puraṣa and the Guṇas of Pradhāna.

21. Obeisance to one who makes Prakṛti and Puraṣa function; obeisance to one who commits what is done and what is not done; obeisance to one who bestows union with the fruit of actions.

22. Obeisance to the knower of the time of all; obeisance

1. *Lord of Paśus*—lord of Jivas or individual souls.

to one who restrains all; obeisance to one who disturbs the equilibrium of Guṇas; obeisance to one who bestows means of subsistence.

23. Obeisance to you the lord of the chiefs of Devas; obeisance to you the creator of living beings; O Śiva be gentle in face to be looked at, O lord, be gentle to us.”

Brahmā said :

24. On being eulogised thus by all Devas, the lord of the universe, the lord of Umā spoke thus to the immortal beings.

Lord Rudra said :

25. O Devas, in regard to Devas I am both harsh and gentle. Tell me the boons you wish to choose. I shall grant them undoubtedly.

Brahmā said :

26-30. Thereafter, Devas bowed down to the three-eyed lord and said to him :

“O lord, let this boon be retained by you alone. When there is any task, you will grant the boon desired by us.”

Brahmā said :

After saying “Let it be so”, the lord bade farewell to Devas and other people. Thereafter he entered his abode together with the Pramathas.¹

He who recites this wonderful episode of festivities in the presence of Devas and brahmans shall become equal to Ganeśa, who has no parallel. After death he shall become happy.

O leading brahmans, he who listens to this hymn or reads it shall go to the world of the lord. He shall be worshipped by Devas, Asuras and others.

1. *Pramathas—ganas, Śiva's attendants.*

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Umā and Śaṅkara leave Himalayas

Brahmā said :

1. When the lord entered his abode and was seated comfortably in an excellent seat, his ruthless enemy the cupid was ready to hit and pierce him with his shafts.

2-4. He was notorious for neglect of good conduct. He was evil-minded and of base family. It was he who harassed the worlds. Concealing his body by covering up his limbs, he put obstacles in the rites of sages. He had come there accompanied by Rati.¹ Both had assumed the forms of ruddy geese. As an assailant O brahmins, he was ready to hit and wound the lord. Hence, the lord of Devas glanced at him contemptuously by opening his third eye.

5. Then, with thousands of clusters of flames, the fire originating from his eye burned immediately the spouse of Rati together with his attendants.

6. On being burned he became distressed and lamented piteously and out of tune. Propitiating that lord he fell down on the ground.

7. With his limbs encompassed by fire the cupid, the scorcher of the world fell down into a swoon instantaneously.

8. His excessively distressed wife lamented piteously. In great agony she ruefully requested the lord and the goddess for mercy.

9. Realizing her pathetic plight, the sympathetic lord and the lady Umā glanced at the desolate Rati consolingly and said.

Umā and Maheśvara said :

10. Indeed, O gentle lady, he has been burned up. His resuscitation here, is not desired. Bodiless though he be, O gentle lady, he will carry out your tasks.

11. O splendid lady, when lord Viṣṇu incarnates as the son of Vasudeva, your husband will be reborn as his son.

Brahmā said :

12. After securing that boon, the fair-faced wife of Kāma

1. Rati—wife of Kāmadeva, god of love.

went back to the land of her choice. She was pleased. She was free from languor.

13. O brahmins, after burning up Kāma the delighted bull-bannered lord sported about on the Himālaya mountain in the company of Umā.

14-17. Accompanied by the goddess, the three-eyed lord sported about in various places such as—beautiful caves, lotus-ponds and lakes, charming places free from crowds of people, Karṇikāra forests, lovely banks of rivers frequented by Kinnaras,¹ peaks of the lord of mountains, tanks and lakes, different parks and groves, amongst Campa bushes, places, resonant with the chirpings and cooings of different birds, holy centres, sacred waters, lawns studded with jewels, etc, etc. In all these holy and charming spots embellished by Vidyādharaś and frequented by Gandharvas, Yakṣas and the immortal beings, the three-eyed lord sported about along with the goddess.

18. Surrounded by Devas led by Indra, sages, Yakṣas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharaś, leading Daityas and others of various sorts, the couple derived great pleasure on that mountain.

19. There the celestial damsels and the leading Devas danced; the delighted Gandharvas sang; the brahmins meditated; some hurriedly played on the musical instruments and some eulogised the excellent qualities of the lord.

20. The noble lord, who destroyed the eyes of Bhaga, who was accompanied by his powerful attendants comparable to Indra, Yama and fire-god, did not leave off that mountain just for pleasing the goddess.

The sages said :

21. What did the great lord the destroyer of Kāma do, staying there accompanied by Umā ? We wish to know this.

Brahma said :

22-23. On the peak of the Himavān, the lord with the crescent moon for his caste mark on the forehead delighted the

1. *Kinnara*—a mythical being with a human figure and the head of a horse or with a horse's body and the head of a man, originally perhaps a kind of monkey, in later times reckoned among the Gandharvas or celestial choristers and celebrated as musician.

goddess and diverted himself. Desirous of pleasing the goddess he cut jokes and provoked mirth along with the leading Gaṇas of different shapes and sizes, who were omniscient, magnanimous and splendid and who could assume any form they liked.

24-25. Once it so happened that Umā went to her mother Menā who was seated in a bright and wonderful golden seat. On seeing the chaste blameless goddess who came there in a divine form, the mother greeted her by offering a valuable seat. Then, Menā the lotus-eyed beloved of Himavān spoke to her when she was comfortably seated.

Menā said :

26-27. O my daughter of splendid eyes, you have come after a long time. Now tell me why do you play sports with poor wretched persons in the company of your husband? Only the low people sport about as your husband does, my precious girl. Those who are poor and those who have no support sport with such wretched and poor people, O Umā.

Brahmā said :

28. On being bluntly told thus by her mother Umā was not pleased. Endowed with enormous patience she did not say anything to her mother. Dismissed by her mother she went straight to her lord and said :

Pārvati said :

29. O lord of the chiefs of Devas I will not stay on this mountain. O lord of massive splendour, make another residence for me in any of the three worlds.

The lord said :

30-31. You were being told always by me to go in for a separate residence, O goddess, but, O gentle lady, the proposal did not appeal to you at all. But now, O gentle lady, O splendid one, why do you seek a residence elsewhere? Tell me O lady of pure smiles the cause for the change of your view.

The goddess said :

32-34. O lord of Devas, today I had been to the abode of my noble father. O creator of the worlds, my mother met me

in a room where there was no one else. After honouring me by offering seat etc. she spoke to me thus "O Umā, my auspicious girl your husband sports with the poor wretched people. Sports and pastime of Devas are never of that sort."

O bull-bannered lord Śiva ! the fact that you sport about with the attendants of poor status is not approved of by my mother."

Brahmā said :

35-38. Then, in order to humour the goddess and make her laugh, the lord laughed boisterously and said :

The lord said :

This is true. There is no doubt about this why were you angry ? O lotus-eyed one, I do roam about in the forests and mountain caverns, surrounded by naked Ganas.¹ Sometimes I wear the hide of an elephant. Sometimes I have no cloth to wear. Sometimes I stay in the cremation ground and have it as my abode. I have no permanent abode anywhere.

O gentle lady, do not be furious with your mother. Your mother has spoken the truth. Unto all creatures in the world there is no other kinsman on a par with one's mother.

The goddess said :

39-40. O destroyer of three cities², I have nothing to do with my kinsmen. O great lord, do such things as will enable me to derive happiness.

Brahmā said :

On hearing the words of the goddess the lord of Devas left his father-in-law's residence for pleasing her consort. Accompanied by his wife and Ganas he went to the Meru mountain frequented by Devas and Siddhas and other Beings.

1. *Ganas*—attendants of Śiva under the special superintendence of god Ganeśa.

2. *Destroyer of three cities*—The three strong cities, triple fortification built of gold, silver and iron in the sky, air and earth, by Maya for the Asuras and burnt by Śiva.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Destruction of Dakṣa's Sacrifice

The sages said :

1-2. O Brahmā, how was the horse-sacrifice of Prācetasā Dakṣa the Prajāpati destroyed in the Vaivasvata Manvantara ? How did the lord, the soul of all, become infuriated after knowing that the goddess had been made angry ? How was the sacrifice of Dakṣa of unmeasured splendour destroyed by the great lord in rage ?

Brahmā said :

3. O brahmins, I shall describe to you how the sacrifice was destroyed in rage by the great lord in retaliation of the treatment meted out to his consort—Satī.

4-6. O excellent Brahmins, the wonderful peak of Meru, Jyotiḥsthalā by name, is worshipped in the three worlds. It is adorned by precious jewels. It is incomprehensible, unthwartable, and bowed to by the people. Formerly, the lord was seated there on the ridge of the mountain wonderfully beautified by all sorts of minerals. He shone well and was as comfortable as he was seated in a palanquin. The daughter of the lord of the mountains stood away by his side.

7-17. He was served by the following: The noble-souled Ādityas, Vasus of great prowess, Aśvins, the noble and excellent physicians, Vaiśravaṇa¹ the lord of Yakṣas, the glorious lord whose abode was in Kailāsa and who was surrounded by Guhyakas, Uśanas, the great sage Sanatkumāra and other great sages, Aṅgiras and other celestial sages, Viśvāvasu the Gandharva as well as Nārada and Parvata.² Many groups of Apsaras came there. The pure, auspicious and pleasant breeze blew wafting different kinds of fragrance. The trees of the forest were laden with flowers of all seasons. The Vidyādharaś, Sādhyas, Siddhas and ascetics worshipped and served the great lord, the lord of Paśus. Similarly, there were other living beings

1. *Vaiśravāna*—Kubera, son of Viśravas.

2. *Nārada and Parvata*—Two sages expert in music who lived for a long time as inseparable friends.

that had assumed different forms. There were extremely terrible Rākṣasas, and Piśācas of great strength who were very bold, who assumed many forms and who held different sorts of weapons and means of striking. The followers of the lord comparable to the fire-god also stood there. Nandīvara, permitted by the lord was also there holding a blazing trident brightly illuminated by its own radiance. Gaṅgā, excellent of all rivers and the source of all sacred waters attended upon him in her embodied form. Thus the great lord stayed there worshipped by the celestial sages and the highly blessed Devas.

18-27. After the lapse of some time the Patriarch Dakṣa resolved to perform sacrifice in the manner laid down and mentioned before. Led by Indra, Devas came from their heavenly abodes to his sacrifice at Gaṅgādvāra¹. Noble-souled Devas who had fiery lustre came there on shining aerial cars. The Gaṅgādvāra was thronged by Gandharvas and Apsaras. It abounded in trees and creepers. Dakṣa the most excellent among the virtuous ones was surrounded by groups of sages.

The residents of the Earth, firmament and heavenly world joined their palms in reverence and stood near him. The Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas, Maruts and Viṣṇu came there to partake of their shares in the sacrifice. The excellent Devas, Ājyapas, Somapas, Aśvins, Maruts and different groups of Devas came there. These and other congregations of living beings, the four species of living organisms such as the ovoviparous, viviparous, the sweat-born ones and the shorting ones (plants) came there. Devas had been invited along with their womenfolk and the sages. Seated in the aerial chariots (or lofty chambers) they shone like blazing fires.

On seeing the raised platform devoid of Rudra, Dadhīci, the great sage, spoke to the sages :—

“O sages, Śaṅkara the leader of all, is not seen in this great sacrifice; the sacrifice does not shine without him.

28. By worshipping those who should not be worshipped and by not worshipping those who are worthy of being worshipped a man undoubtedly incurs great sin.

1. *Gangādvāra*—A locality into the Indo-Gangetic plane where the river Gaṅgā falls from the Himālayas. This place is known as Haridvāra.

Brahmā said :

29-33. After saying this, the brahminical sage said to Dakṣa again.

Dadhīci said :

Why do you not worship the lord of Paśus ?

Dakṣa said :

I have many Rudras of my own; they have matted hairs and they are armed with tridents. They are eleven in number and they stay in eleven abodes. We do not recognize any other Maheśvara beside them.

Dadhīci said :

This is the warning I shall give you all. My lord has not been invited. Just as I am sure that I do not see a deity above Śaṅkara so also I am sure that this elaborate sacrifice of Dakṣa will not attain completion.

Dakṣa said :

This entire offering has been sanctified by the due chanting of Mantras. It is dedicated to the lord of sacrifice. O brahmins, by means of gold vessels I offer this to the unparalleled god Viṣṇu as his share in the sacrifice and not to Śaṅkara.

O Dadhīca, this is duly offered as the permanent share to Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe. I give this share in the sacrifice to that excellent deity and not to Śaṅkara.

Brahmā said :

34. Knowing that Devas were going somewhere, the chaste daughter of the king of mountains spoke these words to lord Śiva her husband.

Uma said :

35. O lord who know all facts, where do these Devas with lord Indra at their head go? Tell me truthfully. I entertain great doubts on that count.

Maheśvara said :

36. The highly blessed, the most excellent patriarch Dakṣa is performing a horse-sacrifice. Those heaven-dwellers are going there.

The goddess said :

37. O blessed one, why don't you go to this sacrifice ? By what ban is your departure prevented ?

Maheśvara said :

38. O highly blessed lady, all this has been manipulated by Devas alone. No share is allotted to me in any sacrifice.

39. O fair-complexioned lady, following the path of previous precedent in the allotment of shares Devas do not offer me the rightful share in the sacrifice.

Uma said :

40-42. O lord, among Devas, you are superior in power and good qualities. You are invincible and unthwartable by virtue of splendour, fame and glory. O highly blessed one, on account of this ban in respect to the share (in sacrifice) I am extremely distressed. I tremble excessively. What sort of charitable gift, holy observance or penance shall I perform, whereby my husband, the infinite lord shall now obtain a substantial or an appropriate share ?

43-45. As she spoke the delighted lord thought that his wife was most agitated. He said :— “O gentle lady of slender belly and limbs you do not know me fully. Do you speak these words in propriety ? O lady of large eyes, I know and all good people know through meditation. Due to your anger all Devas, the three worlds, have been destroyed. They highly praise me as the lord of sacrifices; they sing the Rathantara hymn for my sake; they worship me by means of sacrifices. The priests who perform sacrifices allot share unto me.

The goddess said :

46. O lord, even a vulgar person behaves like a lofty-minded person in the assembly of people. Particularly in front of ladies he praises himself and arrogates.

The lord said :

47. O goddess of Devas, I do not praise myself as you seem to think. O beautiful fair-complexioned lady, I shall create a being and assert my right to this share.

Brahmā said :

48. After saying this to Umā his wife, whom he loved more than his vital breath, the lord created a goblin from his mouth. It arose from the fire of his fury.

49. The lord said thus to him :—"Go and destroy the sacrifice of Dakṣa. With my permission, immediately destroy that holy rite of Dakṣa."

50. That goblin knew that Dakṣa was the cause of Mother's indignation. Hence, he destroyed the sacrifice of Dakṣa playfully. This he did by the order of Rudra to assume the form of a lion.

51. The extremely terrible Bhadrakāli¹ the great goddess was created from that indignation. As a witness to the actions of her lord she accompanied him.

52. In fact, the goblin was the lord himself, who assumed the form of the fury of the lord and took up his abode in the cremation ground, the resting place of ghosts. He is known as Virabhadra.² Eventually he wiped off indignation and sorrow of his consort Umā.

53. From the pores of his bodily hairs he himself created some leading Gaṇas, the terrible followers who had virility and exploit akin to that of Rudra himself.

1. *Bhadrakāli*—form of Pārvati. Lord Śiva, on hearing about the self-immolation in fire of his wife Satī, at the famous sacrifice conducted by Dakṣa, rushed in all anger to the spot and beat the earth with his matted hair, and there ensued two forces called Virabhadra and Bhadrakāli. This Bhadrakāli was really Satī in another form.

2. *Virabhadra*—There are two different opinions in the Purāṇas regarding the origin of Virabhadra. According to the Purāṇas his birth was due to the anger of Śiva. When Śiva knew that his wife Pārvati jumped into the fire and died at the sacrifice of Dakṣa, he struck his matted hair on the ground and from that, Virabhadra and Bhadrakāli came into being. But according to *Mbh.* (Śānti Parva, Ch. 284) Virabhadra was born from the mouth of Śiva to destroy the sacrifice of Dakṣa. From each of the hairpores of Virabhadra a fearful monster was born, all of whom formed a group of ghosts called Gaṇas.

54. These followers of Rudra, who had the valour of Rudra himself, jumped out of his pores in hundreds and thousands.

55. O brahmins, the tumultuous sound produced by those Gaṇas of Rudra was extremely sonorous and appeared to fill the entire firmament.

56. The heaven-dwellers were frightened by that loud tumult. The mountains crumbled down and the earth quaked.

57. Gusts of wind blew ruthlessly. The abode of ocean became stirred up and excited. Fires did not blaze nor did the sun shine.

58. Neither did glimmer the planets nor the stars nor the constellations. Neither sages nor Devas nor Dānavas had any lustre in their faces.

59. When darkness enveloped everything thus, those seated in the aerial chariots were burned up. Terrible stormy gusts of wind blew ruthlessly with the stinking odour of rotting ordure.

60. Some of the goblins shouted and cried aloud; others crashed and thrashed. With the velocity of the wind and the mind they ran helter-skelter in hurry.

61. The ritual vessels were broken to pieces and reduced to powder. The sacrificial chambers crumbling down appeared like the stars fallen from the sky.

62-65. Various sorts of foodstuffs and beverages were swallowed and lapped by the goblins. High mountains like masses of divine cooked rice, beverages and foodstuffs, rivers of milk, marshy sloughs of ghee and milk pudding, divine honey and watery whey and gruel, sand-like candies and sugar, rivers with floating cooked rice of all the six tastes, channels of liquid treacle and molasses pleasing to the mind, high and low heaps of meat, footstuffs of different sorts—nay all those exquisitely prepared lambatives and edibles, juices and squashes were gorged up by those enormous beings with their mouths of diverse kinds. Those beings issuing from the anger of Rudra, and comparable to fire of Death destroyed some and scattered others.

66. Those gigantic beings towering high like mountains agitated and terrified everyone everywhere. Those beings of various forms hurled the celestial damsels playfully.

67-68. Such were the Gaṇas. Accompanied by them, the valorous Virabhadra, impelled by the fury of Rudra, quickly burned that sacrifice well-guarded by all Devas. He burned it up in the presence of Bhadrakālī. The others produced loud crying sounds that frightened all living beings.

69. Cutting the head of sacrifice they yelled terrifically. Then Dakṣa the patriarch and Indra and other Devas joined their palms in reverence and said :—“May this be known who are you, please ?”

Virabhadra said :

70-73. O leading Devas, I am neither a Deva nor a Daitya. I have not come here to eat or to enjoy. I have not come here to see anything nor am I impelled by curiosity.

O excellent Devas, I have come here for destroying the sacrifice of Dakṣa. I am wellknown as Virabhadra. I have come out of the fury of Rudra.

(This lady) shall be known as Bhadrakālī who has emerged from the fury and indignation of the Mother. She is sent by the lord of Devas and so has come to the venue of sacrifice.

O leading king, seek refuge in the consort of Umā, the lord of Devas. Better to face the fury of the lord than to court the challenge of his attendants.

Brahmā said :

74-81. Then the planted sacrificial posts were pulled up and cast off here and there. The vultures, greedy of flesh were swooping down or flying about. The gusts of wind generated by their fluttering wings shook down everything. Hundreds of vixen howled. The sacrifice of the arrogant Dakṣa was harassed by the Gaṇas. Thus harassed the sacrifice assumed the form of a deer and jumped high into the sky.

Observing the sacrifice slipping away in that form, lord (Virabhadra) seized his bow and arrow and went after it. Due to the wrath of that Gaṇa of unmeasured splendour a terrible drop of sweat flowed from his forehead. The moment the drop of sweat fell on the ground, a huge fire appeared, that was comparable to the blazing fire of death. Then, O excellent brahmins, there appeared a man-like being. He was very short

in stature. His eyes were red; his beard and moustache were green. He was terrific. His hair stood up on his head. His limbs were profusely covered with hair. His ears were red. He was awful and black in colour. He wore a red cloth. That Puruṣa of great prowess burned down the sacrifice like a fire that burns down a heap of straw.

82-89. The frightened Devas fled in all directions. As he moved about with long strides the Earth consisting of seven continents shook all round. When that great Being began to function like this, striking terror into the world of Devas I worshipped the great lord and said to him— “O lord, Devas will offer share unto you too. O lord of Devas; let this be withdrawn. All these Devas and thousands of sages know no peace, O great lord on account of your anger, O leading Deva conversant with virtue, the Being who was born of your sweat will be known as Jvara (Fever). He will move about in the world. O lord, the whole of this earth would not bear his vigour if he stayed as one single Being. May he be diffused in manifold forms.” When the lord was requested thus by me and when the share too was allotted, the Pinākabearing lord of Devas said to me— “So be it.” The Pināka-bearing lord himself derived great pleasure.

90-92. Dakṣa sought refuge in lord Śiva. He restrained the Prāṇa and Apāna winds in the cavity of the eye with great effort.

The lord, the conqueror of enemies opened his eyes fully and looked all around. He then smiled and spoke soft words— “Tell me what shall I do for you ?” When the great story was narrated to Devas accompanied by Pitṛs, Dakṣa the Prajāpati joined his palms in reverence and spoke to the lord. He was afraid, suspicious and even terrified. His face and eyes were covered with tears.

Dakṣa said :

93-97. O lord, if you are pleased, if I am your favourite, if I am to be blessed, if boon is to be granted to me (I shall request for this). Some of the food has been eaten. Some beverage is drunk. Some are simply bitten, some destroyed, some are ground into powder. This is the state regarding the requisites

of sacrifice. These were acquired by me during the course of long time with great strain. O great lord, let this not go in vain in regard to me, due to your favour.

Brahmā said :

The lord Śiva who removed the eyes of Bhaga said—So be it.

The Patriarch Dakṣa bowed to the three-eyed lord Śiva the presiding deity of virtue. After securing the boon from lord Śiva, Dakṣa knelt on the ground and eulogised the bull-bannered lord by his thousand and eight names.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

The Prayer by Dakṣa

1. O excellent brahmins, on seeing the virility of Śiva thus, Dakṣa joined his palms in reverence and bowed down. Then he began to eulogise.

2. Obeisance to you, O lord of the chiefs of Devas, Obeisance to you, O slayer of Bala, O lord of Devas, you are the most excellent one in strength, you are worshipped by Devas and Dānavas.

3-63. O thousand-eyed one, O one of deformed eyes, O three-eyed one, one fond of the overlord of Akṣas, you have hands and feet all round; you have eyes, heads and mouth all round; you have ears all round; you stand enveloping everything in the world, Śaṅkukarṇa (Pike-eared), Mahākarṇa (Long-eared), Kumbhakarṇa (Pot-eared), Arṇavālaya (ocean-dweller), Gajendrakarṇa (elephant-eared), Gokarna (cow-eared), Śatakarṇa (hundred-eared). Obeisance to you Śatodara (hundred-bellied), Śatāvarta (having hundred curly locks of hairs), Śatajihva (having hundred tongues), Sanātana (Eternal), One who is worshipped by the Gāyatrins, singing songs of praise, one who is worshipped by those who have stopped performing activities. Devadānava-goptā (Protector of Devas and Dānavas), Brahmā and Śatakratu (Indra). You are Mürtimān, (Embodied),

Mahāmūrti (having physical form), Samudra (Ocean), Sarasāṁ Nidhi (storehouse of lakes), in whom Devas abide as cows in the cowpen. I see in your body the moon, fire, lord of waters, sun, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Bṛhaspati (Jupiter). You are the action, cause and effect, the maker and the instrument. You are Asat and Sadasat (existent as well as non existent). You are the source of origin and seat of Dissolution (Prabhava and Appaya). Obeisance to Bhava, Obeisance to Sarva. Obeisance to Rudra. Obeisance to the bestower of boons (Varada). Obeisance to Paśupati (Lord of Paśus) Obeisance to Andhakaghātin (one who hit Andhaka). Obeisance to Trijaṭa (having three locks of matted hair). Obeisance to Trīśīrṣa (having three heads). Obeisance to Trīśūlavaradhbārin (one who holds excellent trident). Obeisance to Tryambaka (three-eyed). Obeisance to Trinetra (three-eyed). Obeisance to Tripuraghna (one who destroyed the three cities). Obeisance to Caṇḍa (the fierce). Obeisance to Muṇḍa (one with shaven head). Obeisance to Viśvacanḍadhara (One who holds the universe fiercely). Obeisance to Dāṇḍin (One who holds a staff). Obeisance to Śaṅkukarṇa (One having pike-ears). Obeisance to Caṇḍīcaṇḍa (fierce lord of the fierce goddess). Obeisance to Urdhvā Dāṇḍikeśa (One who holds the staff pointed upwards and one who has hairs growing up). Obeisance to Śuṣka (Dry). Obeisance to Vikṛta (the deformed). Obeisance to Vilohita (one who is particularly red). Obeisance to Dhūmrā (smoke-coloured). Obeisance to Nilagrīva (the bluenecked). Obeisance to Apratirūpa (one who has no replica). Obeisance to Virūpa (the deformed). Obeisance to Śiva. Obeisance to Sūrya (identical with the sun). Obeisance to Sūryapati (the lord of the sun). Obeisance to Sūryadvajapatākin (one having the sun as flagstaff and emblem). Obeisance to the lord of Pramathas. Obeisance to Vṛṣaskandha (bull-shouldered). Obeisance to Hiranyavarna (golden coloured). Obeisance to Hiraṇyavarcas (golden coat mail). Obeisance to Hiranyakṛtacūḍa (Obeisance to one with golden tufts). Obeisance to Hiranyapati (Lord of gold). Obeisance to Satrughāta (One who kills enemies). Obeisance to Caṇḍa (the fierce one) Obeisance to Parnasanghaśaya (one who lies amidst clusters of leaves). Obeisance to Stuta (the eulogised one). Obeisance to Stuti (the eulogy). Obeisance to-

Stūyamāna (one who is being eulogised). Obeisance to Sarva (identical with all). Obeisance to Sarvabhakṣa (one who eats every thing). Obeisance to Sarvabhūtarātman (the immanent soul in all living beings). Obeisance to Homa.) Obeisance to Mantra). Obeisance to Śukladhvajapatākin (One whose flag-staff and banner are white). Obeisance to Anāmya (one who cannot be bent). Obeisance to Nāmya (one who should be bowed to). Obeisance to Kilakila (tumultuous noise). Obeisance to Śayamāna (lying down) Obeisance to Śayita (one who has already lain down). Obeisance to Utthita (one who has got up). Obeisance to Sthita (one who stands). Obeisance to Dhavamāna (one who runs). Obeisance to Bhūta (one who has become). Obeisance to Kuṭila (the crooked). Obeisance to Nartanaśīla (one habituated to dance). Obeisance to Mukhavāditrakārin (one who plays with his mouth as with a musical instrument). Obeisance to Bādhāpaha (one who dispels obstacles). Obeisance to Lubdha (one who is greedy). Obeisance to Gītavāditrakārin (one who sings and plays on musical instruments). Obeisance to Jyeṣṭha (the eldest). Obeisance to Śreṣṭha (the most excellent). Obeisance to Balapramathana (one who suppresses Bala). Obeisance to Kalpana (conception). Obeisance to Kalpya (one who is to be conceived). Obeisance to Kṣama (the competent). Obeisance to Upakṣama (very nearly efficient). Obeisance to Ugra (the fierce one). Obeisance to Daśabāhu (ten-armed). Obeisance to Kapālahasta (having the skull in hand). Obeisance to Sitabhasmapriya (one fond of white ashes). Obeisance to Vibhīṣaṇa (the terrifying one). Obeisance to Bhīma (the terrible). Obeisance to Bhīmavrataḍhara (one who observes terrible holy rites). Obeisance to Nānāvikṛtavaktra (one who has many deformed faces). Obeisance to Khaḍgajihvogradāṁśtin (one with sword-like tongue and fierce curved fangs). Obeisance to Pakṣamāṁsalavādya (one who has huge musical instruments at his sides). Obeisance to Tumbivīṇāpriya (one fond of Tumbivīṇā, a kind of lute).

Obeisance to Aghoraghoraṛūpa (one who has the form of Aghora, a terrible form). Obeisance to Ghoraghoratara (one who is more terrible than the most terrible). Obeisance to Śiva. Obeisance to Śānta (calm). Obeisance to Śāntatara (calmer). Obeisance to Buddha (enlightened). Obeisance to

Śuddha (pure one). Obeisance to Samvibhāgapriya (one fond of classification). Obeisance to Prapañca (extensive universe). Obeisance to Ugra (fierce). Obeisance to Sāṃkhyapara (one devoted to Sāṃkhya philosophy). Obeisance to Caṇḍaika-ghanṭa (one having a fierce bell). Obeisance to Ghanṭānāda (sound of the bell). Obeisance to Ghanṭin (one with a bell). Obeisance to Sahasraśataghānṭa (one who has thousands and thousands of bells). Obeisance to Ghanṭāmālāpriya (one fond of a garland of bells). Obeisance to Prāṇadaṇḍa (one awarding life sentence). Obeisance to Nitya (the permanent). Obeisance to you Lohita (Red in colour). Obeisance to Humhumikāra (one shouting Humhum). Obeisance to Rudra. Obeisance to Humhumkārapriya (one fond of the sound (Humhum) Obeisance to Apāravān (Endless, limitless). Obeisance to Nityam-girivṛkṣapriya (one who is always fond of tree on the mountain). Obeisance to Mārga-Mārsasāṛgāla (the jackal at the way-side with a price of meat). Obeisance to Tāraka (one who redeems). Obeisance to Tāra (one who crosses). Obeisance to Yajñādhipati (the over-lord). Obeisance to Kṛta (what is done). Obeisance to Prakṛta (what is perfectly done). Obeisance to Yajñavāha (one whose vehicle is Yajña). Obeisance to Dānta (one who has controlled sense-organs) Obeisance to Tathya (truth). Obeisance to Vitatha (untrue). Obeisance to Taṭa (shore); Obeisance to Taṭya (one favourable to the shore). Obeisance to Taṭinīpati (lord of rivers). Obeisance to Annada (bestower of cooked rice). Obeisance to Annapati (Lord of cooked rice). Obeisance to Annabhuja (one who eats cooked rice). Obeisance to Sanasraśīrṣa (the thousand-headed). Obeisance to Sahasrācarāṇa (having thousand feet) Obeisance to Sahasrodyataśūla (one who has lifted up a thousand tridents). Obeisance to Sahasranayana (thousand-eyed) Obeisance to Bälārkavarna (one having the colour of rising sun). Obeisance to Bälarūpadhara (one having the form of a boy). Obeisance to Bälārkarūpa (one having the form of the rising sun). Obeisance to Bälakriḍanaka (one who plays like boys). Obeisance to Śuddha (the pure one). Obeisance to Buddha (enlightened). Obeisance to Kṣobhaṇa (one who causes agitation). Obeisance to Kṣaya (one who causes decline). Obeisance to Tarāṅgāṅkitakeśa (one whose hair is marked with

waves). Obeisance to Muktakeśa (one whose tresses are released). Obeisance to Śaṭkarmatuṣṭa (one who is pleased with six types of holy rites). Obeisance to Trikarmanirata (one is engaged in the three holy rites). Obeisance to Varnāśrama-dharma-pravartaka (one who makes castes and stages of life function duly and severally). Obeisance to Śreṣṭha (the most excellent). Obeisance to Jyeṣṭha (the eldest). Obeisance to Kalakala (indistinct but sweet sound). Obeisance to Śvetapiṅgalanetra (one who has white and tawny coloured eyes). Obeisance to Kṛṣṇaraktekṣaṇa (one who has black and red eyes). Obeisance to Dharmakāmārthamokṣa (virtue, love, wealth and salvation). Obeisance to Kratha (one who injures). Obeisance to Krathana (one who slaughters). Obeisance to Sāṃkhya. Obeisance to Sāṃkhyamukhya (Chief of the Sāṃkhyas). Obeisance to Yogādhipati (overlord of Yogas). Obeisance to Rathyādhiratha (Charioteer on the street). Obeisance to Catuspathapatha (having the pathway in the fourcross roads). Obeisance to Kṛṣṇajinottariya (one having the hide of a black deer as the upper garment).

O Iśāna Rudrasaṅghāta (group of Rudras), Harikeśa (one having green hair). Obeisance to you. Obeisance to Tryambaka (three-eyed). O Ambikānātha (lord of Ambikā), O manifest and unmanifest. Obeisance to you O Kāla, O Kāmada (bestower of desires), O Kāmaghna (destroyer of desires), Duṣṭaduritanivāraṇa (destroyer of the wicked and the violators of good conduct), O Sarvagarhita (despised by everyone). O Sarvaghna (destroyer of everyone). O Sadyojāta, Obeisance to you. Unmādana (one who causes madness. Śatāvartagaṅgā-toyārdramūrdhaja (one whose hair on the head is wet due to the waters of Gaṅgā that has hundreds of whirlpools). O Candrārdhasaṁyugāvarta (one who has war-like eddies by means of crescent moon?). O Meghāvarta (having eddies with clouds) Obeisance to you. You alone are Nānārthadānakartā (the bestower of different sorts of riches) and Arthada (bestower of riches), Annasraṣṭā (creator of cooked rice), Bhoktā (eater of cooked rice), Yajñabhuk (partaker of sacrifice), Anala (fire), the four types of creatures Jarāyuja etc. You alone, O lord of the chief of Devas, are the four types of creatures. You are the creator of the mobile and immobile beings. You are Prati-

kartā (one who withdraws i.e. annihilates). O lord of the universe, you alone are the Brahman. They speak of Brahman in the waters, you are the great womb of everything. You are Svadhā. You are the storehouse of luminaries. Expounders of Brahman call you *Rk*, *Sāman* and Omkāra. The excellent Devas and the expounders of Brahman who sing Sāman say frequently—"Hari Hari etc." or "Hara Hara etc." You are full of *Tujur* Mantras, *RK* Mantras, *Sāman* and *Atharva* Mantras. You are served by those who know Brahman, and Kalpas and Upaniṣads. The Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras and other castes and stages of life are identical with you. You are Āśramas. You are Vidyut Stanitam (lightning and thunder). You are the year, seasons, month, fortnight, and Kalā, Kāṣṭhā, Nimeśas, stars and Yugas. You are Vṛṣaṇam Kakudam (the chief of bulls). You are the peak of mountains. You are the lion, the chief among animals. You are Takṣaka among Nāgas, You are milk ocean among seas. You are Yajus among Mantras. You are thunderbolt among weapons. You are truth among holy rites. You are the following attributes viz. wish, hatred, lust, delusion, calmness, forbearance, industry, courage, greed, love, anger, victory and defeat. You are the wielder of arrow, bow, iron club (*Khaṭvāṅga*), banner and chariot. You cut, pierce, strike and lead. You are considered a thinker by us. You are the Dharma with its ten characteristics; you are Artha (Wealth) and Kāma (love). You are Indra, Samudra (ocean) Sarits (rivers) Palvalas (Puddles) Sarasi (lakes) Latāvallis (creepers and winding plants) Trṇauṣadhyayah (grasses and medicinal herbs), Puṣus, (animal) and birds. You are the origin of Dravyas (objects), Karmans (actions) and Guṇas (attributes). You are Kālapuṣpaphalapradā (bestower of fruits into the flower of time). You are Ādi (origin) Anta (end) Madhya (middle). You are Gāyatrī and Omkāra. You are Harita (green) Lohita (red) Kṛṣṇa (black) Nila (blue) Pīta (yellow) Aruṇa (pink) Kadrū (tawny) Kapila (palebrown) Babhrū (deep-brown), Kapota (dove-coloured), Mecaka (dark-coloured). You are well known as Suvarṇaretas (one having golden semen). You are considered Suvarṇa (gold in colour), Suvarṇanāman (golden named) Suvarṇapriya (fond of gold). You are Indu (moon), Yama, Varuṇa, Dhanada (bestower of

wealth i.e. Kubera), Anala (fire), Utphulla-Citrabhānu (full-fledged sun), Svarbhānu(Rāhu), Bhānu(sun), Hotra(sacrifice), Hotā (sacrificer), Homya (paraphernalia of oblation), Hutam (oblation). O lord, you are the Trisauparṇa mantra and the Śatarudriya Mantra of Yajurveda. You are the most sacred of all sacred things. You are the most auspicious of all auspicious things. You are the mountain that destroys sins. You are Vṛkṣa (a tree), Jīva (individual soul), Pralaya (Dissolution). You are Prāṇa (vital airs) and Rajoguṇa, Tamoguṇa, and Sattva. You are Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udāna and Vyāna. You are Unmeṣa (Opening of the eye), Nimeṣa (closing of the eye), Kāla (time), Kalpa, Lohitāṅga (Red-limbed), Daṁṣṭrin (having curved fangs), Mahāvaktra (having huge mouth), Mahodara (having large belly), Śuciroman (having pure hair), Haricchmaśru (having green moustache and beard), Urddhvakeśa (having hair standing up), Calācala (moving and unmoving), Gītavāditranṭyaga (Interested in singing, playing on instruments and dancing), Gītavādanakapriya (Fond of singing and playing on instruments). You are Matsya (fish) Jāla (net) Jala (water), Ajayya (Unconquerable), Jalavyāla (water-python) Kuṭicarya (Porpoise), Vikala (having adverse time), Sukala (having good time), Duṣkala (having bad time) Kālanāśana (Destroyer of Kāla Time or god of Death). Mṛtyu (Death), Akṣaya (Everlasting), Anta (end), Kṣamāmāyākarotkara (? One who offers and carries out forbearance and deception).

64-73. Saṁvarta (Dissolution), Vartaka (one who causes whirling), Saṁvartaka and Balāhaka (the clouds at the time of dissolution), Ghaṇṭākin and Ghaṇṭakin and ghaṇṭin (having bells of different types), Cuḍāla (having tufts), Lavaṇyodadhi (the briny sea), Brahmā, Kālāgnivaktra (having black fire in the mouth), Daṇḍin(having staff), Muṇḍa(having shaven head, Tridāṇḍadhṛk (one holding three staffs), Cāturyuga (of four Yugas), Caturveda of four Vedas), Caturhotra (set of four sacrifices), Catuṣpatha (set of four paths), Caturāśramyanetā (leader of the people of four stages of life) Cāturvarṇyakara (cause of division of four castes) Kṣarāksara (perishable and imperishable) Priya (Beloved), Dhūrta (wicked) Gaṇaikaganja (worthy of being considered by the Gaṇas), Gaṇādhipa (the overlord of

Gaṇas) Raktamālyāmbaradhara (one who wears red garments and garlands), Giriśa (Lord of the mountain) Girijāpriya (Fond of the daughter of the mountain lord), Śilpiśa (chief of Artisans) Śilpiśreṣṭha (the most excellent among artisans) Sarvaśilpapravartaka (He who makes arts and crafts function), Bhaganetrāntaka (the destroyer of the eyes of Bhaga), Caṇḍa (fierce), Pūṣṇah Dantavināśanaḥ (he who destroys the teeth of Pūṣan), Svāhā Svadhā Vaṣṭikāra Namaskāra (Obeisance). Obeisance be to you) Gūḍhavrata (one who performs holy rites in isolation), Gūḍha (well-hidden), Gūḍhavrataniṣevitā (one resorted to by those who perform holy rites in secret), Tīrṇa (One who crosses), Taraṇa (one who redeems), Sarvānu-syūtacāraṇa (one who has his cāraṇas (spies) spread in every place), Dhātā (creator), Vidhātā (dispenser of destiny) Sandhātā (one who joins together), Nidhātā (one who deposits), Dharaṇidhara (sustainer of the earth), Tapas (penance), Brahman (the supreme Being), Satyam (truth), Brahmacaryam (the soul of living beings), Bhūtakṛt (the creator of living beings), Bhūta (one who has become Bhūta), Bhavya Bhavodbhava (the source of origin of every thing past, present and future), Bhūrbhuvaḥ svar (one who has gone to the worlds Bhuḥ, Bhuvaḥ and Svaḥ), Vṛta (Surrounded), Agni (fire), Maheśvara (great lord), Rekṣaṇa (having fiery vision) Dvīksaṇakānta (lover of one with two eyes), Dānta (one who has self control) Adāntavināśana (Destroyer of those who have not conquered their sense organs) Brahmāvarta (one who has turned out from Brahma?) Surāvarta (one who makes Devas revolve), Kāmāvarta (one who makes Kāma revolve), obeisance to you. Kāmabimbavirhantā (one who destroys the idol of Kāma) Karṇikārasrajapriya (one fond of the garland of Karṇikāra flowers) Gonetā (leader of cow), Gopracara (one who makes rays spread, or one who makes cows graze), Goviṣeśvaravāhana (one who has, as vehicle, a cow and a leading bull), Trailo-kyagoptā (the protector of three worlds), Govinda, Goptā (Protector), Gogarga.

74-80. Akhaṇḍacandrābhimukha (one who is face to face with the full moon), Sumukha (having good face) Dur-mukha (having bad face) Amukha (having no face) Catur-mukha (four-faced) Bahumukha (many-faced) Raṇeśvabhi-

mukhaḥ sadā (Always face to face in battles), Hiranyaagarbha, Śakuni, Dhanada (bestower of wealth), Annapati (Lord of cooked rice), Virāt (Immense being), Adharmahā (Destroyer of evil), Mahādakṣa (very efficient), Daṇḍadhārī (Holder of staff) Raṇapriya (fond of war), Tiṣṭhan (standing), Sthira (Steady), Sthānu (Stump), Niskampa (unmoving), Suniścala (very still), Durvāraṇa (one who cannot be checked) Durviṣaha (who cannot be borne), Durdarpa (having wisked arrogance), Duratikrama (one who cannot be made submissive), Nitya (Permanent), Durdama (one who cannot be suppressed), Vijaya (Victory), Jaya (conquerer) Saśa (hare), Śasāṅkanayana (having the moon as an eye), Śitoṣṇa (Bearing heat and chillness), Kṣut (Hunger), Trṣā (thirst) Jarā (Old age), Ādhis (agonies), Vyādhis (ailments), Vyādhihihā (destroyer of ailments) Vyādhipa (the lord of sickness) Sahya (Bearable) Yajñamṛgavyādha, (Hunter of Yajñā in the form of a deer), Vyādhinām Ākara (mine of ailments), Akara (handless) Śikhaṇḍi (tufted), Puṇḍarīka (lotus), Puṇḍarīkāvalokana (one who looks at lotuses), Daṇḍadhṛk (holding staff), Cakradanḍa (holding wheel and staff), Raudrabhāgavinaśana (Destroyer of terrible share), Viṣapā (one who drinks poison), Amṛtapā (drinker of nectar), Surāpā (drinker of wine), Kṣīrasomapā (drinker of milk and some juice), Madhupā (drinker of honey) Apapā (drinker of water, Sarvapā (drinker of everything), Balābala (strong and weak).

81-90. Vṛṣāṅgavāhya (one who is to be carried over the body of the bull), Vṛṣabha (Bull-leading deity), Vṛṣabhalocana (bull-eyed). You are well known as the leader of all worlds, Lokasamīkṛta (consecrated in the world). The moon and the sun constitute your eyes, Brahmā is your heart, Agniṣṭoma sacrifice is your body and it is embellished by virtuous holy rite.

O Śiva, neither Brahmā nor Viṣṇu nor the ancient sages are competent to know your greatness precisely like a father protecting his son.

O Śiva, always protect one with the help of your physical subtle forms. Let them come into my vow.

O sinless one, protect me. I am worthy of being protected by you. Obeisance be to you. You are sympathetic to the devotees and I am always your devotee.

May he be my continuous protector, he who stands alone on the shore of the sea after encompassing the miserable state of many thousands of men.

Those who have conquered sleep, those who have mastered their breath, those who abide by the Sattva Guṇa, and those who have similarity of vision and those who perform Yoga, see that brilliance. Obeisance to that Yogic Ātman.

When the close of Yugas is imminent he devours all living beings and he lies down in the middle of waters. I resort to him who lies down in the waters.

It is the fire of the Soma juice that enters the mouth of Rāhu and drinks the nectar of the moon at night. As Rāhu, it devours the sun.

Puruṣas (souls of individuals) of the size of thumbs are stationed in the bodies of embodied persons. Let them protect me always. Let them always nourish me.

91. Devas are procreated by Svāhās and Svadhās. To those who attain death Svāhās and Svadhās are offered. Svāhā, Svadhā and Ahar eulogise you.

92-96. Where the embodied persons ascend to and where the living beings descend from, those who delight but do not drag one—obeisance be to them, obeisance to them. Obeisance to those who are in the ocean, to those who are on mountains, to those who are in the impassable rivers, to those who are in caves, at the roots of trees, in cowpens, in dense forests, in the four cross-roads, in streets, in jungles, in assemblies, in chambers of elephants, horses and chariots, in old and dilapidated parks and temples. Obeisance to those who are in five elements, in quarters and intermediary junctions, to those who are in between Indra and the sun, to those who are in the rays of the moon and the Sun, to those who are present in the nether worlds and who have gone beyond that (I make obeisance always).

97. You are identical with all. You are the omnipresent lord, the lord of all living beings, and the immanent soul in all living beings. Hence you have not been invited.

98. O lord, you alone are worshipped in sacrifices with various sorts of gifts. You alone are the doer of everything. Hence you have not been invited.

99. Or O lord, I have been deluded by your subtle Māyā.
For that reason too, you have not been invited by me.

100. O lord of Devas, be pleased with me. You alone are my refuge. You are the goal and the foundation. It is my opinion that no one else is so.

Brahmā said :

101. After eulogising the great lord thus the highly intelligent Dakṣa stopped. The delighted lord spoke to Dakṣa once again.

The lord said :

102. O Dakṣa of good holy rites, I am delighted with this hymn of yours. Of what avail is much talk ? You will come to my presence.

103. After uttering the words of consolation the omniscient lord of the three worlds spoke the following words succinctly put in good sentences.

Lord Siva said :

104. O Dakṣa, you should not feel sad by this destruction of sacrifice. O sinless one, I am the destroyer of sacrifice and this has been seen by you formerly.

105. O one of Good holy rites, accept this boon from me. Wear a happy and pleasant face and listen to me attentively.

106. O Patriarch, by virtue of my favour, you will derive the fruit of a thousand horse and a hundred Vājapeya sacrifices.

107-110. The holy rite of Pāśupata has been prescribed by me. The Vedas and their six anciliaries are to be understood along with the schools of philosophy—Sāṃkhya, Yoga etc. A penance too difficult to be performed even by Devas and Dānavas should also be undertaken. Thus during the course of twelve years this holy rite has been prepared. It is subtle and no intelligent man shall censure it. In some respects it may conform to the disciplined life of four castes and four stages; in some respects it may not. But its aim is the liberation of individual soul from bondage. This holy rite of Pāśupata has been prescribed by me, O Dakṣa, for people of all stages of life. It releases one from all sins. If this holy rite is performed

well, the benefit is splendid. O highly blessed one. may it befall you. May this mental ailment be eschewed.

Brahma said :

111. After saying this to Dakṣa of unmeasured splendour the lord of Devas vanished along with his wife and attendants.

112. O sages who are conversant with holy rites, after acquiring his share as mentioned before, the lord classified (ailments, fever etc.) into various divisions, in the company of Umā.

113. It is for peace among all living beings that he classified thus. O brahmins, listen. For Nāgas (elephants) it is the scorching of the tuft; for the mountains it is bitumen.

114. It is Nīlikā (for water). For the serpents it is slough (limping). For the cow it is Khoraka (limping), For Earth it is the barren soil.

115. O sages conversant with virtue ! for dogs it is the obstruction of the vision; for horses it is the entanglement with the cavity. For peacocks it is the splitting of their tuft-like flower on the head.

116. Redness in the eye is the fever of cuckoo. Split is the fever among noble persons.

117. Hikkikā (coughing) is the fever of parrots. O brahmins, among lions fatigue is the fever.

118. O sages conversant with virtue, such are the fevers among living beings. It occurs at the time of birth, death and in the intervening period.

119. What is called fever is the refulgence of the great lord. It is very terrible. The supreme lord should be bowed to and honoured by all living beings.

120. He who reads this narrative about the origin of fever with great attention without any wretchedness of mind shall be liberated from ailments. He will be gay and joyous. He will get the benefit of his wishes.

121. He who repeats the hymn of Dakṣa or he who listens to it will never have any thing inauspicious. He will obtain a long life.

122. Just as Lord Śiva is the most excellent among Devas so also this hymn of Dakṣa is the most excellent among all hymns.

123. With great devotion this hymn should be repeated

assiduously by those who seek fame, heavenly pleasures, divine riches, glory, victory, knowledge and other things of a similar nature.

124. He who is sick, he who is miserable, he who is in a wretched state, or employed in a dangerous task by the ruler—all these are liberated from danger and fear.

125. From the supreme lord he derives happiness and with this body itself he becomes the lord of Gaṇas.

126. In the house where the lord is eulogised, neither Yakṣas nor Piśācas nor Nāgas nor Vināyakas will create any obstacle.

127. A women who listens to this with devotion and is sanctified by the lord shall be honoured in her parental abode as well as in the abode of her husband.

128. The holy rites of that person who listens to this or narrates this frequently, shall fructify without any hindrance.

129. By repeating this hymn, whatever one desires mentally or utters orally shall be realized.

130-131. The devotee shall maintain holy observances with the complete control of his sense-organs. According to his capacity he shall offer oblations to the lord, to his consort Pārvatī and their son Kārttikeya and Nandiśvara. Thereafter, he shall repeat the manes in due order. The man will attain his desired objects. He shall enjoy his cherished pleasures.

132-137. After death he will go to heaven where he will be surrounded by thousands of beautiful women.

If a person is endowed with all desires or defiled by all sins, if he reads this hymn of Dakṣa he will be liberated from sins. On death he will attain identity with the Gaṇas. He will be honoured by Devas and Asuras. He enjoys a trip in an aerial chariot yoked to a bull. He will be a follower of Rudra and stay in the region of Śiva till the dissolution of the universe. This has been mentioned by lord Vyāsa the son of Parāśara. No one knows this nor should it be narrated to any one or every one. By listening to this secret, those who are of sinful origin viz. Vaiśyas, Śūdras and women will attain the world of Rudra.

There is no doubt that the brahmin who narrates this on Parvan days attains the world of Rudra.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

The holy Centre of Ekāmra

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

1-5. Thus, the excellent sages heard the meritorious story about the fury of Rudra that destroys sins, as Vyāsa recounted it, O brahmins. They heard about the fury and indignation of Pārvatī, the anger of Śiva, the origin of Virabhadra and the nativity of Bhadrakālī.

They then heard about the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice and the wonderful valour of Śiva. They also heard about the propitiation of the lord by Dakṣa the great soul, the allotment of share to Rudra, the benediction of Dakṣa that confers the fruit of all sacrifices. Those brahmins became surprised and pleased in turns. They asked Vyāsa for the rest of the story. Thus asked by them Vyāsa described the holy centre of Ekāmra

Vyāsa said :

6. On hearing the story mentioned by Brahmā, the leading sages were delighted. Their hairs stood on ends. They praised the lord.

The sages said :

7-8. Wonderful indeed is the glory of the lord, eulogized by you. O most excellent one among Devas, the destruction of the sacrifice of Dakṣa (is also wonderful). Now it behoves you to recount Ekāmra, the most excellent of holy centres. O Brahmā, we wish to hear about it. Our eagerness is beyond measure."

Vyāsa said :

9. On hearing their words, the fourfaced lord of worlds recounted that holy centre of lord Śiva which yields worldly pleasures and salvation on this very earth itself.

1. *Ekāmra*—A holy centre in the land of Utkala distinct from one in South India.

Brahma said :

10-11. Listen, O leading sages, I shall succinctly mention. There is a great holy centre known as Ekāmra. It dispels all sins. It is extremely inaccessible to ordinary persons. It is as auspicious and splendid as Vārāṇasi. It has a crore of Liṅgas and eight holy water spots in it.

12. O excellent brahmins, in the previous Kalpa, there was a single Mango tree there by which name, the holy centre came to be known as Ekāmra.

13. It was full of delighted and well-nourished people, both men and women. Most of the people there belonged to the learned group. It abounded in riches and foodgrains and similar things.

14. There were many houses full of cattle. It was well decorated with towers and minarets. There were many traders and businessmen and variety of jewels beautified it.

15. The city was beautified by streets and embellished by palaces as white and pure as royal swans. There were many lofty mansions with upper apartments.

16. It contained massive doorways arranged in groups of three. A white outer wall enhanced its beauty. It was well guarded by weapons and beautified by moats and trenches.

17. It was adorned by various flags and emblems of variegated colours such as white, red, black, dark or yellow. They were wafted and waved to the winds.

18. The people were gay and joyous in perpetual festivities with various kinds of musical instruments such as the lute, flute and drums. The area was adorned with slings for hurling missiles.

19. There were many temples of gods embellished by outer walls and gardens. The ways of worship therein were wonderful and they enhanced the beauty of the holy centre.

20-27. The women were slender-waisted and joyous. Their necks were adorned by necklaces. They had large eyes like the petals of the lotus. Their breasts were plump and lifted up. These ladies were dark-complexioned with faces shining like the full moon. Their forelocks were steady. Their cheeks were fine. Their girdles and anklets sounded sweet. They had good tresses of hair; their buttocks were beautiful and their eyes were large extend-

ing as far as the ears. They were richly endowed with all characteristic signs and bedecked in all ornaments. They wore white and lustrous garments. Some were golden-coloured. Their bodies bent down due to the weight of their breasts. Their mode of walking was like that of the swans and elephants. They had smeared their limbs with divine scents and unguents. They felt sweet languor due to intoxication. They had ample and beautiful buttocks. They had ever-smiling faces. Their teeth appeared like lightning streaks. They had lips like the Bimba fruits. They had sweet voice. Betel leaves added colour to their mouths. They were artful, beautiful to look at. They were fortunate. They spoke pleasing words to everyone. They were proud of their perpetual youthful bloom. They wore divine garments. They were embellished by their chastity. They resembled the celestial ladies and they sported about in their respective houses. They remained gay and jolly by day and night.

28. The men too were richly endowed with their noble traits and bedecked in all ornaments. They appeared to be haughty by virtue of their youth and handsome features.

29. O excellent sages, they were brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. Those who lived there were very virtuous and engaged in their respective profession.

30-32. There were many bright-eyed courtesans comparable to Ghṛtāci, Menakā, Rambhā, Tilottamā, Urvaśī, Vipracitti, Viśvāci, Sahajanyā and Pramlocā. They had smiling faces and they spoke pleasing words. They were clever and skilled in arts and crafts. They were endowed with good qualities.

33. O excellent sages, the women were experts in dancing and singing. They were proud of their feminine virtues.

34. These beautiful women, pleasing to behold were experts in conversation and side-glancing at people. None of them was bereft of beauty, none harassed others, none could be called wicked or evil in their activities.

35-37. Men were fascinated the moment their side-glances fell on them.

Among the males there were no impoverished, foolish, inimical, sickly, dirty, miserly or deceptive persons. None of them lacked in handsome features. None wilfully harassed

others. None could be called evil or wicked in his activities. These men lived in that holy centre which was reputed allover the world. The holy centre could be traversed comfortably; it was very pleasing to the people who resided there.

38-50. The holy centre was thronged with different sorts of people. It was full of many kinds of plants and trees such as Karṇikāras, Panasas, Campakas, Nāgakesaras, Pāṭalas, Aśokas, Bakulas, Kapitthas, Dhavas, Cūtas, Nimbas, Kadambas and other trees in full bloom; it was bedecked in Nipaka, Dhava and Khadira trees with creepers growing over them. There were other trees such as Śāla, Tāla, Tamāla, Nārikela (cocoanut), Śubhāñjanas, Arjunas, Saptaparṇas, Kovidāras, Pippalas, Lakucas, Saralas, Lodhras, Hintālas, Devadārus, Palāśas, Mucukundas, Pārijātas, Kubjakas, plantains, Jambus, areca palms, Ketaki, Karavīras, Atimuktas, Kimśukas Mandāra, Kundas and other flowering plants. The gardens were comparable to the Nandana garden by the chirping of different birds, the trees laden with fruits that made them bend down and other living beings such as Cakoras, Satapatras, royal bees, cuckoos, partridges peacocks, crows and parrots. There were many other birds such as Jivafījīvakas, Hārītas, and Cātakas. They encompassed the forests. There were other birds chirping very sweetly. The holy centre abounded in long tariff lakes, ponds, sacred water spots adorned with clusters of lotus plants. The lakes looked beautiful with clear water. There were lilies, white lotuses, blue lotuses, Kadamba birds, ruddy geese, water hen, Kāraṇḍava birds, swans and other aquatic animals. The spot was made highly beautiful with different kinds of trees, excellent flowers and water spots. It appeared splendid all round. There the lord with the full-emblem and elephant hide garment was present directly.

51-58. Śiva who yields worldly pleasures and salvation to the people sat among Devas and Sages who brought water severally from the sacred rivers, holy water spots, lakes, lotus-ponds, tanks, wells and oceans on the earth. For the welfare of the people Śiva evolved the holy lake Bindusaras in that holy centre, O excellent brahmins. It was on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Mārgasīrṣa, O excellent brahmins, that the lake was created by the lord.

The devotee who undertakes a pilgrimage to that place on the day of equinoctical transits shall duly take his bath in the Bindusaras in faith. He shall perform Tarpaṇa rites unto Devas, sages, human beings and Manes assiduously. Repeating their names and Gotras he shall perform the libation of water with gingelly seed. By taking ablution duly in that holy water he shall attain the benefit of horse sacrifice. Those who offer charitable gifts to the brahmins on the following occasion derive hundred times the benefit which they may receive from other holy centres.

59-63. There is no doubt that the devotees will accord an everlasting satisfaction to the Pitṛs if they offer balls of rice to them on the bank of this lake.

He shall then go to the abode of lord Śiva observing restraint in speech and control on sense-organs. After entering the shrine he shall circumambulate thrice. Pure (in his mind and body) he shall bathe Śiva with ghee, milk etc. He shall apply sandal paste and sweet scent. He shall worship the moon-crested lord, the consort of Umā with different kinds of flowers worthy of being used in holy rites such as Bilva, Arka, lotus, etc. He shall eulogise the deity with the Mantras mentioned in the Vedas or Āgamas.

64-73. A man who has not undergone the formal initiation shall worship by pronouncing the name and the basic Mantra. After worshipping the lord with scents, fragrant flowers, garments etc, with incense, lights, food offering and presents, by means of eulogies, prostrations on the ground, by sign songs, accompanied by musical instruments, by dances, repeated obeisances, shouts of victory, and circumambulations, the devotee becomes liberated from all sins. By worshipping the lord, the consort of Umā, the lord of Devas, the devotee gets rid of sins. They are endowed with handsome features and youthfulness. He can redeem twentyone generations of his family in this way. He is bedecked in divine ornaments. He will be born as a performer of sacrifices, a liberal donor of charitable gifts and an overlord of the earth.

After taking bath in the waters of Bindusaras, the devotee shall visit the following shrines—Muktiśvara, Siddheśa Suvarṇajāleśvara, Parameśvara and the subtle lord Āmratikeśvara. He

shall duly worship them. He will be going to the world of Śiva on the golden aerial chariot with clusters of tinkling bells. Gandharvas and Apsaras will be singing in his praise and embellish him. He will brighten up quarters. O brahmins, along with the people who habitually reside in that world, he will enjoy all pleasures there pleasing to the mind, until the dissolution of all living beings. When the merits decrease he will return to the earth. O excellent brahmins, he will be reborn in the abodes of Yogins. He will become the master of the Vedas. After attaining the Pāśupata Yoga he will attain salvation.

74-75. Those who visit the temple of lord Śiva on the following days go to the world of Śiva on the aerial chariot having solar lustre. The holy occasions are—the day of Sayana (lying down), the day of Utthāpana (rising up), the monthly transit from one sign of zodiac to another, on the days of tropical transits, on the Aśokasaptami and on the day of Pavitrāropaṇa.

76. The intelligent people who visit the lord at any time, are liberated from their sins. They go to the world of lord Śiva.

77. The holy centre extending to two and a half Yojanas to the West, East, North and South of the lord is an area that yields worldly pleasures and salvation.

78-83. In that excellent holy centre there is a Linga named Bhāskareśvara. It had been worshipped by the Sun-god previously. The devotees shall take bath in the holy ditch and then worship the three-eyed lord of Devas. They will be liberated from all sins. Seated in an excellent aerial chariot they will go to the world of lord Śiva. The Gandharvas will sing in their praise. O excellent brahmins, full of joy they remain there for the period of a Kalpa. After enjoying extensive pleasures in the world of lord Śiva, when their merits dwindle, they come down to the Earth and are born in an excellent family. Or they are born in the abodes of Yogins. They will be masters of Vedas and Vedāṅgas. They will be born as excellent brahmins engaged in the welfare of living beings. They will become experts in the science of Salvation and will have equal consideration for all. After attaining the excellent Yoga of Śiva they derive salvation.

84-87. O brahmins, the devotee shall worship any Liṅga he sees in that holy centre. Wherever that Liṅga is seen whether it is worthy of worship or not, whether it is obtained from forest or in the street, in the cremation ground or in the main cross-roads the devotee shall bathe that Liṅga with devotion and faith. He must assure himself that the Liṅga has no cracks. He shall then worship the Liṅga with scents fragrant and charming flowers, incense, height, food-offerings, obeisances, eulogies, prostrations, dances, songs etc. By worshipping thus in accordance with the injunctions he shall go to the world of Śiva.

88. Even a woman, O leading brahmins, attains the benefit if she worships in due faith. No doubt need be entertained in this respect.

89. Excepting lord Śiva, O excellent sages, who can recount the good qualities of that excellent holy centre ?

90-92. Whether a person possesses faith or not whether it is a male or a female person, the pilgrim shall go there on any day in any month. O brahmins, after taking bath in the waters of Bindusaras, he or she shall visit the temple of three-eyed lord Śiva and the goddess Umā the bestower of boons, as well as Caṇḍa, the Gaṇa, Kārttikeya, Gaṇeśa, the bull, the Kalpa tree and Sāvitri. He goes to the world of lord Śiva immediately.

93-95. By taking bath in the Kapila Tīrtha that is destructive of sins, one obtains all cherished desires and goes to the world of lord Śiva. He who performs pilgrimage in accordance with the injunctions after controlling the sense-organs, shall uplift twentyone generations and then attain the world of lord Śiva.

He who takes his holy dip in Ekāmra, the holy centre of lord Śiva, that is as splendid as Vārāṇasī, will certainly attain liberation.

CHAPTER FORTY

The holy centre Utkala

Brahma said :

1. Mother Virajā, my mistress, is firmly established in Virajā. By visiting her a man protects his family upto the seventh generation.

2. By visiting that goddess even for once and by worshipp-
ing and bowing to her with devotion a man redeems his family
and goes to my world.

3. The other mothers of the world who stand in Virajā are
goddesses who dispel sins and bestow boons. They are favour-
ably disposed to the devotees.

4. There is the river Vaitaraṇī there. It dispels all sins.
By taking holy dip there, the excellent man is liberated from
all sins.

5. The self-born lord Viṣṇu stays there in the form of a
Boar. By visiting him and bowing to him with devotion, man
goes to Viṣṇu's abode.

6-8. There are eight holy sites in the holy centre of Virajā
viz—Kapila, Gograha, Somatīrtha, Alābutīrtha, Mṛtyuñjaya,
Krodatīrtha, Vāsuka and Siddhakeśvara. The intelligent pilgrim
shall visit all these holy sites and take a holy dip therein in the
Virajā with all his sense-organs controlled. By bowing down to
the lords he shall be liberated from all sins. Seated in an
excellent aerial chariot he goes to my world. The Gandharvas
sing in his praise and honour him.

9. He who offers balls of rice in Virajā, my holy centre,
shall undoubtedly accord ever-lasting satisfaction to the manes.

10. O excellent sages, men who cast off their body in
Virajā my holy centre, do attain salvation.

11. He who takes a holy dip in the ocean and visits Kapila,
Viṣṇu and Varahī, goes straight to heaven.

12. O excellent sages, there are many holy sites and shrines.
They should be known as equal to that (Virajā).

13. O excellent brahmins, there is a secret and great holy
centre which bestows salvation and destroys sins, in the land
on the northern shore of the sea.

14. It is covered with sands. It is sacred. It bestows all desires. It extends to ten Yojanas. This is one of the rarest of holy centres.

15-21. That holy centre contains many trees such as Aśoka, Arjuna, Punnāga, Bakula, Sarala, jack tree, coconut tree, Śālas, palmyra, the wood apple, Campaka, Karṇikāra, mango, Bilva, Pāṭala, Kadamba, Kovidāra, Lakuca, Nāgakesara, Śami, Āmalaka (Embylic myrobalan), Lodhra, Citron, Dhava, Khadira, Sarja, Bhūrja, Aśvakarṇa, Tamāla, Devadāru, Mandāra, Pārijāta, Nyagrodha, Aguru, Sandal, Kharjūra, Āmrātaka, Siddha, Mucukunda, Kimśuka, Aśvattha, Saptaparna, Madhudhara, Šubhāñjana, Šimśapa, Nīpa, Nimba (Margose), Tindu, and Vibhitakas. These trees were laden with fruits and fragrant flowers of all seasons. They were delightful to the mind. They were splendid. Many types of birds made the atmosphere resound. The sounds produced by the birds were pleasing to the ears. They were very sweet and excited love pangs powerfully. They afforded great pleasure to the mind.

22-23. The place was full of various birds such as Cakoras, Šatapatras (woodpeckers), Bhṛṅgarājas, (bees), parrots, cuckoos, partridges, Hāritas, Jivajīvakas, Cātakas, and other birds of sweet voice. They were chirping and their sounds were pleasing to the ears. They delighted everyone and they were beautifully perched (on the branches).

24-31. There were clusters of Ketaki plants, Atimuktas, Kubjakas, Mālatis, Kundas, Banas, Karavīras of black varieties, Jambīras, Aruṇas, Kaṇkolas, Dāḍimas, Bijapūrakas, Mātuluṅgas, Areca palms, Hintālas, groves of plantain trees and many types of flowering trees pleasing to the mind. There were creepers, and bushes spreading like canopies. There were different kinds of water reservoirs such as oblong ponds, lakes lotus ponds, and tanks. The different water reservoirs were holy and decorated with lotus-clusters. The lakes were beautiful with clear water lilies, white lotuses, splendid blue lotuses, Kalhāra flowers, and similar flowers abounded in those lakes all round. There were Kadambaka birds; Cakravākas and water fowls. There were floating Kāraṇḍava birds, swans, tortoises, fish, Madgus, Dātyūhas, Sārasas, Koyaṣṭis and cranes and these enhanced the beauty of the place. There were other birds living

in water, flying in the air or walking over the land. There were aquatic flowers; thus the whole holy centre looked very beautiful with different sorts of trees and flowers both on land and in water. There were aquatic and other types of elephants beautifying the place.

32-35. The place was adorned by religious students, householders, forest dwellers and recluses. They were engaged in their virtuous duties. There were other people as well adorning it. The place was filled with delighted and well nourished people. It was thronged by men and women. The place was the abode of all lores. It was a mine of all holy rites and virtues. Thus, the holy centre, endowed with all good qualities, was the rarest of all holy centres.

O excellent sages, the famous lord Viṣṇu abides there. As far as the boundary of the land of Utkala extends, the place is very holy due to lord Kṛṣṇa's favour.

36-43. Everything is well established in the place where the supreme lord who pervades the universe is present. He is the lord of the universe and the soul of all. O excellent sages, we always stay in that land. Rudra, Indra, Devas led by Agni and I too stay there. So also the following too stay there : Gandharvas, Apsaras, Pitṛs, Devas, human beings Yaksas Vidyādharaś, Siddhas, sages of praiseworthy holy rites, Vālakhilyas and other sages, the Patriarchs—Kaśyapa and others, Suparnas, Kinnaras, Serpents and other celestial beings; the four Vedas with their ancillaries, the different sorts, sacred treatises, the Itihāsas and Purāṇas, the sacrifices with excellent monetary gifts and the different sorts of holy rivers. Tirthas and shrines, oceans and mountains too were established in that land. Who will not like to stay in such a place which is the holiest of the holy, which is frequented by Devas sages and Pitṛs and which is blessed with all means of pleasures.

Which land can surpass it in excellence ?

44-49. It is the place where lord Puruṣottama stays as the bestower of salvation.

Blessed indeed are those men who live in Utkala like Devas. They take their bath in the waters of the most excellent of holy

centres and see Puruṣottama. They are actually the dwellers of heaven. They never go to the abode of Yama.

Fruitful indeed is the life of the people who stay in Utkala which is the holy centre of Puruṣottama. The residents of Utkala are highly intellectual because they see the lord in all these attributes. He is the most excellent of Devas, his eyes are large and pleasant; his brows, tresses and the crest are beautiful; he has a beautiful piece of ornament embellishing his ears, his smile is beautiful, his teeth are exquisitely fine, his ear rings adorn him beautifully; his nose and cheeks and forehead are very beautiful and possess good traits. The lotus-like face of lord Kṛṣṇa is the cause of delight to all.

CONTENTS

PART II

CHAPTERS

41. The Narrative of Indradyumna; Description of Avanti	241
42. The Holy Centres Sighted	248
43. A Review of Past Incidents	254
44. Description of Holy Centres	261
45. Horse-sacrifice	264
46. Prayer for Welfare	272
47. Origin of Idols	280
48. Description of Puruṣottama	285
49. A visit to the Holy Banyan Tree by Mārkaṇḍeya	291
50. Mārkaṇḍeya views Annihilation	292
51. Mārkaṇḍeya wanders in the belly of the Lord	296
52. Prayer to the Lord	297
53. Mārkaṇḍeya's vision of the holy lord	301
54. Visit to Kṛṣṇa shrine	308
55. Greatness of Narasimha	314
56. Greatness of Śveta Mādhava	320
57. Mode of Procedure for a Holy Dip in the Ocean	328
58. Rules of worship and Mantras	334
59. Merit of a holy dip in the Ocean	339
60. Glory of five holy spots—Pāñcatirthī	341
61. <u>Mahājyeṣṭhī</u> Full-Moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha	343

Contents

62.	Holy ablution in propitiation of Kṛṣṇa	345
63.	Glory of holy procession : Guṇḍikā yātrā	354
64.	The twelve holy pilgrimages and their benefits	356
65.	The world of Viṣṇu	362
66.	Glory of lord Puruṣottama	368
67.	Glory of Ananta Vāsudeva	371
68.	Glory of holy shrine of Puruṣottama	377
69.	Narrative of sage Kaṇḍu	380
70.	Doubts raised by sages	397
71.	Lord's incarnation in the family of Yadus	404
72.	Incarnations of Hari	407
73.	Nativity of Śrīkṛṣṇa	411
74.	Kaṁsa takes steps to ward off danger	415
75.	Pūtanā slain and Cart smashed	416
76.	Cowherd's colony shifted to Vṛndāvana	418
77.	Suppression of Kāliya	421
78.	Dhenuka and Pralamba are slain	425
79.	Worship of Govardhana mountain	429
80.	Coronation of Lord Kṛṣṇa	432
81.	Ariṣṭa is slain	437
82.	Keśin is slain	442
83.	Akrūra comes to the cowherd's colony	446
84.	Return of Akrūra	450
85.	Kaṁsa is slain	457
86.	The son of Sandipani restored	464
87.	The onslaught of Jarāsandha	467
88.	Mucukunda's Prayer	468
89.	Balarāma returns to the cowherd's colony	472
90.	Balarāma's sport with Ploughshare	474
91.	Return of Pradyumna	476
92.	Rukmin is slain	479
93.	Naraka is killed	482
94.	The prayer by Indra	485

Contents

95.	Lord Kṛṣṇa marries sixteen thousand and one hundred virgins	491
96.	Progeny of Śrī Kṛṣṇa	493
97.	Uṣā and Aniruddha—their marriage	495
98.	The burning of Kāśī	500
99.	Glory of Balarāma	503
100.	The monkey Dvivida is slain	506
101.	Śrī Kṛṣṇa returns to his abode	508
102.	Lord Kṛṣṇa ascends heaven	513
103.	Episode of Kṛṣṇa concluded	514
104.	Different manifestations of the lord	522
105.	Path to the world of Yama	535

CHAPTER FORTYONE

The narrative of Indradyumna Description of Avanti

Brahmā said:

1. O brahmins, formerly, in the Kṛtayuga there was a glorious king who was known as Indradyumna. He was as valorous as Indra.
2. He was truthful in speech, pure in thought and efficient in work. He was most excellent among the wielders of weapons. He was handsome and fortunate. He was heroic and liberal in charitable gifts. He enjoyed pleasures and spoke pleasingly.
3. He performed many sacrifices. He was favourably disposed to the brahmins. He was truthful in utterance. He was an adept in the science of archery, Vedas and other scriptures. He was contented.
4. He was the lover of humanity and he looked splendid like the moon on the full moon-night. Like the sun he was dazzling to look at, he was terrible to the hosts of enemies.
5. He was a devotee of Viṣṇu. He was endowed with Sattva attribute. He conquered wrath and the sense-organs. He was interested in the spiritual lore. He was desirous of salvation. He was interested in virtue.
6. While that king, the repository of good qualities, ruled over the Earth he thought of propitiating Viṣṇu.
7. "How shall I propitiate Viṣṇu, the lord of Devas? In which holy centre or sacred spot or the river bank or hermitage shall it be?"
- 8-9. Pondering thus in his mind he thought of all holy centres on the earth. He saw them in dreamy vision. After seeing the holy centres, sacred spots and cities he mentally repaired to the holy centre Puruṣottama that bestows salvation on the devotees.

10. The king went there accompanied by his flourishing army and vehicles. He duly performed a horse sacrifice where much wealth was distributed as gift.

11-12. He got a lofty palace built there. He established the images of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Subhadrā therein. He constructed five holy spots there. He performed the rites of ablution, charitable gift, penance, sacrifice and the visit to the deity regularly. He devoutly propitiated the lord duly every day by the grace of the lord. In course of time he attained salvation.

13-14. O brahmins, by taking ablution in the ocean named (after) Indradyumna and visiting Mārkaṇḍeya, Vaṭa (banyan tree), Kṛṣṇa and Bala-Rāma one attains salvation certainly.

The sages said:

15-21. Formerly, why did that lord of the world, Indradyumna go to that great holy centre Puruṣottama that bestows salvation?

O most excellent one among Devas, after going there how did that excellent king duly perform horse-sacrifice and worship the lord? How did he manage to build an excellent mansion well known in three worlds in that rarest of holy centres that bestows all benefits?

How did that leading king create the idols of Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā endowed with all characteristic marks, O Patriarch Brahmā?

How did that king instal Kṛṣṇa and other deities who are worshipped by Devas, in that palace which was most excellent in the world?

O most excellent among Devas it behoves you to recount all this precisely and in detail, the whole narrative of that intelligent king.

We are not fully satiated by the nectar-like words of yours. We wish to hear more. Our curiosity has grown excessively.

Brahma said:

22-23. Well done, O excellent brahmins that you have asked me about the ancient story that is holy, destructive of sins, splendid and conducive to worldly pleasures and salvation. I shall mention the story as it had happened in the Kṛta Yuga. O

leading sages, listen with concentration and restraint over the sense-organs.

24. The city of Avanti¹ in Mālava, known as the most excellent one over the earth, was the capital of that monarch.

25. It was thronged by citizens who were delighted and well nourished. The rampart wall, and the arched gateway were firmly built. There were strong mechanical means of bolting the doors. The city was embellished by moats.

26. It was filled by different merchants with different articles for sale. The city was beautiful with streets and bazars. It was bedecked by triangular and quadrangular lawns.

27-31. It was full of rows of mansions with upper stories and apartments; the four cross-roads were well partitioned. Houses and towers abounded in that city which was adorned by hundreds and thousands of palaces which resembled royal swans with pure wonderful necks and which looked charming and gay. The whole city was in a joyous mood due to sacrifices and festivities; the sounds of songs and musical instruments spread everywhere. It was adorned with flags and ensigns of different colours. There were armies of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry men. The city was filled by soldiers of all kinds. It had various centres where crowds gathered together. O excellent sages, the city was rendered prosperous by the people who lived there such as the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas Vaiśyas and Śūdras. The city was embellished by great scholars who made it their permanent home. There were no dirty people there; neither fools nor weak men resided in it.

32-35. There were no sickly persons, no crippled or maimed persons. None indulged in the vice of gambling there. Men and women were always delighted and noble-minded.

The people sported about in day and night with great joy. Men were dressed well and splendidly. Their ear-rings were polished and cleaned. They were handsome and noble. They were bedecked in divine ornaments. They had all good traits and they resembled cupid in their gaiety.

1. *Avanti*—Ujjayini. In the wider sense the name signifies Mālava-deśa. The town is situated on the bank of Siprā. The renowned poets like Kālidāsa lived there. It is one of the seven cities capable of giving liberation (*mokṣa*).

Their hair were fine. Their cheeks were beautiful. Their faces were handsome and they wore moustaches. They were conversant with holy scriptures. They could pierce through the army of the enemy.

36. They were liberal donors of jewels and the enjoyers of riches. O excellent sages, charming women were seen in that splendid land.

37. Their mode of walking was like that of the swan or the elephant;¹ their eyes extended upto the ears; the waists were slender and the buttocks exquisite, their breasts were plump and elevated.

38. Their tresses were glossy and beautiful. Their cheeks were fine and their forelocks steady. Their teeth were like the clearly visible lightning streaks. Their faces were like the full moon. They bent their necks in exhibiting their emotions with gesticulation and charming twists; their ears were adorned with ornaments.

39. Their lips were red like Bimba fruits. They shone with their mouths coloured by chewing betal leaves. They were bedecked in golden ornaments.

40. Some were dark-complexioned, some were fair-complexioned; they had fine buttocks, their girdles and armlets produced charming sounds. They wore divine garlands and garments; they applied divine scents and unguents over their bodies.

41. The women were clever and competent. They were lovely with attractive faces and charming limbs. They were pleasing to look at. They were endowed with beauty and good colour and form. They had smiling faces.

42. Mad and intoxicated they sported about in assemblies and quadrangular court-yards. They delighted others by songs, instrumental music and spicy conversation.

43. The chiefs of harlots, experts in dancing and singing could also be found there. They were experts in the art of conversation, scanning and scrutiny. They were endued with feminine charms and fine qualities.

1. The mode of ladies' walking is often compared to that of a swan or an elephant. Elsewhere it is likened to the slow-moving autumnal clouds after they have shed water.

44. There were others too, the women of noble families endowed with noble traits, chaste, fortunate and embellished by all good qualities.

45-52. The city abounded in fruit-bearing trees and flowering plants, in charming parks, splendid groves and meritorious gardens. There were divine shrines and temples beautified by different sorts of flowers. The following were the important trees:— Śālas, Tālas, Tamālas, Bakulas, Nāgakesaras, Pippalas, Karṇikāras, sandal trees, Aguru, Campakas, Punnāgas, coconuts, jack fruit trees, Sarala trees, citron, Lakucas, Lodhras, Saptaparnas, Śubhāñjanas, mangoes, Bilvas, Kadambas, Śimśapas, Dhavas, Khādiras, Pāṭalas, Aśokas, Tagaras, black Kara-viras, yellow Arjunas, Bhallātas, Siddhas, Āmrātakas, Nyagrodhas, Aśvatthas, Kāśmaryas, Palāśas and Devadārus. There were Mandāras, Pārijātas, Tintidikas, Vibhītakas, old embylic myrobalam trees, Plakṣas, Jambū trees, Śiriṣa trees, Kāleyas, Kāñcanāra trees, Madhus, Jambiras, Tindukas, Kharjūras, Agastyas, Bakulas, Śākhoṭakas, Haritakas, Kaṅkolas, Mucukundas, Hintālas, Bijapūrakas, and other trees. There were Ketaki groves, Atimuktas and Kubjakas.

53-60. The gardens were adorned by Mallikās, Kundas, Bāñas, stems of plantain trees, Mātulungas, Pūgaphalas, Arece palms, Pink Sindhuvarakas, Bahuvāras, Kovidāras, Badaras, Karañjakas and many other charming trees in full bloom. There were creepers and bushes in the gardens comparable to their counterparts in the Nandana¹ garden. They were always full of fragrant flowers. They bent down due to the weight of fruits. The gardens were surrounded by many domestic and wild animals. The place was resonant with the diverse cries of birds. The chief birds were Cakoras, Śatapatras, Bhṛingāras, Priyaputrakas, Kalaviṅkas (Partridges) Peacocks, Parrots, Cuckoos, doves, Khafijarīṭas (Wagtails), herons, vultures and pigeons. There were many other sorts of charming birds that sang songs pleasing to the ears. There were rivers, lotus-ponds and lakes. There were other sacred water-reservoirs adorned by lilies as well as blue lotuses, white lotuses, fragrant Kalhāra flowers and other beautiful flowers growing in water. They had sweet divine fragrance. The plants put forth flowers and shone in all seasons.

1. *Nandana*: name of a celestial garden.

61-65. The lakes were rendered beautiful by swans, Kāraṇḍava ducks and ruddy geese. There were Sārasa birds, tortoises, fishes, crocodiles. There were web-footed swimming waterfowls. There were other birds flying in the sky and moving about in waters. The sky was sweetly resonant with the cries and songs of birds of variegated colours. The magnificent city was rendered beautiful by divine temples and shrines. There were many beautiful birds that swam in water or flew about over the land. In the different gardens there were many flowering trees. The three-eyed lord who slew the Tripuras is seated in that city.

66-70. The deity Śiva is known by the name Mahākāla. He bestows all cherished desires upon the devotee who should take holy dip in the sacred ditch Śivakuṇḍa which is destroyer of sins. The learned devotee should perform Tarpaṇa rites for Devas, Pitṛs and sages. He shall go to the shrine of Śiva and perform three circumambulations. Restraining his sense-organs and wearing washed and dried cloth he shall enter the sanctum sanctorum and worship the deity by offering flowers, sweet scents, incenses, lights, ablution, devoutly offered Naivedyas, musical instruments, songs, circumambulations, etc. He shall propitiate Śiva by obeisance, dances, and hymns of praise.

By worshipping Mahākāla, Śiva, even for once, but duly and devoutly, the man obtains the benefit of a thousand horse-sacrifices.

71. Rid of all his sins he will ride in an aerial chariot equipped with all desirable things and go to heaven where there is the abode of lord Śiva.

72. He will become glorious and assume a divine form. Bedecked in divine ornaments he will enjoy excellent pleasures until the dissolution of all living beings.

73-74. O excellent sages, he will be devoid of old age and death in the world of Śiva. When his merits begin to dwindle he is reborn here in an excellent brahmin family. He shall be a brahmin and master of all Vedas. He shall be an expert in all sacred lores. Thereafter, he shall attain Pāśupatayoga and attain salvation.

75-76. In that city, there is a holy river Kṣiprā. He who takes bath there and performs Tarpaṇa to the Pitṛs and deities shall be liberated from sins. Seated in an excellent aerial chariot

he goes to the celestial world and enjoys pleasures of all sorts there.

77. Lord Viṣṇu the overlord of Devas is also stationed there itself. He is named Govindasvāmin. He yields worldly pleasures and salvation to the devotees.

78-79. By visiting that deity the devotee obtains liberation for himself and twentyone generations of his family. He goes to the world of Viṣṇu in an aerial chariot which has solar colour, clusters of tinkling bells, is richly endowed with desirable things and can go wherever it desires to go and which is very steady. The Gandharvas will sing in praise of him. He is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu.

80-85. Devoid of ailments he enjoys various pleasures until the dissolution of all living beings. He will be blessed with good features, good fortune and happiness. In due course of time, the intelligent devotee shall be re-born as a brahmin on the earth in the house of excellent Yogins. He shall be proficient in the Vedas and other scriptures. After adopting the Yoga of Viṣṇu, he will attain salvation, with no return to this earth.

O brahmins, there itself the man shall visit Viṣṇu named Vikramasvāmin. By visiting the lord, the devotee, whether it be a man or a woman, shall attain the benefits that are mentioned before.

There are other Devas too, viz. Indra and others led by him. O excellent sages, there are Mothers who bestow their cherished desires. By visiting them, and by duly and devoutly worshipping and bowing to them the man goes to heaven. Such is the city of great beauty protected by that lion of a monarch.

86-89. It was gay and joyous with perpetual festivities like the city of Amarāvatī¹ pertaining to Indra. It consisted of

1. *Amarāvati*. The capital city of Indra. Its location is as follows: Brahmā's world extends over 10,000 Yojanas on Mahāmeru mountain. There are eight cities—each 2,500 square yojanas in extent—of the aṣṭadikpālas in parts of this Brahmāpuri:

- (i) In the centre Brahmā's city—Manovati;
- (ii) To the east of Manovati, Indra's city Amarāvati;
- (iii) In the south-east corner, Agni's city Tejovati;
- (iv) On the southern side, Yama's city, Samyamini;
- (v) In the south-west corner, Nirṛti's city Kṛṣṇāñjanā;

eighteen sectors or sub-divisions. The cross-roads were extensively wide and large.

The twanging sound of bowstrings echoed everywhere. It was adorned by the presence of Siddhas. The people consisted mostly of the learned groups; the loud chanting sound of the Vedas reverberated everywhere.

O brahmans, day and night the discourses on Itihāsas, Purāṇas and scriptures and the critical reviews of poems are heard. O Brahmins, thus, the city of Avanti of excellent virtues, has been cited by me. It was here that, formerly, Indradyumna of great intellect ruled as king.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

The Holy centre sighted

Brahma said:

1. Administering the excellent country formerly, from that city, that king of great intellect, protected his subjects like his own bosom-born sons.

2-7 He was highly intelligent and truthful in speech. He was heroic and a veritable repository of all virtues. He was learned and richly endowed with piety. He was the most excellent among all those who wielded weapons. Possessing good conduct, truthfulness and control over his sense-organs the glorious king conquered the cities of his enemies. In fulgence he was like the Sungod; in beauty he was like Aśvins,¹ he possessed their increasing good qualities, he had the valour of Indra; adorned by all traits he shone like the autumnal moon. He performed various sacrifices such as Horse Sacrifice and others.

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- (vi) In the west, Varuna's city Śraddhāvati;
 - (vii) In the north-west corner, Vāyu's city Gandhavati;
 - (viii) In the north, Kubera's city Mahodaya;
 - (ix) In the north-east corner, Śiva's city, Yaśovati.

(See Devi Bhāgavata, 8th Skandha)

1. *Aśvins*—Aśvinikumāras, Aśvinidevas viz. Satya and Daara. The two were the sons of Sūrya. They became physicians of Devas.

There was no other king equal to him in charitable gifts, sacrifices and austerities.

At every sacrifice, he gave the leading brahmins much wealth consisting of gold, jewels, pearls, elephants and horses. There was no limit to the wealth possessed by him such as elephants, horses and prominent chariots, blankets, deer-skins and garments, jewels, cash and food-grains.

8. Thus endowed with riches and adorned by good qualities the king administered the excellent kingdom with his mind assured of realizing all cherished desires.

9. Once he pondered over this, in mind—"How shall I propitiate Viṣṇu, the lord of all Yogas? How shall I propitiate lord who bestows worldly pleasures and salvation?"

10-12. He pondered over the scriptural texts, Tantra texts and extensive Āgamas. He pored over the Itihāsas, Purāṇas, the ancillaries of the Vedas, Dharmasāstras, codes of law propounded by the sages, Vedāṅgas, Scriptural texts and all source-books of the extant lores. After assiduously resorting to his preceptors, the brahmins who had mastered the Vedas, he attained the highest point of learning and became fully contented.

13. After realising the greatest entity, the unchanging lord Vāsudeva, he passed beyond all illusory knowledge.¹ Restraining his sense-organs, he became a seeker of liberation.

14-16. He thought thus—"How shall I propitiate the eternal lord of Devas? He is yellow-robed. He has four arms. He holds a conch, a discus and an iron-club. His chest is covered with garlands of Sylvan flowers. His eyes are large like the petals of a lotus. He has the scar Śrivatsa in his chest. He appears splendid with crown, shoulderlets and other ornaments.

Having thought thus, the king set-off from his city Ujjayini, accompanied by a large army, his priest and his servants.

17. The Charioteer-soldiers followed him in chariots resembling aerial vehicles. They were decorated with flag-staffs and fanners. The soldiers carried weapons in their arms.

1. *bhr̥dnti-jñāna*—illusory knowledge, such as the knowledge of "snake in rope or of silver in a shell". This is known as the *prātibhāsika jñāna*.

18. The cavalry men followed the king with horses on a par with the wind. They carried javelins and iron clubs.

19-20. The (brave warriors) experts in wars of conquests followed him with Himālaya-born elephants in their rut. These elephants were comparable to mountains. They had trunks like the poleshafts. They were fierce and intoxicated, of sixty years in age. Their Howdabs were golden. They were adorned with flags and ringing bells.

21-22. Innumerable infantry-men followed him. They had bows, javelins and swords. They wore divine garlands and garments. They had applied divine scents and unguents (over their bodies). They were young and they wore earings of finished gold. They were mighty heroes, experts in all weapons and missiles and eager to fight.

23-26. The women of the harem followed him. They were bedecked, richly endowed with beauty and blooming youth. They were embellished by all ornaments. They wore divine garments and were bedecked in divine garlands. They had smeared their limbs with divine scents and unguents. Their faces resembled the autumnal moon. Their waists were fine and their dress, exquisitely beautiful. Their ears were beautified by the forelocks. Their lips resembled the Bimba fruits. They had fine teeth and their eyes were large like the petals of the lotus. Their mouths were coloured by the betal leaves they had chewed. They were protected by watchmen and guards. They went ahead in high and low vehicles that were splendid and bedecked in jewels and gold. The birds sang songs in their praise. They were surrounded by men armed with weapons.

27-33. Many courtesans and harlots followed him along with their attendants. They were beautiful in every limb and they were bedecked in all ornaments. They were loving, fortunate and beautiful. They were endowed with feminine charms. Bedecked in all sorts of ornaments they rode in various vehicles and followed him. He was accompanied by brahmins who were conversant with the Vedas and their ancillaries¹ and who were

1. *Vedāngas*—ancillaries. They are six in number:

(i) *Sikṣā*—Science of proper articulation and pronunciation.
 (ii) *Chandas*—Metre;

masters of topics in different scriptures. So also the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras of eight subcastes accompanied him. The goldsmiths, blacksmiths metal-workers, breakers of stones, jewellers, potters, cobblers, cooks, small vendors, cane-makers, artisans working on lids, barbers, those who make gourd-like supports of lutes, those who make and mend arrows, those who work in gold, sword-makers, those who prepare oblations, those who repair vehicles, those who make sweet pies, those who sell (drinking) water, garland-makers, those who make joints, those who sell all sorts of things, groups of village merchants and residents of different towns, followed him with their riches, jewels, gold, folk women and attendants.

34. There were people who sold missiles, those who sustained themselves by trading in betel leaves, the sellers of grass, the sellers of fuel.

35. All those who sustained themselves by the stage, those who sold meat, oil-mongers and cloth merchants followed him.

36. Sellers of fruits, those who sold leaves, those who transported grass and fodder and thousands of washermen (followed him).

37. There were cowherds, barbers, tailors, shepherds, goat-herds and those who tended deer and swans.

38. There were people who sold foodgrains, powdered fried grains, gaggey and salt.

39. There were musicians, dancers, bards, actors, story-tellers and those who are experts in Purāṇas.

40. There were poets, versifiers, composers of poems, experts in different poems, followers of Garuḍa who dispel poison and those who test different jewels.

41. There were blacksmiths, coppersmiths, those who work in bellmetal, Rūṭhakas?, those who make scabbards, painters, turners and Pāvakas.

42. There were makers of sticks and batons, those who make swords, those who maintain by selling ale or gambling;

- (iii) *Vyākaraṇa*—Grammar;
- (iv) *Nirukta*—Etymology;
- (v) *Jyotiṣa*—Astronomy and Astrology;
- (vi) *Kalpa*—Ceremonial represented by Sūtra works.

wrestlers, messengers, Kāyasthas (accountants and clerks) and other workers.

43-44. There were physicians and surgeons on human beings, elephants, trees and cows and those who cut and burn; there were weavers, there were those who painted, those who made wicks and oil paintings, those who maintained by selling quails, partridges and other birds and animals.

45. All these citizens and those who have not yet been mentioned followed him. The entire residents of the city followed him too.

46. Just as the sons eager to see other villages follow their father who proceeds ahead so also those citizens followed him.

47. Thus the glorious king surrounded by a great concourse of people as well as (the four divisions of the army viz the elephants, horses, chariots and infantry, proceeded slowly.

48. Going ahead thus, followed by the armies the king reached the shore of the Southern sea after a long time.

49-58. There the king saw the ocean and was struck with wonder. It was beautiful and it appeared to be dancing in front of him; it was confused and agitated on account of hundreds and thousands of waves; it was filled with many living organisms and it was the abode of many jewels, it contained many waves and billows; it was full of miracles, it was the king of sacred waters, very noisy and extremely terrible, it had no other shore; it was the deep abode of crocodiles, it resembled groups of clouds;

It was full of fishes, tortoises, conches, oyster shell, crocodiles, skate fishes, porpoises, crabs and serpents of great poison.

The briny sea, the bed-chamber of Viṣṇu, is the lord of rivers, it is holy and it dispels all sins, it is the bestower of all cherished desire; it is majestic due to many whirlpools, it is the place of resort for the Dānavas, it is the divine charming wood-stick of nectar (i.e. the source of origin for nectar); it is the lord of waters of divine source of origin, it is the most distinguished supporter of the life of all living beings; it is the most sacred of all sacred objects and most auspicious of all auspicious things; it is the most sacred of all holy waters; it is the most unchanging lord of oceanic creatures, it cannot be pierced or split by any living being, it is the source of the nectar of Devas, it is the cause

of origin, sustenance and annihilation; it is eternal. It is the basis of subsistence for all. It is the holy lord of rivers.

59. After reaching the sea-shore the king encamped there in a beautiful holy land endowed with the qualities of a good land.

60-68. The place was full of Śāla, Kadamba, Punnāga, Sarala, Jack coconut, Bakula, Nāgakesara, Kharjūra, Pippala, Tāla, citron, pomegranate, Amrātaka. Lodhra, Bakula, Bahuvāra, Kapittha, Karṇikāra, Pāṭala, Aśoka, Campaka, Dāḍima, Tamāla, Pārijāta, Arjuna, Prācīnāmalaka, Bilva, Priyaṅgu, Vaṭa, Khadira, Jīngudi, Saptaparṇa, Aśvattha, Agastya, Jambuka, Madhuka, Karṇikāra, Bahuvāra, Tinduka, Palāśabadara, Nipa, Siddhanimba, Śubhāñjana, Vāraka, Kovidāra, Bhallāta, Āmalaka Tāla, Hintāla, Kāṇkola, Karañja, Vibhitaka, Sarja, Madhu, Kaśmari, Śālmali, Devadāru, Śākhoṭaka, Nimbavaṭa, Kumbhi, Koṣṭha, Haritaka, Guggula, sandal, Aguru, Pāṭala, Jambira, Karuṇa, tamarind, red sandal and many other trees resembling the trees of Kalpa. The trees bore flowers and fruits during all seasons.

69-71. It was resonant with the chirping sounds and divine cooings of different birds such as cuckoos, peacocks, parrots, sparrows, Hārītas, royal bees, Cātakas, Bahuputrakas, Jīvañjivakas, Kākolas, partridges, doves, and other kinds of birds charming in appearance and sweet in voice. They were beautifully perched on the trees in full bloom and they were chirping.

72-74. There were many flowering plants such as Ketaki, the perpetually white flowers of Mallikā, Kunda, Yūthikā, Tagara, Kuṭaja, Bāṇa, Atimukta, Kubja, Mālatī, Karavīra, golden Kadalīs and various other fragrant flowers beautiful to look at. These flowers of various colours abounded in forests, parks and gardens. They were sweet-smelling.

75-84. The place was frequented by Vidyādharas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Serpents, Rākṣasas, goblins, Kinnaras, sages, Yakṣas and various animals too. There were deer, monkeys, lions, boars, and buffaloes. There were antelopes and other animals wandering everywhere. There were tigers, elephants and wild animals too. Thus the place was full of trees, gardens and parks comparable to the Nandana park; there were creepers, hedges, bushes and different sorts of water reservoirs. There were birds such as swans, Kāraṇḍavas, Cakravākas, floating geese and

the Kadambas decorated by clusters of lotuses, lilies, Kalhāra flowers etc; there were other flowers too growing in water; there were mountains with bright peaks and charming caves. They abounded in different sorts of birds and various minerals. The peaks were full of wondrous miracles; they were auspicious abodes of all living beings; they contained all medicinal herbs and the ridges were vast and variegated.

Thus, the king saw the place beautified collectively by all these beautiful things. It was a place worshipped by the three worlds. It was ten Yojanas in length and five Yojanas in width. The holy centre was endowed with all mysteries. It was extremely rare.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

A Review of Past Incidents

The sages said:

1-2. O Lord, was there no idol of Viṣṇu in the excellent holy centre pertaining to Viṣṇu, formerly? Wherefore did that king go there with his army and vehicles, and established Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā, the bestower of auspicious things.

3. O lord of the universe, great indeed is our doubt in this matter and so also is our wonder. We wish to hear everything in detail. Tell us the reason thereof.

Brahmā said :

4. Listen you all. I shall succinctly mention the story of some past incidents. It is a story that destroys sins : Formerly, Lord Viṣṇu was asked by Lakṣmī.

5. On the wonder-inspiring golden peak of Sumeru, the lotus-born goddess bowed to the unchanging creator of all worlds, named Vāsudeva.

6-17. The peak of Meru is always rendered splendid by the presence of Siddhas, Vidyādharaś, Yakṣas and Kinnaras, Devas,

Dānavas, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Apsarās, sages, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Sauparnas, Maruts and other people residing in the abode of Devas, Sādhyas, and Patriarchs viz. Kaśyapa and others. It was made charming by the presence of Bālakhilyas¹ and others.

The peak of the Meru mountain was adorned by the glowing Karṇikāra groves which abounded in flowers of all seasons that resembled gold and which shone in brilliance like the sun.

There were many other trees such as Śāla, Tāla, Punnāga, Aśoka, Sarala, Nyagrodha, Āmrātaka, Arjuna, Pārijāta, Āmra, Khadira, Nīpa, Bilva, Kadambaka, Dhava, Khādira, Pálāśā, Śirsāmalaka, Tinduka, Nāriṅga, Kola, Bakula, Lodhra, Dādima, Sarja, Tagara, Karṇa, Śiśi, Bhūrjava and Nimba trees; there were other trees golden in colour and bent under the weight of fruits. The peak of Meru was rendered splendid by Devas and adorned by many plants endowed with fragrant flowers. They were Mālatī, Yūthikā, Malli, Kunda, Bāṇa, Kuruṇṭaka, Karavīra, Ketaki, Kubja, Kīṁśuka, Pāṭala, Agastya, Kuṭaja and Mandāra flowering plants. There were other flowers too that yielded pleasure to the mind.

The peak was rendered beautiful by many flights and flocks of different birds that chirped sweetly. It was rendered resonant by the sweet cooings of cuckoo and the excited crowings of peacocks in an intoxicated state. Thus the peak was rendered resonant and beautiful by different birds, trees and flowers. It was frequented by Devas. The unchanging lord of the universe, the creator of the universe, the maker of the worlds stationed himself there. The lotusborn goddess lowered her head in his presence with a desire for the welfare of the world and put this great question to that excellent lord.

Sri said :

18-20. Tell me, O lord of worlds, there is a great doubt lurking in my mind. The world of mortals is the land of holy

1. *Bālakhilyas* or *Vālakhilyas*—Sixty thousand hermits born to Kratu, a hermit, by his wife Santati. Everyone of them was of the size of half a thumb, but they were as bright as the blazing sun and had attained control over their *senses*.

rites. It is extremely inaccessible and excessively surprising; it is a great ocean of lust and fury where people are seized by the crocodiles of greed and delusion. O lord of Devas, if you consider me who have bowed down, as worthy of being blessed tell me how a devotee is liberated from this ocean of worldly existence. Excepting you, there is none else in the world who can clarify this doubt decisively.

21. On hearing those words of his consort, Viṣṇu the lord of Devas spoke with pleasure. What he said was nectarlike. It was the great essence.

The lord said :

22. O gentle lady, the well known deity Viṣṇu is stationed in the excellent holy centre. The deity is fascinating. The lord awards excellent benefits. He can be easily worshipped and propitiated.

23. There is no other God in the three worlds, on a par with him. By glorifying this lord one is liberated from all sins.

24-25. This leading holy centre has not been perfectly understood by the immortal beings, Daityas, and Dānavas. O fair-faced lady, this has been kept as a secret by me even from excellent sages Marīci and others. But I shall recount to you the leading holy centre. O fair-complexioned lady of fine buttocks, listen to it with a single-minded attention and emotional fervour.

26-27. (When the previous Kalpa comes to a close and the new) Kalpa¹ is about to begin, when the mobile and immobile beings have perished when Devas, Gandharvas, Daityas, Vidyādharaś and Nāgas have been dissolved, everything was enveloped in darkness. Nothing could be seen or known. In that darkness the soul of the living beings, the Supreme Being, the preceptor of the universe is alone kept awake.

28. He is the lord and cause of Lord Śiva the three deities, viz. Brahmā the creator of the Universe, and Viṣṇu. The great lord of Yogic soul is known as Vāsudeva.

29. At the conclusion of his Yogic slumber he created

1. *Kalpa*—a period of one thousand yugas or fourteen Manvantaras.

Brahmā and unchanging being. He was in the midst of his umbilical lotus resembling the filament of the lotus.

30-36. Brahmā, lord of the world, who originated in that manner, slowly created the world constituted of five great elements. The gross elements that had their natural cause in the subtle elements were created by him. He created the mobile and immobile beings of four types viz. the oviparous, the viviparous, the sweat-formed (worms etc.) and the vegetables and trees that pierce the ground and grow. Brahmā, the patriarch, pondered over the Ātman in his mind and created the universe of mobile and immobile beings. He created different subjects. He created Marīci and other sages, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, the fourteen worlds of seven heavens and the netherworlds. He created continents, oceans, Gaṅgā and other rivers. He created Yakṣas, Vidyādharaś, monkeys, lions and different sorts of birds. He created people of four castes viz. Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. He created alien tribes and last-born (outcastes) severally. He created the entire universe of mobile and immobile beings—whatever that can be termed as living being viz. the grass, the bushy hedge and ants.

37. After thinking, he created a manly being from his right side. He created a woman from his left. He created human beings from his two parts.

38-43. Since then, the subjects are being procreated by sexual intercourse.

After thinking deeply and creating diverse forms of living beings whether of low, middle or higher order and all of my shrines, the lotus-born deity meditated upon the physical form of Vāsudeva. Immediately after being meditated upon by that lord Vāsudeva revealed himself as the glorious being with thousand eyes, thousand legs and thousand heads. His eyes resembled the lotus. His body was dark-coloured like the rain-bearing cloud. The scar Śrīvatsa was his characteristic sign. Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds saw him, all on a sudden. After offering seats, Arghya, Pādya etc without any omission, Brahmā eulogised him with concentration, by means of high class hymns of prayer.

Thereafter, I spoke thus to Brahmā the lotus-born lord:—

"O dear one, tell me the reason why I have been meditated upon, now".

Brahmā said :

44-46. O lord of the universe, tell me about the most excellent abode on the earth, greater than all other abodes and shrines. O lord of Devas, sacrifices, charitable gifts and holy rites are pathways leading to the portals of heaven. Similarly, Yogic practice, truthfulness, penance, faith and holy pilgrimages to the various holy centres are also the causes of heavenly pleasures. But they are difficult of access to ordinary mortals. For the welfare of the Universe, tell me the easiest means for some other centres than those mentioned above.

47-49. O beloved one, on hearing the words of Brahmā I said thus,—“Listen, O Brahmā, I shall mention the rarest of holy centres on the Earth. It is devoid of impurities. It is the most excellent of all holy centres. It is the blessed shrine that enables one to cross the ocean of worldly existence. It is conducive to the welfare of cows and brahmins. It is meritorious. It is conducive to the rise of happiness of all the members of four castes. The holy centre is extremely splendid and it yields worldly pleasures and salvation unto men. O great grandfather to all those who reside there, it is extremely meritorious.

50-52. The eternal lord of holy centres originated from Him. The great and well known holy centre is resorted to in the four Yugas. The lord is the most excellent being among all Devas, sages, religious students, Daityas, Dānavas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, and Vidyādhara, nay of all mobile and immobile beings. Hence, it is called the best of all.

53. On the shore of the Southern ocean a place extending to ten Yojanas all round the place where there stands a holy big tree, is the rarest of all holy centres.

54. This holy fig tree does not perish when the Kalpa comes to a close and the dissolution of all the worlds starts. It remains there as before.

55. Even the sin of brahmin slaughter is dispelled merely when the holy fig tree is seen and its shadow falls on one. What doubt then in the case of other sins ?

56. All those creatures who circumambulate and make obeisance, shake off their sins and go to the abode of lord Viṣṇu.

57-58. To the north of the holy fig tree and to the south of the abode of lord Viṣṇu is a palace. It is a pious and victorious spot. The devotee should stop there. Men who visit my idol there made by the lord himself go to my world without any strain.

59. O my beloved, on seeing men (and women devotees) going thus, (God of death) came near me once, bowed to me with the bent head, and said thus:—

Yama said:

60-68. O lord, O lord of worlds, O lord of the universe, I am bowing down to the lord with all these characteristics. He stays in the milk ocean. He lies on the body of Śeṣa.¹ He is the most excellent bestower of boons. He is the lord and creator and is not created by anyone. He is the maker of all worlds. He is conducive to the happiness of all. He is the ancient Puruṣa. He is worthy of being known. He is the eternal lord manifest and unmanifest. He is the creator of the greater and lesser beings. He is the lord of worlds. He is the preceptor of the universe. There is the scar Śrivatsa² on his chest. He is adorned by the garlands and sylvan flowers. He is clad in yellow robes. He has four arms in which he holds conch, discus, mace etc. He is bedecked in necklaces, shoulderlets, crown and armlets. He is fully endowed with all characteristic marks. He is devoid of all sense-organs. He stands motionless like the steady peak of a mountain. He is subtle and eternal in the form of luminary.

1. *Śeṣa*—Ādiśeṣa, Chief of the Nāgas, is the reposing bed of Viṣṇu. But he is also represented as supporting the earth at the behest of Brahmā. According to a myth, Balabhadra Rāma, the elder brother of Śrīkrṣṇa was born from a portion of Śeṣa.

2. *Śrivatsa*—Once sage Bhṛgu went to the abode of Mahāviṣṇu. There he saw Mahāviṣṇu in deep slumber. Seeing Mahāviṣṇu whose task is to preserve the world, sleeping like the irresponsible person, Bhṛgu gave him a kick on his breast. Viṣṇu sprang up suddenly, saw Bhṛgu standing before him. He begged pardon of the sage. He declared that he would carry Bhṛgu's footprint permanently on his chest as a sign of his repentence for having shown disrespect to him. This footprint still remains on Viṣṇu's chest and is known as Śrivatsa.

He is devoid of both positive and negative aspects. He pervades (everything). He is greater than Prakṛti. I bow unto that lord of the universe, the lord who bestows happiness".

In this manner, Lord Yama eulogised me formerly by the side of that holy fig tree by reciting different hymns and made obeisance.

69. O highly blessed lady, on seeing him standing outside with palms joined in reverence, I asked the (God of Death) about the purpose for which I had been eulogised.

70. O Vaivasvata of long brawny arms, indeed, you are the most excellent of all Devas. Why did you eulogise me ? Tell me all in brief.

Yama said :

71. In this meritorious shrine known as Puruṣottama, there is an excellent idol made of sapphire. It bestows all cherished desires.

72. O lotus-eyed lord, by visiting it with emotional fervour and faith, even men devoid of desires go to the abode called Śveta.¹

73. Hence, O slayer of enemies I am not able to carry on my activities. O great lord, be pleased. O lord, withdraw the idol.

74. On hearing the words of Yama I spoke to him : O Yama, I shall conceal it with sands all round.

75-76. Then, O gentle lady, that idol was concealed by me under the heap of Earth and creeping plants, so that men who seek for heavenly pleasures could not see it. O gentle lady, after covering it up with creeping plants with golden coverings and appendages, I sent Yama to his own city² in the South.

Brahm said :

77-78. Every event that happened there, O brahmans, in

1. Śveta or Śvetadvīpa—Colonel Wilford identifies it with Britain—J. Dowson. Hindu Mythology and Religion p. 315.

2. The city of Yama is named *Samyamīnī*.

that holy excellent shrine Puruṣottama, Janārdana, the lord of Devas, related fully to his splendid consort.

79-89. The lord mentioned everything immediately to her: viz. Indradyumna's departure to that place, vision and description of the holy centre, building of the palace, performance of horse-sacrifice, dream, sight of a log of wood on the shore of the briny sea; vision of Vāsudeva, the king of sculptors, O brahmins, the making of the idol with due colours in particular, the installation of idols in the palace that was most excellent in the world. O leading brahmins, glorification of Kalpa at the time of pilgrimage, episode of Mārkaṇḍeya, installation of Śaṅkara, glory of five holy centres, vision of the trident-bearing lord, that of the holy fig tree, O brahmins, and its prosperous consequence, the vision of Baladeva, Kṛṣṇa, in particular and Subhadrā there itself. Vision of Narasimha and the glorification of its prosperity, vision of infinite Vāsudeva, glorification of the merit, greatness of Śvetamādhava, vision of heavenly portals, vision of wide ocean, the holy dip therein, the performance of Tarpaṇa rite, O brahmins, the efficacy of holy dip in the ocean by Indradyumna, benefit of five holy centres, Mahājyeṣṭha, abodes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the benefit of entire pilgrimage, description of the world of Viṣṇu and of holy centre once again.

The great lord mentioned all these to the Goddess.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Description of the Holy Centres

The sages said :

1. O lord, we wish to hear the rest of the story of the king. After going to that excellent holy centre what did the lord of men do?

Brahmā said :

2. Listen, O leading sages, I shall mention briefly the vision of the holy centre that the king had and his activities thereafter.

3. After going to the holy centre well-known to the three worlds the king saw the beautiful (surrounding) regions and the rivers.

4. There is a sacred river there which takes its source from the foothills of the Vindhya Forest. It is a splendid river that dispels sins and it is known as Vindhya-pagā.

5. This river of great current is on par with Gaṅgā. It falls into the southern ocean. That excellent river of meritorious waters is known as Mahānadi.¹

6. She is the beloved wife of the southern ocean. Her beauty is enhanced by hundreds of tributaries. There are villages and cities on either of its banks.

7. O leading sages, these villages are full of well grown plants. They are very charming and thronged by delighted and well nourished people. They are finely dressed and bedecked in ornaments.

8. The Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras are found there engaged in their duties. They are splendid in their traits and very peaceful.

9-10. Their mouths are filled with betal leaves. They are bedecked in garlands and necklaces. The Vedic mantras fill the mouths of the brahmins. They have learnt the Vedic Mantras along with the six ancillary subjects. They have learnt the Vedic mantras by heart in their Padapāṭha and Krama Pāṭha. Some of them are engaged in Agnihotra and some in the holy rites of Aupāsana. They are experts in the scriptural topics. They perform sacrifices distributing wealth by way of Dakṣiṇās.

11-12. In the quadrangles, the royal highways, gardens, parks, assemblies, mansions and temples of the deities, the following are heard by the common people viz. the mythological traditions, Itihāsas and Purāṇas, the Vedic Mantras with their ancillaries and the characteristically good discourses on poetry and scripture.

13-19. The ladies who resided in that land were justifiably proud of their beauty and blooming youth. They were fully

1. *Mahānadi*—a river celebrated in the Purāṇas and flowing through the region of Utkala (Orissa).

endowed with all characteristic marks. Their buttocks were ample. They were dark-complexioned but their faces resembled lotuses or the autumnal moon. They had plump and elevated breasts. Being prosperous they were beautiful to look at. They wore golden bangles and they were richly adorned by lustrous robes. They were as soft to the touch as the interior of the plantain tree. They had the lustre of the pollen dust of lotus flowers. They were lovely with the lower lips resembling the Bimba fruit and the eyes extending upto their ears. Their faces were beautiful and their tresses lovely. They were bent under the weight of necklaces. Their eyes resembled the petals of red or blue lotus. Other slender-bodied ladies had their teeth sparkling like the streaks of lightning. Their forelocks were curly. They shone with their hairs partitioned on upper side. Their necks were made beautiful due to the various ornaments. They were bedecked in garlands and necklaces. With their earings studded with jewels and the beautiful Karnapūras (ear-ornaments) they were seen resembling the celestial women. They had splendid traits.

20-22. These excellent ladies dallied with highly blessed bride-grooms singing divine songs. They sported about with various musical instruments such as lutes, flutes, Mṛdaṅga, drums and other types of drums like the Paṇavas, Gomukhas and Dundubhis. The conches too produced sweet sounds. Sporting about with sweet musical instruments these elegant ladies delighted one another. Expertly playing in these musical instruments and singing sweetly, these excellent ladies were gay and jolly, mad and passionate, by day and night.

23. The whole of that holy centre was frequented by mendicants, recluses, Siddhas, householders, religious students, those who had mastered Mantras, those who had realised self by practising austerities and those who had become Siddhas by means of performing sacrifices.

24-25. The king, thus saw the rarest of holy centres. He thought—Here itself I shall propitiate the eternal lord Viṣṇu, the great lord, the preceptor of the universe, the sole redeemer, the supreme saviour, the infinite lord of chiefs of all, the unvanquished lord.

26-30. This is now known to me as the mental Tīrtha Puruṣottama. It is the place where the huge holy fig tree stands like the Kalpa tree. The idol having the lustre of sapphire has been hidden by the lord himself. There is no other splendid idol of Viṣṇu seen anywhere. I shall endeavour to make Viṣṇu the lord of the universe of truthful exploit visible to the eye. I shall duly observe excellent holy rites by performing sacrifices, charitable gifts, austerities, meditations, worships and observances of fasts. With the mind not resting on any other topic, with the mind dwelling on him and not thinking of anyone else, I shall begin the preliminary activities for the construction of Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Horse-Sacrifice

Brahma said:

1. O excellent brahmins, after thinking like this the king made the preliminary arrangements for the propitiation of Viṣṇu.

2-6. He called for experts in astronomical calculations and the masters of astrology. He got a spot of land sanctified. With great assiduity and joy he consulted the wise brahmins who had mastered the Vedas and scriptures, the ministers, counsellors and those who were experts in the science of architecture. On an auspicious day, at an auspicious hour when the combination of the moon and the constellation was good and when there was favourable beneficial influence of planets the king offered libation with faith and concentrated mind. There were shouts of victories. Auspicious sounds were raised by charming musical instruments, the chanting sounds of the Vedic Mantras and sweet vocal songs. Flowers, fried

1. *Kalpa-vrikṣa*—a tree in paradise. It gives any object which a person desires to get.

grains and raw rice grains (were scattered). Sweet scents were offered. People accompanied him with sacred lamps and pots filled with water.

7. After duly offering libation, the king Indradyumna called the heroic rulers of Kalinga, Utkala and Kosala and said:

The king said :

8-9. With great concentration you go together for the collection of rocks and slabs. Take with you chiefs of sculptors and artisans expert in rocks to the extensive Vindhya Mountains splendid with many caves and caverns. Examine the ridges and peaks and get the splendid rocks chopped off. Let them be brought here on carts. Do not delay".

10. After commanding them to proceed, Indradyumna spoke to the ministers and priests.

The king said :

11-12. Let messengers go in haste, to each and every corner of the earth where there are kings and let them proclaim my order, "At the behest of Indradyumna may the kings start together with their priests, ministers and four divisions of the army, viz. elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers.

Brahmā said :

13. Thus the messengers who were commanded by the noble king went to different kings and proclaimed the words of that monarch to them.

14. On hearing the words of messengers the kings came there in a hurry accompanied by their armies.

15-17. Those who had been staying in the eastern, southern, western and northern quarters, those who lived at the outskirts and border lands, the residents of the adjacent territories, the dwellers of the mountain regions and the inhabitants of all islands came there. O brahmins, on hearing the command of Indradyumna, they came with their chariots, elephants, infantry and cavalry in elaborate and extensive array.

18. On observing that the various kings had arrived with their ministers and priests, the delighted king announced the weighty task on hand.

The king said :

19-21. Listen, O leading kings, to what I am going to say. My mind is worried as to how I shall be able to perform the great Horse Sacrifice in this auspicious and excellent holy centre that yields worldly pleasures and salvation and to build a palace pertaining to Viṣṇu. O excellent kings, if you all assist me I shall carry out these things with collaboration and co-operation of all of you.

Brahma said :

22-33. When the intelligent king of kings announced this, they were delighted. At his behest they offered the requisite things in cash and kind. They showered coins and jewels, gold pieces and pearls. They presented blankets, deerskins, auspicious antelope skin coverings, diamonds, lapis lazulis, rubies, emeralds and saphires. They supplied elephants, horses and the chariots. Innumerable materials of worship and articles of utility high and low, were supplied by them in plenty. Hundreds of jars and vessels were filled with rice grains, barleys, pulses of various kinds, gingely seeds, mustard seeds, Bengal grams, wheat, Masoor dals, rice of various kinds such as Śyāmāka, Nīvāra, Madhūka and horse gram. Other grains and foodstuffs grown in villages or forests and heaps of rice were supplied by them. Hundreds and thousands of jars were filled with ghee and various foodstuffs and unguents and whatever was needed for the holy rites. On seeing that every thing necessary for the sacrifice had been gathered, the brahmins conversant with the rules of holy rites assembled. On seeing the brahmins who had mastered the Vedas and Vedāṅgas and who were experts in the scriptural texts and the performance of holy rites, the sages, great sages, celestial sages and ascetics, religious students, householders, forest dwellers and recluses, the newly initiated brahmins and others strictly adhering to the performance of Agnihotras, preceptors, venerable teachers and others who regularly recited the Vedic passages and performed penance, and many other holy personages who were present as members of the assembly watching the proceedings—on seeing all these the glorious king spoke to his preceptor.

The king said :

34. Let learned brahmins who have mastered the Vedas go about and find out a place worthy of being used for successfully concluding the horse-sacrifice.

Brahmā said :

35-37. Thus ordered, the royal priest carried out the behest of the king. He gladly accompanied the ministers, architects and carpenters. Keeping the brahmins who were experts in the holy rites of sacrifice in front, the intelligent brahmin (the priest) converted the Fishermen's village into sacrificial chamber with lofty pinnacles and bylanes.

38. (All round the sacrificial chamber) hundreds of palaces were built. They were beautiful and they resembled the abode of Indra. They were bedecked in gold and jewels. Excellent gems enhanced their beauty.

39-40. The columns were wonderfully built of gold. There were many big ornamental gateways in and near the surroundings of the shrine of sacrifice. Solid and pure gold was used for them. The righteous king erected harems for the kings who had come from different lands.

41. He got constructed many comfortable houses and residences for the Brahmins and Vaiśyas who had come there from different lands.

42. Due to their love and affection for that king (Indradyumna), the excellent kings and their womenfolk assembled there during the festivities, bringing with them precious stones and jewels (as presents).

43. As those noble persons enjoyed themselves in their respective camps; their sound reached heaven like that of the rumbling sea.

44. O excellent sages, the king gave specific orders that food, beverages and items of bedding should be duly supplied to the visitors.

45. Delicious foodstuffs of various kinds prepared with rice, sugarcane, barley milk and milk products were served to guests. The excellent king himself approached them and ordered for the immediate supply of things they wanted.

46-49. There were many expounders of Brahman in that sacrifice. Noble and excellent brahmins came there accompanied by their disciples. The king greeted them all lovingly. He followed them to their camps. Eschewing all arrogance, the king of great splendour (did everything to their honour). The artisans and sculptors finished their work in regard to the holy altar of sacrifice and informed the king. On hearing that everything was complete the alertful unerring king experienced a joyful horripilation alongwith his ministers.

Brahma said :

50-57. When the sacrifice began to function eloquent expounders of syllogisms discussed the causes and arguments, desirous of defeating one another.

O brahmins, everything was arranged for the guests by the lion among kings in a manner befitting even the lord of Devas. The ornamental gateways were made of gold. The various items of bedstead and seats were studded with jewels. There were chambers of crystal and pots and dishes of peculiar shape and workmanship. The king did not find any of these pots not made of gold. But the sacrificial pots were made of wood because it had been prescribed in the scriptures. Of course they were embellished with gold. O brahmins, the animals of the land and water were duly offered at the proper time. The kings saw the animals of excessive splendour present there. He saw cows, buffaloes and old ladies too. There were aquatic animals, birds and beasts of prey. There were oviparous, viviparous, sweat-born and vegetation. They also saw the mountainous people and the subsidiary grains. Thus every body was gay and jolly, due to the presence of milk animals and food-grains.

58-65. On seeing the sacrificial chamber the visiting kings were struck with wonder. Much of sweet and cooked rice was distributed among the brahmins and the vaishyas. While a full hundred thousand brahmins were taking food there, the Dundubhi (drum) produced loud sound frequently like the rumbling sounds of the cloud. At the close of every day it was sounded many times. Thus the royal horse sacrifice increased and flourished. O brahmins, the surplus quantities of the

cooked rice were scattered about. There were canals of curds and eddies of milk. The entire population of Jambūdvipa was present there along with the people of other islands. Brahmins were seen in large numbers in that great sacrifice. O excellent brahmins, thousands of men wearing ear-rings of finished gold took the vessels with them and served the brahmins, and announced what they were serving. Other men who followed served beverages. The people gave the brahmins those of cooked food usually enjoyed by the monarch.

66-67. The king honoured the brahmins who were conver-sant with the Vedas and the kings, lords of the earth, who had come there as visitors. He distributed wealth by way of gifts. He welcomed kings who were great fighters in battles and who had come there from different quarters. He welcomed the actors, dancers and others who were experts in music and dance.

68-74. The king had a thousand one hundred charming wives who had plump and elevated breasts. Their eyes resembled the petals of blue lotus. Their faces resembled the autumnal moon. They were of noble birth and endowed with qualities. The beauty of the sacrificial chamber was enhanced by his excellent wives who wore garlands studded with jewels. They had necklaces of precious stones that spread the divine lustre of the moon. The chamber was beautified by flagstaffs and banners. The elephants were drenched in ichor and were pleasing to look at. They were huge, like mountains. Hundreds and crores of tuskers bedecked in ornaments beauti-fied the sacrificial hall. The crores of excellent horses beautified the holy place. They had the velocity of the wind. They were of excellent breed hailing from the Sindhu region. They were white in colour with dark coloured ears. There were innumer-able foot soldiers. They were ready to face all eventualities with different weapons lifted up. They were comparable to the sons of Devas. The king surveyed the entire sacrificial chamber (and the surroundings). He derived joy. The delighted king spoke thus.

The king said :

75-77. O Princes of good restraint, bring you, the excellent horse marked with auspicious traits. Take it all over the Earth. May the sacrifice be performed here by the learned conversant with holy rites and piety. May there be brought elephants sixty years old, black antelope, birds, bulls and cows along with the persons who tend them.

78-82. After bringing various objects along with gold plattus the king gave them to the brahmans in accordance with the injunctions and in great faith. The lord duly presented the kings residing in different lands with cash, elephants, horses, good garments and lands. He propitiated the brahmans with different sorts of jewels along with foodstuffs and edibles. He delighted the poor and the helpless persons by giving them various things they desired. The excellent king attaining gifts of their choice returned to their respective native lands.

He delighted his own family including house servants both male and female by giving them whatever they desired. Thus, the king felt contented due to the successful performance of horse-sacrifice. He felt he was blessed.

Extra verses Between verses 77 and 78

[May the sacrifices function and may the place pertaining to Visnu (be started). Whatever the Brahmans desire in their mind may be given to them, even if the objects be women, jewels, villages and cities. Let the fertile lands or fields be given to the suppliants. So also other beautiful things be given to those who ask for them. The words "not available", should never be uttered. Let this sacrifice function as long as the ancient lord becomes visible to me, very near the venue of sacrifice.

O brahmans, after saying thus, Indradyumna the most powerful of long arms made gifts of the following articles :— Masses of gold, crores of ornaments, a hundred thousand elephants, hundred thousands of horses, a hundred million bulls, cows with their horns wrapped in gold, beautiful milch cows along with the vessels for milking made of bellmetal. He gifted these articles to the brahmans who understood the Vedas. He was glad to do this.

In that great sacrifice he gave valuable clothes, deer skin-coverings white in colour and pure in quality, and excellent corals and jewels. He gave away different sorts of jewels such as diamond, lapis lazuli, ruby, pearl, etc. He presented the brahmins with five hundred pure virgins bedecked in ornaments and eyes resembling lotuses. Many beautiful mature women were given as ladies of love to the brahmins and others who sought them. Those ladies had heavy breasts. They had covered their breasts by their bodice. They were so slender-waisted that they appeared as though they did not have the waist at all. They had good buttocks. Their eyes were as large as the petals of lotus; by bending their necks they exhibited their emotional fervour and amorous gestures. Many of them were bedecked in bangles. They wore anklets on their feet. They were clad in silk garments. O excellent brahmins, they were gifted to everyone of the suppliants among the brahmins at the horse-sacrifice. The dishes prepared were full and delicious with different ingredients appropriately added. There were many delicacies prepared from candid sugar, savouries prepared after frying them in oil, baked breads made of flour, other items of edibles prepared neatly, confectionery items fried in ghee, sweets and salted dishes, sweet pies and well cooked rice. In order to please everybody the cooked food was served again and again. There was no end to the wealth already gifted or going to be gifted.

On seeing this great sacrifice Devas, Daityas, Cāraṇas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Siddhas, Sages, and Prajāpatis were struck with great wonder. The excellent sacrifice was very splendid. The priests, ministers and king Indradyumna were all delighted. There was no dirty person there. There was no one wretched or hungry person left. There was no calamity or casualty; there was neither mental agony nor physical ailments. There was no premature death. There was no death due to poisonous bites; there was no evil influence of adverse planets. The people were well nourished and jolly during the great festival of that king. The sages richly endowed with austerities and power of penance who had been staying there for a long time said that there had never been such a sacrifice before with the lavish display of wealth and food-grains.

Thus, O excellent brahmins, the king concluded the excellent sacrifice called Aśvamedha].

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Extra verses at the beginning of Chapter

[*The sages said :*

O lord of the chiefs of Devas, tell us what we ask regarding the ancient incidents. How were the idols made formerly by Indradyumna? In what manner was Viṣṇu pleased with him? Please mention all these incidents to us. We are very eager to hear.

Brahmā said :

O leading sages, listen, to the Purāṇa that is on a par with the Vedas. I shall recount the past events and the origins of the idols.

When the great sacrifice duly functioned, when the palace was also built, he was worried over the idols day and night.

"I do not know, by what means I can see the supreme lord, the lord of Devas, the lord of all, the sanctifier of the world, the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation".

The king was extremely worried. He never slept either at night or by day. He did not enjoy any pleasures. He did not relish bath and toilet. He did not like make-up.

His pleasure did not grow due to musical instruments, scents, songs, colour, elephants in their rut, horses, lapis lazuli, sapphire, ruby, gold, silver, diamonds and crystals. He did not feel pleasure in anything that money could buy or mind could desire. He did not feel glad due to the animals of the forest or by moving about in the firmament.

Rock, clay and wood are the three substances used for making the idols of Viṣṇu. Of these three, which is the most preferable? How can an idol marked by all traits be made?

If the idol is made of one of these three and is installed it shall be liked by the lord. It will be worshipped by devas". Thus the king became worried and he thought thus.

After worshipping the lord in accordance with the injunctions laid down in the Scriptural text Pañcarātra,¹ the king began to eulogise.

O Vāsudeva, obeisance be to you. O cause of liberation, obeisance to you. O lord of the world, protect me from the ocean of worldly existence of birth and death.

O lord, resembling the firmament, devoid of impurities, obeisance to you. O Saṅkarṣaṇa, obeisance to you. O holder of the earth, protect me.

Obeisance to you, the deity having the lustre of gold-wombed Brahma, obeisance to you, O shark-emblemed one. Obeisance to you. O lover of Rati, O enveloper and annihilator, protect me.

Obeisance to you, O deity resembling collyrium. Obeisance to you, O deity favourably disposed towards your devotees. O Aniruddha, obeisance to you. Protect me. Be the bestower of boons.

O abode of the learned, obeisance to you; obeisance to you O deity fond of the learned. Obeisance to you O Nārāyaṇa. Protect me who have sought refuge in you.

Obeisance to you, O most excellent one among the strong. Obeisance to you, O ploughshare-armed deity. O great grandfather, the four-faced lord, the abode of the universe, protect me.

Obeisance to you, the deity having the lustre of blue clouds. Obeisance to you, the deity worshipped by Devas.]

1. *Pañcarātra*—a system of spiritual doctrines, by following which one attains the position of Uparicara.

The Prayer for Welfare

Brahmā said :

1-2. Thus the king concluded the great Horse sacrifice in accordance with the injunctions laid down in the Vedas.

He was afraid of the ocean of worldly existence. For the purity of his mind and for attaining the highest region of Viṣṇu, he sat in an isolated place and eulogised the lord, the bestower of bliss on the universe.

The king said :

3-4. O support of the universe, O lord of the universe who enable us to fulfil our desires. O lover of Laksmi, O ocean of mercy, favourably disposed to your devotees, and fond of the good, O Viṣṇu, O great lord, save me who have been immersed in the ocean of worldly existence. O deity resembling the fire of dissolution. Obeisance to you the annihilator of the sons of Diti, O Narasimha of great vigour and bright eyes, save me.

5. O great Boar¹ just as the earth had been formerly lifted up by you by your curved fangs, from the nether worlds so also save me from the ocean of misery.

6. O lord Kṛṣṇa, these idols of yours, the bestowers of boons, have been eulogised by me. You, Baladeva and others, are stationed in separate forms.

7-9. O lord, O lord of Devas, Garuḍa and others are the parts of your body. O lord, the guardians of quarters² with their

1. This refers to the Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu. The boar entered the sea and found out the earth that had sunk. The boar lifted the earth at his tusks, came out of the ocean and set the earth firm over the water. On the way, the fierce and wicked Hiranyakṣa hindered him. The Boar killed Hiranyakṣa and disappeared.

2. *Guardians of quarters*—lokapālas. They are sometimes regarded as the guardian deities of different orders of beings, but more commonly of the four cardinal and four intermediate points of the world. They are 1 Indra, of East; 2 Agni of South-east; 3 Yama of South; 4 Sūrya of South-west; 5 Varuṇa of West; 6 Vāyu of North-west; 7 Kubera of North; 8 Iśāna of North-east. Others substitute Nirṛti for Sūrya and Iśāni or Pṛthivi for Iśāna. According to Dharmasaṅgraha, the Buddhists enumerate 14 lokapālas.

weapons and Keśava and others are the parts of your body. O lord of the Universe, O lord of all worlds, of large and delighted eyes, your different forms mentioned by the learned have been worshipped and eulogised by me. O lord, you who have been bowed by me are the bestower of virtue, love and wealth. Grant boons and confer your blessings upon me, O lord.

10. Hara, Saṅkarsana and others who have been glorified as your variant forms, have been evolved for your worship. They are dependent on you, they resort to you for support.

11. O lord of Devas, in fact, you have no other form separate from you. The various forms of yours are only for your worship by the devotees.

12. O lord, how can man mention you as twofold, you who are one and only one. You are all-pervading Consciousness by nature and you are unsullied.

13-14. Your supreme form is devoid of positive and negative aspects. It is unsmeared. It is devoid of impurities. It is subtle, steady, unmoving and firm. It is rid of all sins. It is stationed as mere existence. O lord, even Devas do not know that. How can I know it ?

15-16. The learned worship that other form of yours which is clad in yellow robes, has four arms, holds conch, discus and iron club in hands, wears a crown, shoulder-lets etc, has the scar Śrivatsa in the chest and is adorned by garlands of sylvan flowers. Others also who resort to you for support worship that form.

17. O lord of Devas, most excellent one among Devas, O bestower of freedom from fear on devotees, O deity with eyes like the petals of lotus, save me. I am immersed in the ocean of sexual objects.

18. Excepting you, O lord of worlds, O husband of Lakṣmi, I do not see any one in whom I can seek refuge. O slayer of Madhu,¹ be pleased.

1. *O slayer of Madhu.* Madhu and Kaitabha sprang from the ears of Viṣṇu. They were about to kill Brahmā who was lying on the lotus springing from Viṣṇu's navel. Viṣṇu killed them and obtained the names : Kaitabhāri and Madhusūdana.

19-22. I have hundreds of ailments due to old age. I am afflicted by miseries. I am deluded. I experience pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow. I have been bound and fettered by nooses of activities. I have fallen into the very terrible and awful ocean of worldly existence. Having sensual objects for its waters it is very difficult to cross. Passionate attachment and invidious hatred make it agitated like the fishes. It is majestic with the sense-organs acting as whirlpools. Greed and sorrow constitute its turbid waves. There is no one to cling to or to resort to as support. The ocean of worldly existence is very fickle but without any essential significance. O lord, deluded by Māyā I am wandering in it for a pretty long time. I am born again and again into thousands of species of living beings.

23. O lord, I have passed through births, thousands and ten thousands of them of diverse kinds, in this world.

24-25. The Vedas have been studied by me together with their ancillaries. Different scriptural texts, Itihāsas and Purāṇas and many fine arts have been learnt and understood by me. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction, hoarding and dwindling, income and expense, victory and defeat, prosperity and adversity, rise and fall have been experienced by me.

26. Separations from and union with wives, enemies, friends and kinsmen have been faced by me. Many and many kinds of fathers have been seen by me.

27. Many miseries have been experienced by me. Many miseries have been misunderstood and enjoyed as pleasures by me. I have had cousins and kinsmen, sons and brothers, in plenty.

28. I have lived within the belly of women that abounds in urine and floating masses of faeces. O lord, great misery has been experienced by me while staying in womb.

29. O lord, all those miseries that are usual in childhood, youth and old age have been suffered by me.

30. The miseries at death, in the path and the abode of Yama as also the tortures in hell have been experienced by me.

31-33. Again and again, I have been born amongst worms, insects, trees, elephants, horses, deer, birds, buffaloes, camels, cows and monkeys, among the twice-born people and Śūdras, in the wombs of rich Kṣatriyas and impoverished ascetics, of

kings and their servants and other embodied souls. O lord, I have taken birth in their houses again and again.

34. O lord, many times I have been the slave of glorious prosperous men. From the impoverished state I had attained the state of a lord and master.

35. Many were killed by me. I have been killed by many. I have caused death to many and my death has been caused by many. Much had been given to me by others and many times gifts have been distributed by me.

36. For and on behalf of my parents, friends, brothers and wives, among rich and learned brahmins well-versed in the vedas and poor ascetics.

37-42. Setting shame and bashfulness aside, O lord, many piteous words have been uttered by me. O lord, I do not see that abode amongst mobile and immobile beings of divine, animal or human origin, where I have not been.

O lord of the universe, sometimes I had my stay in hell. Sometimes I stayed in heaven. Sometimes my stay was confined to the limits of human world and sometimes in the sacred waters of holy centres. Just as the bucket in the contrivance to raise water, goes up or down or stays in the middle, bound always with the rope, so also, O excellent Deva, I have been fettered by the rope of Karman. I whirl up and down and in the middle due to the influence of Karman. Thus, in the wheel¹ of worldly existence, which is very awful and which causes hairs to stand, I have been revolving for a pretty long time. I do not know what I do. All my sense organs are in utter confusion.

43. A fugitive (terrified of life) attacked by grief and greed I have become senseless. Now, O lord, utterly helpless and confused, I seek refuge in you.

44. O lord, save me who have become miserable and immersed in the ocean of worldly existence. O lord of the universe, if you consider me your devotee have pity on me.

45. Excepting you I have no other kinsmen who may have some consideration for me. O lord, after resorting to you, my lord, I cease to have any fear from any quarter or direction.

1. The idea often occurs in Sanskrit poetry.

46-49. O lord, I have no fear at all in regard to life or death or acquisition and preservation of good things.

O lord, those base persons who do not worship you duly cannot have redemption from the fetters of worldly existence.

If they have no devotion to Viṣṇu the creator of the universe, of what avail is their mobility of birth, good conduct, learning, or even life itself?

Those who are deluded and are under the influence of Tāmasika nature censure you. They fall into hell. They are born again and again. They have no redemption from the ocean of hell.

50-55. Those men of evil nature, O lord, who slender you, are the basest of men.

O Viṣṇu, wherever I am born as a result of my activities, may my devotion unto you be always steady. It is by propitiating you that Devas, Daityas and other persons of self restraint have attained the greatest realization. Who will not worship you, O Lord ?

O Lord, even Brahmā and other Devas are not competent to eulogise you adequately. How can I then, with the limited human intellect eulogise you who are beyond and greater than nature.

O lord, due to my ignorance you have been eulogised in a haphazard manner by me. If you have mercy on me forgive my fault.

O lord, good men have forbearance in regard even to one who has committed a crime. Hence, O lord of Devas, be pleased to retain affection for your devotees. O lord, you have been eulogised by me with the mind full of devotion. Vāsudeva, may all that be true. Obeisance to you, O lord.

Brahma said :

56. O excellent sages, the Garuḍa-emblemed deity who was eulogised thus by him became pleased with him and granted him the boon of his choice.

57. He who worships the lord of the universe every day and eulogises him by this hymn, shall become intelligent. He shall certainly obtain liberation.

58. The pure man who repeats this excellent hymn during the three Sandhyās every day shall attain virtue, wealth, love and liberation. He shall surely become a scholar.

59. He who reads, listens to and narrates this with great concentration shall shake off his sins and obtain the divine world.

60. This hymn is conducive to wealth. It dispels sins. It is auspicious. It bestows worldly pleasures and salvation. It is a rare esoteric secret. It is sacred. It should not be imparted to any one and everyone.

61. It should not be imparted to an atheist, a fool, an ungrateful person, an arrogant or to one of wicked intellect. It should never be handed over to a knave.

62. It should be imparted to one endowed with devotion, good qualities and good conduct, to a devotee of Viṣṇu, to a calm person habituated to perform his duty with faith.

63. This hymn Kāruṇyastava (a hymn of mercy) causes destruction of sins. It bestows happiness and salvation, and grants desires. This hymn of the lord mentioned by me is the most excellent of all.

64. Those pure men who meditate continuously on the slayer of Mura,¹ the subtle deity, the ancient Puruṣa attain liberation and enter Viṣṇu as do the butter-offering consigned to the fire of sacrifice by reciting the Mantras.

65. Viṣṇu is the only lord who dispels sorrows of worldly existence. He is greater than the greatest being. There is no one greater than that lord. He is the creator, protector and annihilator. He is the essence of all material objects.

66. Of what avail is their learning ? Of what avail are the good qualities they possess ? Of what avail are their sacrifices, charitable gifts and severe penance ? All these are useless if they do not have devotion to lord Kṛṣṇa who is the preceptor of the universe and who is the bestower of happiness and salvation.

67. He who has devotion to the deity known as the best of all Puruṣas is the most blessed in the world. He is pure. He is a

1. *The slayer of Mura:* Lord Kṛṣṇa slew the two powerful asuras : Mura and Naraka when he attacked Prāgjyoṭīṣa, the capital city of Naraka.

great scholar, the most excellent by virtue of sacrifices, austerities and noble traits. He is the wise knower, liberal donor and speaker of truth.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

The Origin of Idols

Brahma said :

1-2. O leading sages, after eulogising and bowing thus to the eternal lord of the universe, Vāsudeva the bestower of all desired benefits, the worried king spread Kuśa grass on the ground and a single cloth over Kuśa grass. Keeping his mind concentrated on him he restrained his sense-organs and went to sleep.

3. At the time of going to bed his thought was—"How does Vāsudeva, the lord of Devas become visible ? How is that lord going to dispel my agony ?

4. Vāsudeva, the preceptor of the universe revealed himself to the sleeping king as one who held conch, discus and iron club.

5-8. He saw the lord of Devas, the preceptor of the universe, in the course of a dream. The lord was holding conch and discus. His fierce hands held iron club and discus. He had the bow Śāringa, arrow and sword. There was a halo of shining resplendence. He had the colour and lustre of the sun at the end of Yugas. He resembled the blue lapis lazuli. He was seated on the shoulders of Garuḍa. The splendid deity had eight arms. O self-possessed sages, the lord spoke to the king :—"Well done, O king, of great intellect".

O king, I am satisfied on account of this great sacrifice and your devotion and faith Why do you bewail in vain ?

9. O king, the idol here is eternal and worthy of being worshipped. I shall tell you the means whereby you will obtain that idol.

10-12. When this night dawns, at the rise of the sun devoid of impurities, (you shall go) to the place where the sea water

comes to an end. It is adorned by different trees. O king, even within the shore line much water is seen. It is the water that has rushed in there in a flood from the waves of the briny sea. There is a great tree on the shore standing both on land and in the water. Though the billows strike at it, the tree does not shake.

13. O king, go there alone in a sportful mood. Take an axe with you and wade through the waves. You will reach the tree.

14-15. On reaching the holy fig tree chop it off unhesitatingly. Chop, pear and chisel that tree of wonderful appearance. O king, evolve my divine idol after full consideration. Leave off worries that delude you.

Brahmā said :

16. After saying this, Lord Viṣṇu, the highly blessed deity, vanished from sight. On account of this vision in his dream the king was extremely surprised.

17. The king spent that night eagerly expecting (what had been foretold). His mind dwelt on it alone. He repeated the Mantras and hymns pertaining to Viṣṇu.

18-19. When the night dawned into day the king got up. He took a holy dip in the ocean in accordance with the injunctions. He gave charitable gifts to the brahmins, offering villages and cities. After performing the routine rites of the forenoon, the king went ahead.

20. Neither a chariot nor a charioteer, neither an elephant nor a foot-soldier accompanied him. The highly intelligent king entered the great shore alone.

21-22. There he saw the huge tree, the resplendent tall tree. It was very terrible, fierce, holy and extensive. Its height was great and the size very large. It stood well protected near the seashore. It had the colour and lustre of dense red madder. The tree had neither a name nor a species.

23. O brahmans, on seeing that tree the king was joyous. He chopped it off with his sharp and steady axe.

24. He was desirous of splitting it unto two. When the log was being examined a wonderful event was seen.

25-28. Viśvakarmā¹ and Viṣṇu assumed the forms of two brahmins and came there. Both these brahmins were equally highly blessed. They shone with their resplendence. They had divine garlands and unguents. They approached king Indradyumna and said : "O great king what is it that you are going to do here ? O king of powerful arms, why was this tree chopped off? O king of powerful arms, this tree had been standing isolated on the shore of the great sea (away) from the desolate thick forest. Why has it been cut down ?

Brahma said :

29-30. O brahmins, on hearing their words the king became glad. On seeing them arrive there like the moon and the sun endowed with forms the king bowed to these lords of Universe. He spoke to them sweet and soft words as he stood with his head lowered in reverence.

The king said :

31. It is my desire to propitiate the lord of Devas, the lord of the worlds devoid of beginning and devoid of end. For that I shall make the idol.

32. In the course of a dream I have been directed by the lord of Devas the noblest and the greatest Soul. It has thus been narrated to you two.

33. On hearing the words of the king who was on par with lord Indra, the lord Viṣṇu, the lord of the Universe laughed with satisfaction and spoke thus.

Viṣṇu said :

34-38. Well done, well done, O highly blessed one. Your inclination is excellent. The ocean of worldly existence is terrible. It is as restless as the leaves of the plantain tree. It is insignificant and more or less full of misery. Enjoyment of pleasures is like the crocodile. It makes it excited. The sense-organs act like foams and whirlpool. It is very difficult to cross. It causes hairs to stand on end. Hundreds of different ailments

1. Viśvakarma, the architect of gods.

act like eddies. The ocean of worldly existence is like a water bubble. Since in such an atmosphere your mind is inclined to propitiate Viṣṇu, you are really blessed. O leading king, you are adorned by all good qualities. The entire Earth with all subjects, mountains, parks and forests, towns and villages, and adorned by the four castes, is blessed, since you, O leading king, are the lord and protector of subjects.

39. Come on, O highly blessed one, this tree is comfortably cool. Sit here alongwith us both. We shall discuss pious topics.

40. This is my associate who has come here to help me. He is the most excellent among the artisans. He is equal to Viśvakarmā himself. He is an expert in all activities. He will make the idol thought of by you. Leave the shore now.

41-47. On hearing these words of the brahmin, the most excellent king left the shore and stood in the cool shade of the tree. Then the soul of the universe, the deity who had assumed the form of a brahmin, O leading brahmins, gave this order to the chief of Artisans—"Make the idol. The first one shall be in the form of Kṛṣṇa. It should be extremely calm. The eyes should be as large as the petals of the lotus. He should have the scar Śrivatsa and Kaustubha¹ jewel. He should hold conch, discus Sudarśana² and iron club.

The second idol should have the colour and lustre of the moon and cow's milk. It should be marked by the Svastika sign. He should hold the ploughshare as his weapon. He is the lord of great strength named Ananta.³ His end has never been seen and understood by Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Vidyā-dharas and serpents. Hence he is known as Ananta.

1. *Kaustubha*:—a celebrated jewel, obtained with thirteen precious things at the churning of milky ocean and suspended on the breast of Kṛṣṇa.

2. *Sudarśana*:—The discus of lord Kṛṣṇa which he received from the fire-god to fight with Indra when the latter showered rain to protect the forest Khāṇḍava from burning. According to another version, Viśvakarmā, the divine architect put the sun in a turning machine, turned him and decreased his radiance. Out of the dust of the sun, produced by this process, Viśvakarmā made the discus-weapon, the aerial chariot, Puṣpaka, the Trident of Śiva and the Śakti (lance) of Subrahmanyā. Of these weapons, the discus Sudarśana was given to Mahāviṣṇu.

3. *Ananta*, the Nāga chief Śeṣa. Balarāma, the eldest brother of Śrīkṛṣṇa is said to be part incarnation (amśavatāra) of Śeṣa.

The third idol should be of Subhadrā¹ the sister of Vasudeva. It shall be splendid and gold-coloured. It should be marked with all characteristics.

Brahma said :

48. On hearing his words, Viśvakarmā did all efficiently, instantaneously. He made the idols of auspicious traits.

49. The ear-rings were of wonderful design and shone in the ears. The hands were kept on the discus and ploughshare, Kṛṣṇa holding the discus and Balarāma the ploughshare. The idols were approved of by the pious people.

50-51. The first idol had white lustre and colour. It was as resplendent as the autumnal moon. The eyes were reddish. The body was huge and the head looked savagely fierce due to the hoods. It was the fierce Balarāma who was clad in blue robes, He was haughty and intoxicated due to his inordinate strength. He wore a single ear-ring. He had a divine form. He held the iron club and the threshing rod.

52-53. The second idol was Viṣṇu's. His eyes resembled the lotus; his body the blue cloud. He shone like the Atasi flower. His eyes were as large as the petals of the lotus. He had yellow garments. He was very fierce and auspicious. He was marked by the characteristic sign of Śrīvatsa. The discus filled one of his hands. He had a divine form that dispelled sins.

54-55. The third idol made by Viśvakarmā was that of Subhadrā. She had the colour and lustre of gold. Her eyes were large like the petals of a lotus. She was clad in robes of various and wonderful colours. She was bedecked in necklaces and shoulderlets. She was adorned by wonderful ornaments. Gem-studded necklaces dangled round her neck. Viśvakarmā made her very beautiful with plump and elevated breasts.

56-57. On seeing this wonderful deed of making the idols in a trice, on seeing that the beautiful idols richly endowed with all characteristic signs, clad in a pair of divine clothes and adorned by different jewels were made quickly, the king was excessively surprised and he spoke thus.

1. *Subhadra*—sister of Śrīkṛṣṇa was married to Arjuna. Abhimanyu was her son. She is deified.

Indradyumna said :

58-60. Are you two Devas who have come here in the guise of brahmins ? Both of you have wonderful activities. You are of divine conduct, not human.

If you are not Devas or human beings, are you Yakṣas or Vidyādharaś ? Are you Brahmā and Hṛṣikeśa ? Are you Vasus or Aśvins ? I do not know whether you are really present here or merely stationed in Māyā form (whatever it may be). I seek refuge in you two. May your real self be revealed to me.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Description of Puruṣottama

Sri Bhagavān said :

1-2. I am neither a Deva nor Yakṣa neither a Daitya nor the king of Devas. I am neither Brahmā nor Rudra. Understand me to be Parameśvara (The Supreme Lord). I dispel the agony of all worlds. My strength and manliness are in perfect state. I have no end. I am to be propitiated by all living beings.

3. The deity whom the Yogins call Vāsudeva can be comprehended only through perfect knowledge. It is mentioned in all scriptures. The lord is mentioned (as Brahma) in Vedānta texts.

4. I am Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. I am Indra, the king of Devas. I am Yama who restrains the universe.

5. I am the earth and other elements. I am the three-fold sacrificial fire.¹ O king, I am also the firegod swallowing what is consigned into him. I am Varuṇa, lord of Waters. I am earth and the supporter of the Earth.

6. Whatever there is in the world that can be expressed by a word, whether mobile or immobile, I am that.

1. *Three fires*—Gṛhapatya, Āhavaniya and Dakṣipā.

The whole universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings is nothing other than what I am.¹

7. O excellent king of good holy rites ! I am pleased with you. Choose any boon that you wish. Whatever is desired by you, whatever is cherished in the heart by you, I shall give you immediately.

8. Persons without merit do not have my vision even in a dream. Due to your steadfast devotion you have seen me directly.

Brahma said :

9. O brahmins, on hearing these words of Vasudeva the king experienced horripilation all over his body and he recited the following prayer :

The king prayed :

10-16. O lover of Śrī, obeisance be to you. O consort of Śrī, obeisance to the yellow-robed one. O bestower of glory, O lord of Śrī, O abode of glory and prosperity, obeisance to you. O home of Glory, I bow down to the primordial Puruṣa. Isāna the lord of all, having faces all round. I bow down to you who are eternal and unsullied.

I make obeisance to one who is beyond sound, beyond attributes, devoid of positive and negative aspects, unsmeared, attributeless, subtle and omniscient and who conceives and creates all.

I bow down to one who resembles the colour in the rainy season; who is engaged in activities conducive to the welfare of cows and brahmins, who protects all, who pervades all and who purifies all.

I bow down to the lord who holds conch and discus, who holds iron club and the threshing rod; I bow down to the lord who grants boon and who has the lustre of the petals of the blue lotus.

I bow down to Hari who lies down on the serpent couch

1. This tendency towards monotheism is due to the influence of Vedantic advaitavāda, but generally the Purāṇas represent polytheistic creed.

in the milky ocean. I bow down to Hṛṣikeśa who dispels all sins.

I bow down to you, the lord of the chiefs of Devas, who bestows boons and pervades all.

Brahmā said :

17. After eulogising thus, he bowed to the lord with palms joined in reverence. After bowing down and falling down on the ground he said.

The king said :

18-21. O lord, if you are pleased with me, I choose this excellent boon. The following persons shall meditate on the greatest region :—Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Nāgas, Siddhas, Vidyādharas, Sādhyas, Kinnaras, Guhyakas, the sages who are highly blessed and experts in the different texts of scriptures, recluses, interpreting Yogins, Vedic scholars, and those others who are conversant with the scriptures on liberation. The region that is devoid of attributes, free from impurities, peaceful, highly sanctifying and worthy of being hidden as a secret. Due to your favour I wish to go to that region which is very difficult of access.

The Lord said :

22. May everything be to your welfare. Obtain everything desired by you. Everything will happen as you wish by my favour. There is no doubt about it.

23. O excellent king, rule over the great kingdom continuously for ten thousand nine hundred years.

24-26. You will then go to the divine region which is difficult of access even to Devas and Asuras. Your desire shall be fulfilled. I shall show you the calm and peaceful region worthy to be known. It is the unchanging, unmanifest secret region, greater than the greatest, subtle, unsmeared, motionless and steady. It is devoid of old age and grief, devoid of activities and cause. I shall show you that region by attaining which you will derive the highest bliss and realize the greatest goal.

27-28. O leading king, may your fame stay here on the Earth as long as there are clouds, as long as the sky exists, as

long as the moon, sun and stars last, as long as the seven oceans exist; as long as Meru and other mountains stand and Devas stand in heaven. So long your fame will remain undiminished.

29. This sacred water-reservoir named Indradyumna-saras is born as a part of sacrifice. By taking bath in it even for once, people attain the world of Indra.

30. He who offers rice balls on the splendid bank of the lake shall redeem twentyone generations and go to the world of Indra.

31. He will go there in aerial chariot honoured by celestial damsels and the divine musicians singing in loud voice. He shall stay there for the duration of fourteen Indras.

32-36. To the South of the lake, in the South West corner there is a holy fig tree. There is a raised platform close by. It is covered by a bushy growth of Ketaki plants. The place is full of different trees with innumerable coconut palms, Camakas, Bakulas, Aśokas, Karṇikāras, Punnāgas, Nāgakesaras, Pāṭalas, Āmrātas, Saralas, sandal trees, Deodars, Nyagrodhas, Aśvatthas, Khadiras, Pārijātas, Arjunas, Hintālas, Tālas, Śimśapas, Badaras, Karanjas, Lakucas, Plakṣas, Jack, Bilva and many other trees. All of them adorn the place.

37-41. On the fifth day in the bright half of the month of Āśādha when the constellation is Maghā, devotees will keep us there for seven days. Good-featured Courtesans clad in splendid dress will install the idols. Sweet and pleasing songs as well as dances coupled with sports (will entertain them). Fanning with chowries having golden handles and fans decorated with jewels, the auspicious ladies will instal us there. There will be religious students, recluses, excellent brahmins, householders, forest-dwellers. Siddhas, and others will assemble there and eulogise Rāma and Keśava by reciting hymns of excellent words and letters and the Mantras of Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman.

42. By eulogising, visiting and devoutly bowing to the idols men shall stay in the prosperous city of Hari for ten thousand years in accordance with the divine reckoning.

43-45. He will be honoured and worshipped by heavenly nymphs and Gandharvas singing sweetly. He shall sport about there as a follower of Hari, Keśava. He will go to the excellent

world on an aerial chariot that has the colour of the sun wearing a shining necklace of precious gems. He will enjoy all desired pleasures in that excellent world. When the power of penance dwindles he will return to the earth as a man and be born as a brahmin. He will have crores of coins and wealth. He will certainly be a master of four Vedas.

Brahmā said :

46. After granting him the boons thus and giving him the time-limit O brahmins, Hari vanished along with Viśvakarmā.

47. The king was delighted. The hairs over his body stood up. He considered himself blessed due to the vision of Hari.

48-53. The idols of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Subhadrā the bestower of boons, were brought on the divine chariots. They were rendered beautiful and wonderful by the adornment of jewels and gold coverings. With shouts of victory and auspicious slogans the intelligent king accompanied by his ministers and priests brought the images there.

With the accompaniment of sounds of different musical instruments and auspicious chanting of vedic Mantras, he installed them in a holy, beautiful auspicious place. He got them installed through brahmins in an auspicious time when the constellation was auspicious and the (lunar day) was splendid, in accordance with the injunctions and regulations laid down in the śāstras. The king did every thing with the permission of his preceptor. After offering monetary gifts duly to the preceptor he distributed money among the Rtviks and others in accordance with the injunctions of the Śāstras.

54-58. After duly performing the rites of installation in the palace, the most excellent abode, he established all of them duly by holy rites. He worshipped them with fragrant flowers of all sorts. He offered gold, jewels, pearls and splendid clothes. Gems of various kinds, divine chairs, villages, towns, cities, lands and territories were gifted by him. After giving away such gifts, after performing different sacrifices and after ruling over the kingdom in the most fitting manner the king became contented. He abandoned every thing he possessed.

Then he attained the highest abode, the greatest region of Viṣṇu.

59-60. Thus excellent sages, the pious king has been recounted by me. The greatness of the holy centre has also been mentioned. What else do you wish to hear? On hearing the words of Brahmā born of the unmanifest, the Brahmins thought it wonderful and gladly asked him again.

The sages said :

61-62. O most excellent Deva, at what time is one to go to Puruṣottama shrine? O lord, what is the mode whereby the Pañcatirtha pilgrimage is to be performed? Tell us the respective merits and benefits of taking holy dip and offering charitable gifts in each of these Tirthas as well as of visiting the deity. Mention them separately.

Brahma said :

63-71. If any one observes fast and performs penance in the holy centre of Kurukṣetra, standing on one leg, conquering anger and sense-organs and continues it for seventy thousand years he may derive some benefit thereof. But, O excellent Brahmins, if he observes fast and visits Puruṣottama but once he obtains a greater benefit than that. Hence, O excellent sages, Puruṣottama is to be visited in the month of Jyeṣṭha assiduously by brahmins and other castes who desire to attain heavenly world and who have perfect restraint. After performing pilgrimages to the five Tirthas duly, the excellent man should visit Puruṣottama on the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha. Those who visit the undiminishing lord Puruṣottama on the twelfth day, reach the world of Viṣṇu from where they never fall off. Hence, O excellent brahmins, one must assiduously go there in the month of Jyeṣṭha. After taking the holy dip in the five Tirthas, Puruṣottama should be visited. Even that person who is far off but who devoutly glorifies Puruṣottama everyday with a pure mind shall go to the city of Viṣṇu. The man who undertakes pilgrimage with faith and concentration to Kṛṣṇa (shrine) shall be liberated from all sins. He shall go to the world of Viṣṇu. By visiting the wheel

of Hari, that is kept above the palace even from a distance and by bowing to it devoutly, the man is immediately liberated from sins.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

A Visit to the Holy Banyan Tree by Mārkandeya

Brahma said :

1-4. At the close of the Kalpa, O excellent sages, when the great annihilation began to function, when the sun, moon and wind perished, when the mobile and immobile beings were destroyed, when the sun of dissolution rose up, when the fierce rumbling sound of the clouds of dissolution was heard when the trees and mountains crumbled due to the calamitous mass of lightning and thunder, when the whole world was crushed, when the great comets portended distinction, when the waters in the lakes and rivers were dried up, O brahmins, the fire of utter annihilation accompanied by the wind entered the worlds, brightly illuminated by the twelve Ādityas.

5. It pierced the Earth, entered the nether worlds and caused consternation among Devas, Dānavas and Yakṣas.

6. O leading sages, burning from below, the fire destroyed everything in a trice, the world of Nāgas and whatever there was on the earth.

7-8. The Doomsday fire blazed up hundreds and thousands of Yojanas. The wind blew quickly. The entire universe including Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Nāgas and Rākṣasas was burned by the blazing lordly fire.

9-10. When blazing brightly, it was very terrible. Known as Kalpa fire it had great flames and excessive resplendence. It shone and produced a loud report. Burning with its own brilliance it resembled ten million suns. Immediately it burned the three worlds, the abodes of Devas, Asuras and mortals.

11. In the middle of this terrible dissolution of such a

devastating nature an extremely virtuous sage was engaged in the path of meditation.

12. O Brahmins, he stood there alone. He was known as Mārkaṇḍeya. He was bound by the noose of delusion. His sense-organs were agitated by hunger and thirst.

13-14. O brahmins, his throat, lips and palate were parched. On seeing the great fire he became extremely terrified. Oppressed by thirst and faltering at every step, he wondered over the earth like a senseless fugitive. Unable to find a saviour he ran about here and there.

15-19. He did not derive any pleasure. O brahmins, he did not find any place of rest. He thought within himself :— “I do not know in whom I shall take refuge. How can I see that lord, the eternal Puruṣeśa” Thinking thus with his mind in concentration on the eternal lord the cause of the great dissolution he reached that divine region of the eternal lordly Banyan tree well known as Puruṣeśa. O excellent sages, he hastened near the tree. After reaching it he sat under its root. There was no fear from the black fire there. There was no showering of burning sparks of fire. The Doomsday fire did not come there. There was no thunderbolt either.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Mārkaṇḍeya views annihilation

Brahmā said :

1. Then great clouds rose up in the sky presenting a wonderful sight. They were like herds of elephants bedecked in necklaces of lightning streaks.

2-5. Some of them were dark-complexioned like the blue lotus. Some resembled the lilies. Some the filaments. Some were yellow. Some had the green shining colour. Some resembled the Eggs of the crow. Some had the lustre of lotus petals. Some were of vermillion hue. Some had the huge size of excellent cities. Some were comparable to excellent mountains.

Some shone like collyrium. Some had the lustre of emerald. Great clouds bound by clusters of lightning and streaks rose up, O highly blessed ones. They had terrible forms and they roared with a terrible rumbling noise.

6-10. The clouds then covered the sky. The entire earth including the mountains, forests and mines, and the quarters were filled by them. They were showering jets and columns of water, O excellent sages. Thereafter, urged by lord Brahmā the terrible clouds flooded the entire earth with water. Showering water they filled up earth. They extinguished the awful, terrible and inauspicious fire. Urged by lord Brahmā, they rained for twelve years filling everything with currents of water. Then, O brahmins, the oceans transgressed their own shore-lines.

11-15. The mountains crumbled. The earth sank. At the extremities of the sky the clouds whirled and revolved. They enveloped the sky. Struck by the forceful gust of wind they perished. O excellent sages, Viṣṇu the primordial lord residing in a lotus drank up the terrible wind. O brahmins, he then slept in that terrible vast sheet of water without any support and enveloped in darkness. When Devas, Asuras and men perished, when the earth was rid of Yakṣas and Rākṣasas, the tired sages meditated on the Lord. On opening up his eyes he saw the earth filled with water. He did not see the Banyan tree, earth, quarters and the sun.

16-18. He did not see the moon, wind, Devas, Asuras or Nāgas, in that terrible vast sheet of water when mobile and immobile beings had perished. Getting immersed therein, O brahmins, the sage began to swim. In great agony he swam about here and there. O brahmins, he was about to be drowned. He could not see any saviour. On seeing him perplexed and bewildered the lord who had been delighted at his meditation, spoke to him in sympathy.

The Lord said :

19-20. O dear, O Mārkaṇḍeya of holy rites, you are tired like a boy. You are my devotee, hence, come to me quickly. O dear one, O excellent sage, do not be afraid. You have come to my presence. O Mārkaṇḍeya of great courage, I find that you are like a boy afflicted by fatigue.

Brahmā said :

21. O brahmins, on hearing his words, the sage was extremely infuriated and surprised too. He said.

Mārkandeya said :

22-24. Who is calling me by name as though slighting my penance ? Who is thwarting, as it were, my body, many thousand years old ? This looks quite unmannerly. I have been honoured by Devas, too. Brahmā, the lord of Devas addresses me "O Long-lived one". My head is hardened due to extreme penance. Who is that short-lived rogue who wishes to hasten his death by calling me Mārkandeya ?

Brahmā said :

25-26. O brahmins, after saying thus, the sage became worried and anxious—"Is this a dream that I have seen ? Or is this a delusion ?"

After thinking thus he decided thus dispelling his misery "I shall seek refuge in lord Viṣṇu with devotion".

27. The sage then sought refuge in Viṣṇu. His mind solely dwelt on him alone. Once again he looked at the Banyan tree towering above the water.

28-34. On one of its wide branches there was a beautiful golden and divine palanquin made by Viśvakarman. It was studded with diamonds and lapis lazuli. It was decorated with crystals and corals. Rubies too were put in precious stones, covered with various sheets and beautified by valuable gems. It looked miraculous in many ways. It was adorned by a halo zone. He saw lord Kṛṣṇa who had assumed the form of a boy stationed on it. He had the resplendence of a crore of suns. He shone in his brilliance. He had four arms and beautiful limbs. His eyes were large like the petals of a lotus. He had the scar Śrivatsa on his chest. He held a conch, a discus and an iron club. His chest was covered with garlands of sylvan flowers. He wore divine ear-rings, weighty necklaces round his neck. He was bedecked in divine gems and jewels. On seeing him the eyes of the sage bloomed in wonderment. His hairs stood up all over his body. He bowed to the lord and said this :

Märkandeya said :

35. How is it that this boy stays here alone and fearless in this terrible vast sheet of water where all mobile and immobile beings have perished ?

Brahma said :

36. Although the sage was aware of the past, present and future, he did not understand the lord as he was deluded by his Mâyâ. When he did not understand him he said with dejection :

Märkandeya said :

37-43. In vain is the vigour of my penance; futile is my perfect knowledge, futile are my rites, my long life is in vain. My human birth itself is in vain, since I do not know the divine lord sleeping in the palanquin.

Brahma said :

That brahmin who pondered thus, who senselessly floated about for a saviour and who was completely bewildered became extremely dejected and dispirited. O brahmins he could not look at the brilliance of the boy as he stayed there resembling the rising sun and supported by his own greatness. O leading sages, on seeing the sage coming towards him the boy said to him laughingly in a voice that resembled the rumbling sound of the cluster of clouds.

The Lord said :

O dear one, I know that you are tired and you have approached me for protection. Enter my body quickly. This is the plan devised by me for you.

Brahma said :

On hearing his words the deluded sage did not utter anything. The helpless sage entered his wide open mouth.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Märkandeya wanders in the belly of the Lord

Brahma said :

1. After entering the belly of the boy the sage saw the entire earth consisting of different realms and countries.

2-4. He saw seven oceans¹ :—Of salt water, sugarcane juice, wine, ghee, curds, milk and fresh water. He saw seven continents—Jambū, Plakṣa, Śalmala, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śaka and Puṣkara. He saw Bhārata and other Varṣas (sub-continents). He saw the golden mountain Meru, its peaks shining with gems and jewels. It had many caves.

5. He saw four castes,² first to last in his belly. He saw deer, monkeys, lions, boars, Srmara variety of deer, rabbits, elephants and other animals.

6-9. Whatever holy centre, village or city there was on the earth, he saw everyone of them therein. He saw agricultural operations, breeding of cows and cattle and business activities of buying and selling. He saw therein Indra, Devas and other heaven-dwellers, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Yakṣas, eternal sages, Daityas, Dānavas, Serpents and snakes. O excellent sages. He saw Rāhu the son of Siṁhikā, and other enemies of Devas. O excellent brahmins, in his belly he saw those mobile and immobile beings which had been formerly seen by him on the face of the earth.

10-12. Or of what avail is much talk or the same thing repeated over and over again? He saw the entire mobile and immobile beings beginning with Brahmā and ending with a blade of grass. He saw the Bhurloka, Bhuvarloka, Svarloka, Mahar, Jana, Tapas, Satya, Atala, Vitala, Pātāla, Bhūtala, Vitala, Rasātala and Mahātala. In fact, he saw the entire cosmic egg in his belly.

1. *Seven oceans* : Sea of Lavāṇa (salt water), of Ikṣu (sugarcane juice), of Surā (liquor), of Ghṛta (clarified butter), of Dadhi (curd), of Dugdha (milk) and of Fresh Water. Each of these surrounds a particular island.

2. *Four Castes* : Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra. These castes exist even today, though they are dwindling fast.

13-16. O excellent brahmins, by the favour of that lord his movement was unimpeded. His memory was unimpaired. O brahmins, wandering thus over the entire universe in his belly he could never reach the end of the body of Viṣṇu.

O brahmins, when he could not reach the end of his body, the sage sought refuge in the lord the bestower of boons.

Then, O brahmins, he suddenly came out of the open mouth of the noble-souled Puruṣa with the speed of the wind.

Extra eight verses according to another reading occur between the 4th and 5th verses of Chapter 51

He saw the Meru mountain inhabited by sages and abounding in trees. It was full of animals and mysterious and wonderful objects. It was beautified by tigers, lions, boars, Camara, deer, buffaloes, elephants, monkeys and other animals. It was peopled by Lord Indra and other Devas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Nāgas, and those others who lived in the abode of Devas.

Brahmā said :

Thus the excellent sage, the brahmin, who wondered about in the belly of that boy, saw the glorious Sumeru, Himavān, Hemakūṭa, Niṣadha, Gandhamādana, Śveta, Durdhara, Nīla, Kailāsa, Malaya, Vindhya, Pāriyātra, Arbuda, Sahya, Śuktimān, Maināka, and the mountain Rkṣa. He saw these and other mountains that were there. O excellent sage, he saw them bedecked in gems and jewels. He saw Kurukṣetra, Pañcāla, Matsya, Madras, Kekayas, Bāhlikas, Śurasenas, Kāśmīras, Taṅgaṇas, Khasas, Kirātas, Karṇapravarāṇas and Marus.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

The Review of the Prayer to the Lord

Brahmā said :

1. O excellent sages, after coming out of the belly of that boy, he once again saw the earth turned into a vast sheet of water. It was devoid of people.

2. He saw that same lord in the form of the infant boy whom he had seen before. He was stationed on the branch of banyan tree in a palanquin.

3. That lord had the scar Śrivatsa on his chest. He was clad in yellow robes and had four arms. His wide eyes resembled the large petals of the lotus and he stayed there taking up the universe.

4. On seeing the sage floating and swimming like a senseless person and approaching him after coming out of his mouth, the lord spoke with laugh.

The Lord said :

5. O dear one, I hope you stayed in my belly comfortably and have had your rest. While wandering about what wonderful thing did you observe there ?

6. O excellent sage, you are my devotee and have resorted completely to me. But you are tired. Hence, to help you I speak to you. See me again.

Brahm said :

7-10. On hearing his words he experienced horripilation due to delight. He looked at the deity who was bedecked with lustrous gems and jewels and who was too dazzling to be seen. In a Muhūrta, O brahmins, by the favour of that lord he had a new pair of eyes delighted and devoid of impurities. O brahmins, the sage bowed his head at his feet that are worshipped by Devas and which had red toes and sole. With a voice chocked with delight he began to eulogise him. The delighted sage looked at the Supreme being again and again with palms joined in reverence and began to eulogise :

Mārkandeya said :

11. O lord of Devas, O lord of Universe, you have assumed the form of a boy by your Māyā, O beautiful lotus-eyed one, save me, I am miserable and I have sought refuge in you.

12. O most excellent one among Devas, I am scorched by the fire called Sarvarta. O lord, save me. I am afraid of the rising of sparks of fire in flames.

13. I am dried up by the fierce wind that is the life-giving breath of the universe. I am perplexed and bewildered as well as tired. Save me, O lord, save me.

14. Scorched by the Ādityas, Pralayāvartaka and others, I do not derive peace. Save me, O lord.

15. I am thirsty and afflicted by hunger. O lord of universe, I am miserable too. I do not see any saviour. Save me, O lord.

16. In this terrible vast sheet of water, as the mobile and immobile beings have perished I do find no resort, save me, O lord.

17. O lord of Devas, the mobile and immobile beings were seen by me in your belly. I am surprised and bewildered. Save me, O lord.

18. In this worldly existence that has no basic support, be pleased O Lord, O most excellent one among Devas, be pleased. O deity fond of the learned and Devas, be pleased.

19. Be pleased, O Lord of the learned. Be pleased, O support of the learned. Be pleased, O lord of the worlds, O cause of the cause of the Universe.

20. Be pleased, O lord of Devas. Be pleased with me, O deity that bear the burden of the earth. Be pleased, O deity residing in waters. Be pleased, O slayer of Madhu demon.

21. Be pleased, O lover of Lakṣmī, be pleased, O lord of Devas. Be pleased, O slayer of Karṇa and Keśin. Be pleased O destroyer of Ariṣṭa.¹

22. Be pleased, O Kṛṣṇa, O destroyer of Daityas. Be pleased, O slayer of Danu's sons. Be pleased, O resident of Mathurā. Be pleased, O scion of the family of Yadus.

23-24. Be pleased, O younger brother of Indra, be pleased O bestower of boons, O unchanging one, You are the earth, water, fire, wind and firmament. You are the mind, Ego, and

1. *Ariṣṭa* : An asura, a servant of Karṇa. Once, at the instance of Karṇa he went to Gokula disguised as an ox to kill Śrīkṛṣṇa. The ox instilled terror in people by crushing hills and mountains, with its horns and bellowing like a bull. But Śrīkṛṣṇa faced the beast with courage and rained blows on him so that it was thrown hundred yojanas away and it cried. At the time of death it regained its former form and was recognized as asura.

cosmic intellect. You are the Primordial Nature. O lord of the universe, you are Sattva and other things.

25. You are the Puruṣa, the seed of the Universe. You are more excellent than others. You are the sense-organs. O lord, you are the objects, and subtle primary elements.

26. You are the guardian of the quarters. You are Devas, Yajñas and sacrificial gifts. You are Indra, Śiva, offering and the sacrificial fire.

27. You are Yama, the lord of manes; O lord, you are the lord of Rākṣasas (Nirṛti) himself. You are Varuna, lord of waters; you are wind and the lord of wealth (Kubera).

28. You are Isāna, Ananta, Gaṇeśa, Sañmukha, Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas and Khecaras (Planets).

29-30. You are Dānavas, Yakṣas, Daityas, Maruts, Siddhas, Apsaras, Nāgas, Gandharvas, Cāraṇas, manes, Vālakhilyas, and Prajāpatis. O Acyuta, you are sages, ascetics, Aśvins and demons.

31-33. You are other species too, whatever can be termed a living being. Of what avail is much talk ? You are everything beginning with Brahmā and ending with the blade of grass. You are the whole universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings, all things of the past, present and future. Your greatest form, O lord, is steady, motionless and fixed. Even Brahmā and others do not know that. Then what about others of deficient intellect. O lord, you are intrinsically pure. You are perpetual and greater than Prakṛti.

34-35. You are unmanifest, permanent, infinite, all-pervasive, supreme lord. You are the firmament, the greatest being, the calm one, the unborn and unchanging.

36. Who is competent to eulogise you adequately, you who are devoid of attributes and unsullied. O lord, you have been eulogised by me the deficient one of insignificant mind. O lord of the chiefs of Devas, it behoves you to forgive that, O eternal one.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Märkandeya's Vision of the Holy Lord

Brahmā said :

1. Thus eulogised by Märkandeya, O brahmans, the lord became pleased. He said in a voice as majestic as the rumbling sound of clouds.

The Lord said :

2. O excellent sage, tell me freely what you have in your mind. O brahmanical sage, I shall give you everything, whatever you may desire from me.

Brahmā said :

3. O brahmans, on hearing the words of that noble infant, the sage became extremely delighted. With his mind dwelling on him he said :

Märkandeya said :

4. O lord, I wish to know you. O bestower of salvation, I wish to know your Māyā (Illusion). O lord of Devas, by your favour, my power of memory is not impaired.

5. I have hurriedly wandered through your body. O lord, I entered your body through your mouth. O lord, I saw all worlds in your belly.

Extra verses

[O lord, the following are stationed within your body viz.—Devas, Dānavas, Rākṣasas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Nāgas. Indeed, I saw the whole universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings. I saw the border lands of the mountain Sumeru thronged by sages and beautified by minerals. The place was full of trees and creepers of all kinds; fountains and springs there were many, it was full of animals of all kinds; it was wonderfully charming and beautified by animals such as tigers, lions, boars, Samara deer, buffaloes, elephants, antelopes, monkeys, and other animals. It was occupied by Indra and other Devas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Nāgas, Sages, Yakṣas, Apsaras and other dwellers of heaven. Such was the borderland of the mountain Sumeru. I, an excellent sage and a brahmin, wandered further on in your belly, as a boy. . .

I saw the Himavān, Hemakūṭa, Niṣadha, Gandhamādana, Śveta, Kañkanila, Kailāsa, Dardura, Mahendra, Malaya, Vindhya, Pāriyātra, Arbuda, Sahya, Śuktimān, Mai-nāka, Cakra and many other mountains. O lord, I, the excellent sage, saw all those mountains adorned by gems and jewels.

I saw Kurukṣetra, Pañcāla, Matsya, Madras, Kaikayas, Bāhlikas, Śūrasenas, Kāsmīras, Kirātas, Karṇaprāvaraṇas, Ekapādas, Dvipādas, Tripādas, Bahunetrakas, Aindras, Prāgjyotiṣas, Kambojas, Tāmraliptakas, Āṅgas, Vaṅgas, Suhmas, Kalāpas, Utkalas, Mahoragas, Nāgas, Kalingas, Koṅkaṇas, Arbudas, Mālavas, Dravidas, Saurāṣṭras, Navanas and many other lands. Wandering through your body I saw these and many other lands, O noble-souled one.

I saw the following holy centres :—Prayāga, Kurukṣetra, Puṣkara, Naimiṣa, Gayā, Gaṅgādvāra, Kubjāmra, Badarī, Sindhusāgara, Kokāmukha, Śuddhatīrtha, Brahmā-varta, Kuśasthalī, Lauhajaṅgha, Aśvatīrtha that rids one of all sins, Kardamāla, Agnitīrtha, Amarakanṭaka, Lohārgala, Jambūmārga, Bhogatīrtha of much holy water, Utpalāvartaka, the holy centre Śripuruṣottama, Ekamukha, Kedāra, Kāśī, Viraja, Kālafijara, Gokarṇa, Śriśaila and Gandhamādana. O Lord I saw these and other holy centres, shrines and temples in your body, as a boy.

I saw the following holy rivers :—Gaṅgā, Śatadrū, Yamunā, Kauśiki, Carmanvatī, Vetravatī, Candrabhāgā, Sarasvatī, Vipāśā, Vitastā, Sindhu, Godāvarī, Vasvokasāra, Nalinī, Payoṣṇī, Narmadā, Aparṇā, Tuṅgabhadrā, Karatoyā, Mahānadī, Suvarṇā, Kṛṣṇā, Śibirā the great river, Vaitaranī, Kāverī, Soṇa, Bhīmarathi, Viśālā, Śiprā and Vetravatī. These and other rivers I saw while wandering through your belly entirely, the belly of a noble soul. I saw the sky beautified by the moon and sun. It was shining with its own resplendence similar to that of fire and sun. O boy, I saw the earth too, rendered splendid by the forests. There the brahmins performed various sacrifices. The Kṣatriyas were engaged in the activities of pleasing and honouring the people of all castes. The Vaiśyas performed the agricultural operations. O Puruṣottama, all these and many other things were seen.]

6. O lotus-eyed one, I wish to know you, the unchanging one.

Why have you swallowed this universe and why do you stay here in the form of an infant ? It behoves you to expound all this to me.

7. O sinless one, what for is the entire universe stationed in your body ? O suppressor of enemies, how long have you to stay here ? O lord of Devas, I wish to know. Tell me everything in detail.

8. O lotus-eyed one, I wish to hear everything in detail and in the precise manner. O lord, what I have seen is immense and inconceivable.

Brahmā said :

9. Thus requested by him, the lord of Devas of great resplendence, the foremost among the eloquent ones spoke the following words to Mārkaṇḍeya.

The Lord said :

10. Admittedly, O brahmin, Devas do not know me in reality. Out of affection for you I shall tell you how I create this universe and discharge it.

11. O brahminical sage, you are one with great filial affection. You have sought refuge in me alone. Your celibacy is great. Hence, I have seen directly.

12. Formerly, the term 'Nāra' was given by me to the waters. They are my perpetual resort. Hence, I am called Nārāyaṇa.

13. I am Nārāyaṇa; I am the permanent unchanging, source of origin, the dispenser of destiny and the annihilator of all living beings.

14. O excellent brahmins, I am Viṣṇu, I am Brahmā, I am Indra too. I am king Vaiśravaṇa¹ and Yama the Lord of ghosts.

15. O excellent brahmin, I am Śiva, Soma and patriarch Kaśyapa. I am creator and dispenser of destiny and I am sacrifice too.

1. *Vaiśravaṇa* : Kubera, king of Yakṣas.

16-17. The fire god is my mouth, the earth is my foot, the moon and sun constitute my eyes; heaven is my head. The hollow space and quarters are my ears, the waters originate from my sweat, the firmament constitutes my body, the wind is stationed in my mind. I have performed hundreds of sacrifices with the requisite monetary gifts.

18-21. Those who have learned the Vedas worship me at the sacrificial altar. The leading Kṣatriyas and the rulers of the earth, desirous of attaining heaven also worship me. Similarly, the Vaiśyas desirous of conquering upper regions, worship me.

It is I who assume the form of Śeṣa and hold aloft the earth having the mountains Meru and Mandara as its ornaments and extending as far as the four oceans.

O brahmin, formerly, this earth was about to sink under water. Assuming the form of boar, it was lifted up by me with my strength.

O excellent brahmin, I have become the submarine fire Vaḍavā¹ and entering the ocean I drink up waters and let them out as well.

22-27. The brahmins form my face, Kṣatriyas my arms, Vaiśyas my thighs and Śūdras my feet. They become thus by their exploits gradually. The R̥gveda, Sāmaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda spring up from me and re-enter me alone.

It is me alone that the brahmins, ascetics, those who value peace very much, those who have restrained themselves, those who are desirous of gaining perfect knowledge, those who are devoid of lust and wrath, those who are unattached, those who are bereft of sins, those who adhere to Sattva quality, those who have no arrogance or egotism and those who are experts in spiritual matters for ever worship and meditate upon.

I am the luminary named Saṁvartaka. I am the fire called Saṁvartaka. I am the sun called Saṁvartaka. I am the wind called Saṁvartaka.

1. *Bṛadāvī* : the fire of sage Aurva's penance which started to burn the world but which, at the request of pitṛs he threw down into the sea where it took the shape of a horse-head and living beneath the sea continued vomiting heat at all times.

O excellent brahmin, what appear like the forms of stars in the firmament are the pores of my hairs. Understand this.

28-33. Understand that all oceans, the storehouses of gems and jewels, and the four quarters are my robes, bedsheets, and abode. Lust, fury, delight, fear and delusion, O excellent one, understand that all these constitute my forms.

O brahmin, by performing splendid actions men attain me. Adhering to truthfulness, charitable gifts, severe penance and nonviolence towards all creatures, performing holy rites laid down in accordance with my injunctions (people attain me). Those who ponder over my body are active, only because I prompt their knowledge and conscience and not in accordance with their love.

The twice-born, those who learn the Vedas well, those who worship by holding different sacrifices, those who have restrained themselves and those who have conquered anger—attain me. I cannot be attained at all by men of evil actions.

34-39. (I cannot be attained) by persons overwhelmed by greed, by miserly persons, by ignoble persons and those who have not regulated their life actions too.

Know that this is the benefit of men who have purified their souls inasmuch as I am inaccessible to those of confused state or deluded mind, who have recourse to deceptive Yogic path.

O excellent one, whenever virtue is afflicted or fades away and evil rises up, I create myself then.

When the terrible Daityas and Rākṣasas who are fond of violence and who cannot be killed by excellent Devas come to be born in this world, I take birth in the houses of meritorious persons entering human bodies and suppress every evil. I create Devas, human beings, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, the mobile and immobile beings and then I annihilate them by my own Māyā. At the time of Karman or realization of their fruits, I think about proper bodies and create them.

Additional verses

[I create them by permeating into human bodies for fixing up the bounds of decency.

My virtue is white in colour in Kṛta age, it is dark in Tretā,

red in Dvāpara and black in Kali age. At that time (i.e. in Kali age) there will be three parts of evil.

When the hour of destruction arrives I adopt the extremely terrible form of Kāla (God of Death) and destroy the set of three worlds. Alone, I destroy everything mobile and immobile. I have three duties, viz., creation, sustenance and dissolution. I am the soul of Universe. I am conducive to the happiness of all worlds. I am unbroken (i.e. not divisible). I am all-pervasive, infinite, Hṛṣikeśa of great strides. Alone I lead the wheel of time (I make it move and whirl). That is my form as Brahman. It suppresses all living beings and it endeavours for all living beings.]

40. Thus, O excellent sage, my soul is well embedded in all living beings. O leading brahmin, still no one knows me.

41-44. All devotees in the whole of the universe worship me in every way.

O sinless brahmin, whatever of painful nature has been experienced by you in me, is entirely for the rise of happiness and welfare.

All mobile and immobile beings seen by you in the world have been evolved by me. My soul is the conceiver and creator of all living beings.

I am named Nārāyaṇa. I hold conch, discus and iron-club. I am the soul of the universe. Fascinating all the worlds, I sleep, O brahminical sage, till a thousand sets of four Yugas pass off completely.

45. Thus, O excellent sage, for the duration of the period till Brahmā rises up I remain in the form of an infant though I am not an infant.

46. O leading brahmin, honoured and worshipped by brahminical sages, boon has been granted to you by me in the form of Brahmā. I have been propitiated many times.

47. When the mobile and immobile beings had perished you set out. Seeing everything in a vast sheet of water you were bewildered. It was observed by me and hence you were shown the universe.

48-52 When you entered my body you saw the universe and were surprised. You could not understand the real nature behind it. Then, O brahminical sage, you have been disgorged through the mouth immediately by me. My own soul incomprehensible to Devas and Asuras was revealed to you by me.

O brahminical sage, till Brahmā of great penance wakes up, move about here comfortably and confidently.

O excellent brahmin, after the grand-father of the universe has woken up, I shall singly create elements, physical bodies—viz. ether, earth, fire, wind, and water. Indeed, I shall create mobile and immobile creatures.

Brahmā said:

53. O brahmins, after saying this, when the period of a thousand sets of four Yugas was completed the lord again spoke to him in a voice as majestic as the sound of rumbling cloud.

The Lord said :

54-55. O sage, tell me the real truth. What did you eulogise me for ? Choose the most excellent boon. Ere long, I shall give it to you. You are more long-lived than Devas. You are my devotee of steady holy rites thereby, O leading brahmin. Now obtain a still longer life.

Brahmā said :

56. On hearing that splendid speech of the lord and glancing at him, the sage bent down his head, made obeisance and spoke thus again :

Märkandeya said :

57-60. O lord of Devas, O most excellent of the twice-born, since your form has been seen, O Hari, when you are seen, my delusion has gone away. It is the truth. Similarly, O lord of the Universe, I wish for the welfare of all worlds. I wish for the toning down of diversity by your favour. In this holy and pure shrine of Puruṣottama, O lord, I shall build a big temple for Śiva. It shall resolve the dispute between the devotees of Śiva and the devotees of Viṣṇu. In your place, let me instal Śaṅkara.

61. Thereby the people in the world will know Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva as the same form.

Then the lord of the universe replied to the great sage.

The Lord said :

62-63. This Linga is the greatest cause, the lord of the worlds. It is for the sake of propitiation and for toning down the rigour of diversity.

O leading brahmin, at my behest, build the Śiva temple instantaneously. By virtue of power stay in the world of Śiva.

64. O brahmin, when Śiva is installed it is I who am installed. There is no difference between us two. We are one in (emotional fervour) but split into two forms externally.

65. He who is Rudra is himself Viṣṇu. He who is Viṣṇu is himself Rudra. There is no difference between the two as in regard to the Wind and Ether.

66-69. Only childish men do not know that he who is Garuḍa-emblemed is the full-emblemed three-eyed lord who slew the Tripuras. Hence, O brahmans, build a temple of Śiva, named after you. To the north of the lord of Devas make the holy reservoir very splendid. It will be well known in the mortal worlds by the name Mārkaṇḍeya Hrada. O excellent brahmin, he will dispel all sins.

Brahmā said :

O excellent sages, after saying this to Mārkaṇḍeya the all-pervading lord Janārdana vanished there itself.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Visit to Kṛṣṇa Shrine

Brahmā said :

1. O brahmans, henceforth, I shall recount the mode of visiting the five Tīrthas (holy centres) and the benefit derived from holy dips, charitable gifts and visits to the deities.

2. The pure man should go to the eddy called Mārkandeya Hrada and dive therein facing the north. He should take the holy dips thrice and repeat this Mantra.

3-4. "O Enemy of Tripuras, O destroyer of the eyes of Bhaga, save me. I am immersed in the ocean of worldly existence. I have been seized by sins and rendered unconscious.

Obeisance to Śiva, the calm one, the dispeller of sins. O lord of Devas, I am having my holy ablution. May my sins perish".

5. After taking the holy dip in the water of depth upto the umbilicus, the intelligent devotee should duly perform Tarpaṇa of Devas, sages, manes, and others by means of water mixed with gingelly seeds.

6-7. After bath and Ācamana, the devotee shall go to the temple of Śiva. He shall enter the shrine of deity and circumambulate thrice. After worshipping the lord by the root Mantra, O Brahmins, he shall bow down and propitiate the lord by the Aghora Mantra.

8. O three-eyed lord, obeisance be to you. O Moon-ornamented lord, obeisance to you; O Virūpākṣa, save me. O Mahādeva, obeisance be to you.

9. By taking the holy dip in the eddy of Mārkandeya Hrada, thus, and by visiting Śaṅkara, the man obtains the benefit of ten horse-sacrifices.

10-11. Liberated from all sins, he goes to the world of lord Śiva. There he enjoys excellent pleasures till the ultimate dissolution of all living beings. He then returns to this world and is born as a brahmin of vast learning and renown. He adopts Yoga pertaining to Śaṅkara and attains salvation.

12. Thereafter, the devotee should go to the holy fig tree on a par with the Kalpa tree, circumambulate it thrice and worship the banyan tree with great devotion, repeating the following Mantra :—

13-14. "Om obeisance be to the holy banyan tree of unmanifest form, cause of the great dissolution, permeated by the great tasty juice.

O banyan tree, you are immortal, surviving all through the Kalpa. You are the abode of Viṣṇu. O banyan tree, dispel my sins. O Kalpa tree ! obeisance to you".

15. By devoutly circumambulating and bowing down to the Banyan tree resembling the Kalpa tree the man is immediately liberated from sins like the serpent that is rid of its old and decaying slough.

16. O brahmans, even by passing through the shadow of this Kalpa tree, a man eschews the sin of brahmin slaughter. What doubt is there in regard to other sins ?

17-18. By visiting Viṣṇu in the form of the banyan tree that has originated from the body of Kṛṣṇa and that is a great being consisting of splendour of the Brahman and by bowing to it, O brahmans, the devotee derives a benefit that is superior to the benefit of Rājasūya and horse-sacrifice. Redeeming the members of his family he goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

19. By making obeisance to Vainateya, Garuḍa son of Vinatā who is stationed in front of Kṛṣṇa, the devotee shall become liberated from all sins. He shall then go to the city of Viṣṇu.

20. He who visits Puruṣottama, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Subhadrā after visiting the banyan tree and Vainateya, attains the greatest goal.

21. After entering the shrine of Viṣṇu and circumambulating the lord thrice he should worship and propitiate Saṅkarṣaṇa and Subhadrā, repeating their own Mantra :—

22-23. Obeisance to you, O Rāma holding the plough-share. Obeisance to you, O deity with the iron club as the weapon. Obeisance to you, O lover of Revatī.¹ Obeisance to you, (O deity) favourably disposed towards devotees. Obeisance to you, O excellent one among strong persons. Obeisance to you, the holder of the earth. O enemy of Pralamba, Obeisance be to you. Save me, O elder brother of Kṛṣṇa.

24-26. By propitiating lord Balarāma thus, the man will derive the desired benefit. The lord is worshipped by Devas. He is invincible. He has the size and shape of the peak of the mountain Kailāsa. His face is lovelier than the moon. The lord wears blue robes; his head is hideous on account of hoods. He holds the plough. He has great strength. He is bedecked with single ear-ring. He who devoutly propitiates

1. *Revatī*—Wife of Balabhadra or Balarāma.

the son of Rohini¹ is liberated from all sins. He goes to the world of lord Viṣṇu.

27-28. The man enjoys happiness there until the dissolution of all living beings. When the merit dwindles down he returns to the earth, here in the excellent family of Yogins. He becomes an excellent brahmin, the master of all scriptures. He derives perfect knowledge and attains salvation that is difficult of access to others.

29. After worshipping the ploughshare-bearing lord thus, the clever devotee shall worship Kṛṣṇa with great concentration uttering the twelve-syllabled Mantra.

30. The self-possessed bold persons who devoutly worship Puruṣottama by reciting the twelve-syllabled Mantra attain Salvation.

31. O brahmins, neither Devas nor Yogins, nor the Chanters of Sāman hymns attain that goal which those who are devoted to the twelve-syllabled Mantra attain.

32. Hence, one should devoutly worship Kṛṣṇa, the preceptor of the universe, by reciting that Mantra alone. After worshipping with scents, fragrant flowers, etc. he should bow to the deity and propitiate him.

33-37. Be victorious O Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the universe. Be victorious O destroyer of all sins. Be victorious O slayer of Cāṇūra and Keśin. Be victorious O slayer of Karīsa.

Be victorious O lotus-petal-eyed lord. Be victorious O holder of discus and iron club. Be victorious O deity dark in complexion like the blue cloud. Be victorious O bestower of happiness on all.

Be victorious O lord worthy of being worshipped by the universe. Be victorious O destroyer of the world. Be victorious O Viṣṇu worthy of being worshipped by the worlds. Be victorious, O bestower of desired benefit.

O excellent lord, O Puruṣottama, I am immersed in the terrible ocean of worldly existence. It is significant. Miseries are like foams therein. It is terrible with wrath making it agitated as if through crocodiles. The objects of sense-organs,

1. *Rohini*: mother of Balabhadra. She was the second wife of Vasudeva, the other being Devaki, mother of Śrīkṛṣṇa.

constitute the flooding waters therein. The different ailments are like its waves and foams. It is impassable due to the whirlpools of delusion. O lord, save me.

38-41. O brahmins, by worshipping Kṛṣṇa thus the devotee attains the benefit of thousands of horse-sacrifices. Kṛṣṇa is the lord of Devas. He is the bestower of boons. He is favourably disposed towards his devotees. He is the bestower of all benefits. He has two arms and stout shoulders. His eyes are large as the petals of the lotus. His chest and arms are large. His face is splendid. He is clad in yellow robes. He holds conch, discus and ironclub in his hands. He has a coronet and shoulderlets as ornaments. He is endowed with all noble characteristics. He is adorned by the garlands of sylvan flowers. After visiting him the man shall join his palms in reverence and prostrate in front of him like a rod. He derives the benefit of thousands of horse-sacrifices.

42. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa the man obtains that benefit which has been glorified as the result of holy dip and charitable gifts in the holy centres.

43. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains that benefit which results from a sacrifice where much gold is distributed together with precious stones and other valuables.

44. By making obeisance to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains that benefit which has been glorified as the result of sacrifices and the Vedas.

45. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains that benefit which is attained by all charitable gifts, holy rites and observances.

46. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains that benefit which has been cited as the benefit accruing from different sorts of severe austerities.

47. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains that benefit which is glorified as the result of the vow of celibacy perfectly practised.

48. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains the benefit of a householder who strictly adheres to the disciplined conduct of life.

49. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa a man obtains the

benefit glorified as the result of life in the forest led by (forest-dweller).

50. By visiting and bowing to Kṛṣṇa, a man obtains the benefit cited as the result of renunciation as mentioned before.

51. O brahmins, of what avail is much talk in regard to the greatness of that lord. By devoutly visiting Kṛṣṇa a man obtains salvation which is most difficult to obtain.

52-53. The man will be liberated from sins accumulated in the course of crores of Kalpas. He will be endowed with the greatest glory. He will be endued with good qualities. He will redeem twentyone generations of his family. He will go to the city of Viṣṇu on a very brilliant aerial chariot flourishingly endowed with all desirable things.

54-55. For a period of hundred Kalpas he will enjoy pleasures pleasant to the mind along with Gandharvas and Apsaras like the four-armed Viṣṇu.

Falling off from that world he comes here to the earth and is born as one conversant with Dharma, master of Vedas and devoid of malice in the excellent family of brahmins.

56. He will be engaged in the performance of his own duty. He will be quietly controlling his sense organs. He will be engaged in the welfare of all living beings. Attaining perfect knowledge pertaining to Viṣṇu, he will attain salvation.

57. Thereafter, O brahmin, he shall worship Subhadrā, favourably disposed towards her devotees by reciting the requisite Mantra. He shall then propitiate her by bowing to her with palms joined in reverence.

58. Obeisance to you O omnipresent Goddess. Obeisance to you the bestower of auspicious happiness. Save me, O Goddess with eyes like the petals of a lotus. O Kātyāyani, obeisance be to you, Subhadrā.

59-61. By thus propitiating that Goddess, who creates the universe, who is beneficial to the universe, who was the sister of lord Baladeva, who is the bestower of boons and who is auspicious, the man goes to the abode of Viṣṇu, on an aerial chariot that can go at one's own sweet will. Till the dissolution of the world he sports there like a Deva. Then he comes here and attains the state of a human being. He shall become a

brahmin conversant with the Vedas. After attaining Yoga pertaining to Lord Viṣṇu he attains liberation.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

The Greatness of Narasimha

Brahma said :

1. By thus visiting and bowing to Bala, Kṛṣṇa and Subhadrā, the devotee obtains virtue, wealth, love and liberation.
2. Just as he comes out of the temple of the deity, the man becomes blessed. After bowing to the deity the man returns to his abode with great concentration.
3. He returns to his abode where lord Viṣṇu's idol, made of lapis lazuli, is covered up by sands. By bowing to the lord who vanished there he enters the city of Viṣṇu.
4. O brahmins, that lord who is identical with Devas and who slew the most excellent one among Asuras stays there with half of his body made like that of a lion.
5. By devoutly visiting Narasimha lord, and by bowing to him one is liberated from all sins. There is no doubt in this.
6. Those men on the earth who are the devotees of Narasimha, incur no sin at all. They will have all desired benefits.
7. Hence, by all means one shall resort to Narasimha since he bestows the benefit of virtue, wealth, love and salvation.

The sages said :

8. O lord, since you say that the glory of Narasimha is the bestower of happiness and is very difficult of access it has kindled great wonder in us.
9. O lord of the universe, we wish to hear the power of that lord in detail.. Our eagerness is very great.
10. O lord, obeisance be to you. For rendering help to devotees, tell us how Narasimha, the lord of great strength becomes pleased.

11. Tell us all about those (achievements) which originate by the favour of Narasimha. O great grandfather, be pleased with us.

Brahmā said :

12. O brahmins even as I recount listen to the power of that lord who is unconquered and incomprehensible and who bestows worldly pleasures and salvation.

13. O brahmins, who is competent to recount the good qualities of that lord half of whose body is that of a lion ? I shall mention a few succinctly.

14. We hear many human and divine accomplishments which are undoubtedly realized by the favour of that lord.

15. Due to the favour of that lord, one's movement becomes unimpeded in the mortal world, heaven, netherworlds, quarters, water, city as well as mountain.

16. In this world including the mobile and immobile beings O brahmins, there is nothing impossible to achieve for lord Narasimha who is always sympathetic to his devotees.

17. I shall mention the mode of procedure for the worship of the lord. This is helpful to his devotees. I shall mention what it is whereby the deity with half the body of a lion is propitiated.

18. O leading sages, listen to the eternal Kalparāja (Royal ritual), the real principle of Narasimha which has not been understood by Devas and Asuras.

19. O brahmins, the leading aspirant devotee should subsist on a diet of milk accompanied by greens, roots, barley food, fruits, fried grain powder and oil cake.

20-22. A pure loin cloth alone should constitute his garment. He should conquer his sense-organs and establish himself for meditation in the forest, an isolated place, mountain, confluence of rivers, a barren land, a holy centre of Siddhas or in the hermitage of Narasimha. Then he should worship the lord in accordance with the injunctions. O leading sages, on the twelfth day in the bright half of the lunar month he shall observe fast. With his mind and sense organs in perfect restraint he should repeat the mantra for two million times.

23. O brahmīns, there is no doubt that the aspirant would be liberated from all sins whether they be subsidiary or major.

24-25. He should circumambulate and worship Narasimha with flowers, scents, incenses, etc. After bending the head before the lord the devotee should apply Jāti flowers smeared with camphor and sandal paste on the head of lord Narasimha. Thereby Siddhi results.

26-28. The lord is not hindered anywhere in any of his activities. Even Brahmā, Rudra and other Devas are incompetent to bear the resplendence of the lord. What then in regard to Dānavas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, human beings, Vidyādharaś, Yaksas, Kinnaras and Nāgas. There are those who wish for other Mantras, (than those of Narasimha). All these perish (on seeing Narasimha), like darkness when the resplendence of the sun or fire is revealed.

29. The (Talisman) that is inspired once by the repetition of Mantras bestows steady pleasures. The talisman that is inspired thus twice, becomes a divine amulet. It protects the devotee from Devas as well as Dānavas.

30. It should also protect from all those enemies such as Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Yaksas, Vidyādharaś, Nāgas, goblins, demons as well as similar antagonists.

31-34. The amulet that is inspired (with Mantras) thrice, cannot be broken by Devas and Asuras.

O excellent Brahmīns, lord Narasimha of great strengths protects the aspirant devotee within a radius of twelve Yojanas.

The devotee should then go near a Crevasse and observe fast for three nights. He should then kindle the holy fire with Palāśa twigs and logs.

O leading brahmīns, the aspirant should make two hundred sacrifices with (as many) Palāśa twigs soaked in honey, sugar and ghee repeating Vaṣaṭkāras.

The opening of Crevasse should be visible instantaneously.

35. The learned aspirant shall unhesitatingly enter the Crevasse with the coat of mail on, as he goes ahead, his difficulty, darkness and delusion perish.

36. A wide royal road beautified by humming bees becomes visible. O brahmīns, remembering Narasimha he enters the nether worlds.

37-40. After going there, the aspirant should repeat the mantra of Narasimha the undiminishing mantra.

Thereafter, thousands of women playing on the lute come out to welcome him. O brahmins, after greeting him they take the leading aspirant, holding him by the hand.

O excellent brahmins, they make him drink the divine elixir. Immediately after drinking it he becomes very powerful. His body becomes divine.

He dallies with those girls till the ultimate dissolution of all living beings. When his body is split he becomes merged in Vāsudeva.

41-46. When the residence there, no longer appeals to him he starts therefrom. The leading aspirant takes the following things with him :—A tablet, a trident, a sword, a yellow orpiment, a jewel, a mercury, a pair of elixir sandals, collyrium, the skin of a black antelope, the pleasing pill, waterpot, rosary, staff, Siddhavidyā named Sañjivāni and the scriptural texts. If the trident, that is enveloped by the wavelike formation of sparks of blazing fire is placed in the heart even for once it burns sins accumulated in crores of births. If it is placed in poison it destroys poison. If it is placed over the body it dispels leprosy. Even after committing the sin of foetus slaughter he becomes purified by this divine remedy. When patients are afflicted by powerful planets, the devotee shall think about the blazing deity. Thereby the terrible planets will perish quickly in the heart.

47. The amulet (inspired with Narasimha Mantra) tied round the neck of children affords a permanent protection: It destroys tumour, pustule, boils, as well as spider poison.

48. If afflicted by ailments, the devotee should perform a sacrifice with sacrificial twigs, ghee and milk, thrice a day during the junctions (i.e. dawn, midday and dusk). If this is continued for a month it will dispel all ailments.

49. I do not see anything that cannot be achieved in the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings. Whatever accomplishment he desires, he certainly achieves it.

50-57. Another method: the devotee worships the lion one hundred and eight times. He takes seven lumps of clay from the anthill, cremation ground, four cross-roads. Mixing them with

red sandal he pours cow's milk and rolls it into a lump. With this lump he makes the image of a lion six fingers (in length and height). Taking a bark leaf he applies yellow orpiment over it. This he ties round the neck of Narasimha. The aspirant then worships the deity with water. He repeats the Mantra innumerable times. With the sense-organs perfectly under restraint he continues the repetition of Mantra for seven days. Within a Muhūrta the entire earth is flooded with water.

Or the devotee shall worship Narasimha on the top of a tree. By performing the Japa of the Mantra one hundred and eight times the devotee can prevent a great downpour.

The noble aspirant puts the image of Narasimha in a cage and closes it. He should then whirl it. Within a short while a great gust of wind will undoubtedly blow. He can restrain it quickly by means of water inspired with the repetition of Narasimha Mantra seven times.

If the aspirant digs the earth and keeps the image concealed at the threshold of anyone, the entire family of that person will be annihilated. If it is taken out, it accords peace.

58. Hence, O leading sages, the devotee should always worship the lord of beasts, of great power, the bestower of all desires.

59-60. Liberated from all sins he goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

By devoutly worshipping the most excellent one among Devas, who has assumed the form of a lion, the Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, womenfolk, Śūdras and the lowcaste people are liberated from inauspicious miseries accumulated in the course of crores of births.

61-67. O Brahmins, by worshipping that excellent Deva they attain all desired things such as Deva-hood, lordship of the immortal beings and Gandharva-hood. They attain the status of Yakṣa or Vidyādhara or other types of desired things.

By visiting, eulogising, bowing to and worshipping Narasimha, men obtain a kingdom, heavenly pleasure and salvation which is very difficult to attain.

By visiting Narasimha a man obtains the desired benefit. Liberated from sins he goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

By devoutly visiting once that lord who has assumed the form of a lion, one is liberated from inauspicious miseries accumulated in crores of births.

On the following occasions the lord should be remembered. At the time of war, or a calamity very difficult to surmount, or at the time when one is afflicted by thieves, tigers etc., or when there is danger to life in a dense forest or when one is likely to be afflicted by poison, fire and water or when one is afflicted by kings and others, oceans, planets, sickness etc. By remembering the lord on these occasions a man is liberated from hosts of calamities.

Just as the desert of darkness is dispelled at sunrise so also all calamities perish by visiting the lord.

68-77. When lord Narasimha is pleased, a man obtains the miraculous pill, collyrium, sandals of the nether worlds, elixir as well as other desired things.

There is no doubt that one obtains all those desires for which one worships Narasimha with his desires kept in mind.

By visiting the lord of the chiefs of Devas, by devoutly worshipping him and bowing to him, the devotee derives ten times the benefit of ten horse sacrifices. He is liberated from all sins. He is embellished with all good qualities. He is richly blessed with the fulfilment of all desires. He is devoid of old age and death. Seated in an aerial chariot the devotee goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

The aerial chariot is golden. It is embellished with clusters of twinkling bells. It has good resplendence. It is richly furnished with all desirable things. It can go to any place one wishes. It has the colour and lustre of the midday sun. Pearl necklaces are suspended from it. Hundreds of celestial damsels are present in it. It is resonant with the divine sound of singing the Gandharvas. He is eulogised by Apsaras. He is as happy and gay as Devas. He redeems twentyone generations of his family. Thus he goes to the world of Viṣṇu. O excellent brahmins, there in the world of Viṣṇu he enjoys excellent pleasures in the company of Gandharvas and Apsaras. He assumes the form with four arms. He enjoys pleasures and happiness till the final dissolution of the world. When his merit dwindles he returns to this world and is born as a brahmin in an excellent family of Yogins. He masters

the four Vedas and their ancillaries. He attains Yoga pertaining to Viṣṇu and obtains liberation.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

The Greatness of Śveta Mādhava

Brahmā said

1. By visiting and devoutly bowing to Vāsudeva-Ananta the man is liberated from all sins. He attains the highest region of Viṣṇu.
2. He has been propitiated by me and thereafter by Indra, Vibhiṣaṇa¹ and Rāma. Who does not wish to be propitiated?
3. The man who takes holy dip in the Śvetagangā and visits Śvetamādhava as well as Matsya Mādhava (Lord Viṣṇu in the form of a fish) goes to Śvetadvīpa.

The sages said :

4-5 It behoves you to recount fully the greatness of Śveta-mādhava. O Lord of the Universe, recount the installation of Hari in detail. Lord Śvetamādhava is well known in that sacred and excellent holy centre. He is well known in the whole of the universe. Who installed that lord formerly?

Brahmā said:

6. O Brahmins, there was a powerful king named Śveta in the Kṛtayuga. He was intelligent, valorous and truthful. He was conversant with holy rites and he was steadfast in performing them.

7. In his kingdom, men used to live upto ten thousand years without sickness. No body perished or was despondant in that kingdom.

8-9 When this state of affairs continued thus in the kingdom for some time, O brahmins, the son of a very righteous sage named Kapalā Gautama passed away even before he cut his

1. *Vibhiṣaṇa* : brother of Rāvana. Rāvana, Kumbhakarṇa, and Vibhiṣaṇa were born to Viśravas by his wife Mālini.

teeth. The intelligent sage brought the dead boy to the presence of the king.

10. On seeing the boy in this long slumber without sentience, O brahmins, the king took a vow of resuscitating the infant boy back to life.

The king said:

11. If I do not within seven days bring back this boy who has gone to the abode of Yama, I shall ascend the burning pyre.

Brahmā said :

12. After saying thus, the king worshipped the great lord with one thousand and one hundred blue lotuses. Then he repeated the Mantra.

13. On seeing the surpassing devotion of the king, the Lord of the universe came there together with Yama and said "I am delighted and satisfied".

14-15 On hearing the words of the Lord suddenly and seeing Lord Hara who had smeared his limbs with ashes, who had hideous eyes, who in resplendence resembled the Kunda flower and the autumnal moon, who was wearing the hide of a tiger and whose tresses were marked by the moon he fell instantaneously on the ground, bowed to him and spoke.

Sveta said :

16-17. If you have mercy upon me, O Lord, if you are pleased on seeing me, may this boy, the dear child of a brahmin, who is under the control of the God of death, come back to life once again. This is the holy rite I have taken upon myself. O Lord Maheśvara, kindly instal a long life in this boy who is dead suddenly. Kindly accord all round welfare.

Brahmā said :

18. On hearing these words of Sveta, lord Maheśvara became joyous. He called the God of death who is terrible to all living beings.

19. O Brahmins, he restrained the unshwartable Kāla, the

obedient servant of Yama; he resuscitated the boy from the jaws of death.

20-21. After bringing back the sage's son to life and according welfare to the entire universe, O brahmins, the Lord vanished there itself together with goddess Umā. Thus the excellent king enlivened the son of the sage.

The sages said :

22. O Lord of Devas, O Lord of the Universe, O unchanging source of origin of the three worlds, tell us now the greatest fact of the deity named Śveta.

Brahma said :

23. Listen, O leading sages, O sinless ones, for the welfare of all living beings I shall mention factually what you ask of me.

24. The greatness of Mādhava is destructive of all sins. On hearing it the man attains the desired pleasures.

25. O brahmins, I have heard his anecdote formerly from the sages, the divine story of the deity called Mādhava. Listen to that story which dispels fear, grief and agony.

26-28. King Śveta ruled over the kingdom for thousands of years with great concentration. He pondered over various holy rites of secular and Vedic nature and also over the restraints and observances. O Brahmins, he resolved to propitiate Keśava and adopted holy rites for that purpose. He went to the greatest holy centre on the shore of the Southern Sea. In a beautiful auspicious spot on the shore near Kṛṣṇa's shrine Śveta built a beautiful palace.

29-30 To the south of the Lord of Devas he built the palace of a hundred bows' lengths. O leading Brahmins, with white marble rocks, Lord Mādhava was made to appear like a white man resembling the moon by king Śveta. He performed the installation duly as (previously) thought of.

31-33. The king made charitable gifts to the brahmins, ascetics, poor and helpless persons. Thereafter, the king went to the presence of Lord Mahādeva. Repeating the twelve syllabled Mantra alongwith Omkāra he prostrated on the ground. Then the blessed king observed the vow of silence and abstaining from food for a month entered into Samādhi (trance). At the

end of prayerful observance the king stood at the feet of Viṣṇu and began to eulogise the lord of Devas.

Sveta said :

34. Om obeisance to Vāsudeva, obeisance to Saṅkarṣaṇa, obeisance to Pradyumna, Aniruddha, obeisance to Nārāyaṇa.

35. Obeisance to the omniformed, to the creator of the form of the Universe, to inconceivable deity devoid of attributes, to the pure one, of (splendid) activities.

36. Om obeisance to the deity with the umbilical lotus, to the source of origin of the lotus-born lord; to the lotus-coloured one, to you with the lotus in hand.

37. Om obeisance to the lotus-eyed bountiful lord with a thousand eyes: obeisance to the thousand-footed, thousand-armed and thousand-furred lord.

38. Om obeisance to Varāha (Boar), the bestower of boons, the most excellent, the most praise-worthy deity of good intellect, Acyuta of gold complexion.

39. Om obeisance to the lord in the form of a boy, obeisance to the deity with the lustre of a tender lotus, obeisance to the deity with the rising sun and the moon for the eyes, obeisance to the lord with the tresses resembling Muñja grass.

40. Obeisance to Keśava, obeisance to Nārāyaṇa. Obeisance to Mādhava, obeisance to Govinda.

41. Om obeisance to Viṣṇu, obeisance to the lord endowed with wealth and strength; obeisance to the slayer of Madhu, to one who holds pure rays.

42. Obeisance to the infinite one, the subtle one, to one who bears the Śrivatsa scar, obeisance to Śrīvikrama and the deity who wears the divine yellow robes.

43. Obeisance to you the cause of creation; obeisance to the protector and the sustainer, to one endowed with attributes, and also to one devoid of attributes.

44. Obeisance to the lord of dwarfish forms, to one of dwarfish activities, to one of small eyes, to one of dwarfish vehicle.

45. Obeisance to the infinite deity worthy of being worshipped, to one of unmanifest forms, to one who cannot be argued about, to the pure and the dispeller of fear.

46-47. Obeisance to the deity who acts as a raft (for crossing) the ocean of worldly existence, to the deity of colour forum, to the deity of auspicious gentle form, to the deity assuming terrible forms, to the deity that breaks worldly existence, the bestower of worldly pleasures, to the deity in the form of universe; obeisance to the creator of worlds.

48. Om obeisance to the deity of divine forms, to the deity whose breath is constituted by the moon and fire. Obeisance to one whose tresses are constituted by solar and lunar rays. Obeisance to the deity conducive to the welfare of cows and brahmans.

49. Om obeisance to the deity on the form of Rk; Obeisance to the deity in the forms of Pada and Krama. Obeisance to you, who are eulogised by the Rks; obeisance to the deity whose means is Rk.

50. Om obeisance to the upholder of Yaju's mantras, to the deity who has assumed the form of Yajus, to one who is worthy of being worshipped through Yajus, to one who is served, to the lord of Yajus Mantras.

51. Om obeisance to you, O lord of Śrī; Obeisance to Śridhara; obeisance to the most excellent one; obeisance to the lover of Śrī; obeisance to one of self-control; obeisance to the Yogin worthy of being meditated upon by the Yogins.

52. Om obeisance to the deity in the form of Sāman. Obeisance to the excellent tone of the Sāman. Om obeisance to the gentle one of Sāman. Obeisance to the deity conversant with the Sāmayoga.

53. Obeisance to the Sāman. Obeisance to the deity sung about by the Sāman songs. Om obeisance to the uplifter of the Sāman. Obeisance to the deity conversant with the Sāman. Obeisance to the composer of Sāman songs.

54. Obeisance to the deity whose head is Atharvaveda; obeisance to the deity whose from is Atharvan; obeisance to the deity whose foot is Atharvan; obeisance to the deity whose hand is Atharvan.

55. Om obeisance to the deity with adamantine head; obeisance to the slayer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha; obeisance to

one stationed in the waters of great ocean. Obeisance to one who redeemed the Vedas and brought them out of waters.

56. Obeisance to Hṛṣikeśa¹ of brightly illuminated form. Obeisance to you, lord Vāsudeva. Obeisance to you Nārāyaṇa.

57. Obeisance to the deity conducive to the welfare of the world. Om obeisance to the destroyer of delusion. Obeisance to one who breaks existence.

58. Obeisance to one who bestows salvation; obeisance to one who dispels bondage; obeisance to the maker of luminaries. Obeisance to the deity of fiery form.

59. Obeisance to the lord of Yogins; obeisance to Rāma who redeems all; obeisance to happiness; obeisance to the happy-eyed; obeisance to the upholder of merits.

60. Obeisance to Vāsudeva worthy of being saluted; obeisance to Vāmadeva; obeisance to one who creates bodies for the embodied souls; obeisance to the breaker of difference.

61. Obeisance to the one whose body is saluted by Devas; obeisance to you of divine crown; obeisance to one who is the abode of fame; obeisance to one who serves as a shelter.

62. Om obeisance to the maker of riches; obeisance to one who bestows riches and residence; obeisance to the deity of the form of sacrifice; obeisance to the lord of sacrifices; obeisance to the Yigin.

63. Obeisance to the lord of ascetics who preach Yoga. Obeisance to one who holds a discus; obeisance to Saṅkarṣaṇa; obeisance to one who slew Pralamba.²

64. Obeisance to the holder of ploughshare whose velocity is great and whose sound resembles the sound of clouds. Obeisance to you a perfect knowledge of the wise, O Nārāyaṇa the ultimate resort of all living beings.

65. O Lord excepting you, I have no other kinsmen or guide for redeeming me from hell. Hence, O deity favourably disposed towards those who bow down, I bow to you with emotional fervour.

1. *Hṛṣiketa* : One who has controlled the sense-organs that is a yogin. Kṛṣṇa is said to be yogeśvara.

2. *Pralamba* : an asura who attacked Śrikrṣṇa and Balarāma but was killed by the latter.

66. O Keśava, O Acyuta, excepting you there is none to wash off the impurity of body and mind, O lord of Devas.

67. I have approached you after eschewing all sorts of contacts and unions. O Keśava, may my contact remain with you for attaining self-realization.

68. O Keśava, I know that this worldly existence is full of pain. It is impossible to cross it during adversities. I am afflicted by my threefold searching tortures. Hence, I seek refuge in you.

69. The entire universe is deluded by enticing desires through your Māyā. It is attracted by covetousness, etc. Hence, I have resorted to you.

70-72. O Viṣṇu, nothing is conducive to happiness for an embodied soul stationed in the world.

O lord of sacrifices, as the mind is gradually turned to you, one may attain the ultimate pleasure, if one is not enamoured of the benefit of actions. "I am doomed. I am devoid of discriminating faculty". The Universe is seen unhappy and dejected thus.

O Govinda, save me from worldly existence. It behoves you to uplift me. I am immersed in the ocean of worldly existence which cannot be crossed, with delusion forming its waters. O Lotus-eyed one, excepting you there is no other saviour unto me.

Brahma said :

73-74. O Brahmins, thus the lord was eulogised by king Śveta in that divine excellent holy centre known as Puruṣottama. In consideration of his devotion, Hari, the lord of Devas, the preceptor of the universe came in front of the king surrounded by all Devas.

75-77. He resembled the blue cloud. His eyes were large like the petals of lotus. By the tip of his hand the glorious lord held Sudarśana with a bright disc allround. In his left hand he held the splendid conch Pāñcajanya of great lustre. It was devoid of impurities. It resembled the moon and the liquid content of the milky ocean. The emblem of the lord was the

king of birds.¹ The glorious lord held the iron club, sword and Śāringa bow. He said :—“Well done, O king, since this excellent idea rose within you, O sinless one, choose whatever is desired by you and whatever is conducive to my welfare. I am delighted with you”.

Brahmā said :

78. On hearing these nectar-like words of the Lord of Devas, Śveta bent down his head with devotion and said with his mind concentrating on the lord.

Śveta said :

79-80. O lord, if I am a devotee, grant me this excellent boon. The unchanging region of Viṣṇu is above everything upto the abode of Brahmā. It is devoid of impurities and Rajas. It is pure. It is rid of the contact with the world. O lord of the universe, I wish to go to that region by your favour.

The Lord said :

81-82. After enjoying the nectar of ruling over the kingdom you will go to that abode which Devas, sages, Siddhas and yogins do not approach. It is the greatest abode devoid of ailments. After passing over the worlds you will attain my world.

83. O leading king, your glory will spread throughout the world. I will always be present here.

84-88. Devas and Dānavas will sing about this as Śveta Gaṅgā, pure and holy Gaṅgā. My devotees who have great concentration will go to heaven even by touching the sacred water of Śveta Gaṅgā, O leading king, by the tip of Kuṣa grass.

He who visits this idol of lunar splendour named Mādhava and worships it even once, casts off other worlds. He is honoured in my world. The idol resembles the conch and cow's milk. It is destructive of sins. It has eyes resembling a lotus.

For many Manvantaras he will enjoy as he pleases the extensive pleasures in the company of my followers. He will be surrounded by beautiful celestial virgins. The Siddhas and Gandharvas will sing his praise and serve him.

1. King of birds—Garuḍa, the Vehicle of Mahāviṣṇu.

89-91. Falling off from that place he comes here as a man. He shall be born as a brahmin mastering the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. He will be glorious. He will enjoy all pleasures and live for a long time. He will possess elephants, horses, chariots and other vehicles. He will be surrounded by wealth and food-grains. He will be pure and endowed with handsome features. He will be fortunate and accompanied by sons and grandsons.

He will return to the holy centre Puruṣottama at the root of the Banyan tree on the sea-shore. Remembering Hari and casting off the body he shall go to that calm and quiet place.

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Mode of Procedure for a Holy Dip in the Ocean

Brahmā said :

1-3. By visiting Śvetamādhava and Matsyamādhava by his side and by bowing to the first incarnation of Mādhava in the form of a Fish, one is liberated from all miseries. Lord Matsya Mādhava had at the outset assumed the form of Rohita fish. He had been thinking of the earth stationed at the bottom of the nether worlds. He established himself there in order to redeem the Vedas.

4. He goes to the greatest abode where Hari himself is present. Returning to this place (earth) in due course of time he shall become a king on the earth.

5. By resorting to Matsyamādhava a man becomes un-thwartable. He shall be a donor, enjoyer of pleasures, a worshipper, a devotee of Viṣṇu and truthful in speech.

6. Afterwards he attains Yoga pertaining to Hari and gains salvation. O leading sages, the greatness of Matsyamādhava has been recounted by me. By visiting him the devotee will obtain all cherished desires.

The sages said :

7. O Lord, we wish to hear further. The rites of wiping off,

causing sprinkling of water by means of Kuśa grass, ablution, charitable gifts, etc are performed on the sea-shore. Kindly mention the entire benefits thereof.

Brahmā said :

8-10. Listen, O leading sages, to the benefit of Mārjana rite performed duly. One attains excellent merit due to devotion. Out of devotion one must direct one's mind towards him. The rite of taking holy dip in the eddy called Mārkanḍeya Hrada is to be preferably performed in the forenoon. Especially on the fourteenth day of the lunar fortnight this rite is destructive of all sins. Similarly, the rite of ablution in the ocean is equally praise-worthy at any time. Especially on the full moon day (by the holy dip) one attains the benefit of a horse-sacrifice.

11. The Pañcatirthi (a set of five holy centres and sacred waters) is as follows :—The eddy named after Mārkanḍeya, the holy banyan tree, the shrine of Kṛṣṇa, the shrine of Balarama and the great Indradyumnasaras (Lake of Indradyumna).

12. One should visit the Tīrtharāja (king of holy centres, the holy Banyan tree) on the full moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha. If the constellation Jyeṣṭha coincides with it, it is especially auspicious.

13-15. The devotee should be pure mentally, verbally and physically. He should not think of anything else. He should be free from all Dvandvas (mutually opposed pairs). He should be free from lustful attachment and rivalry. The beautiful banyan tree is the Kalpa tree itself. After taking holy dip near it, the devotee shall circumambulate the lord thrice with great concentration. O Brahmins, by visiting this Lord one is liberated from sins accumulated in the course of seven births. He attains extensive merits and the desired salvation.

16. O brahmins, I shall mention its names and size, in the Yugas Kṛta, etc, in due order.

17. The names of the banyan tree in the Kṛtayuga etc are respectively.—1) Vaṭa, (2) Vaṭeśvara, (3) Puruṣa and (4) Purāṇapuruṣa, O brahmins.

18. The sizes of the Kalpa tree in the four Yugas are 1) one Yojana 2) three fourths of a Yojana (3) half a Yojana and 4) onefourth of a Yojana.

19. After bowing to the banyan tree repeating the mantra mentioned before, the devotee shall go to the South to a distance of three hundred bow's lengths.

20. At this place one can behold Viṣṇu. Here is a pleasing entrance to the heavenly world. A log of wood equipped with good qualities is dragged by the waters of the ocean.

21. By bowing to him and then by worshipping him, the devotee is liberated from all ailments, sins, evils and things of other sorts.

22-24. Through the heavenly door the devotee views the ocean as one with fierce foams. He shall then perform the rite of Ācamana. Remaining pure he should meditate afterwards, fix the eight-syllabled Mantra in the (fingers of the) hand and (limits of) the body that is the Mantra which learned men say thus—Om namo Nārāyaṇāya.

What can be done with many Mantras that cause only mental confusion ? This mantra Om namo Nārāyaṇāya is the means of achieving everything.

25. The waters are glorified as Nāras because they are the sons of Nara (human beings). At the outset the waters had been the abode of Viṣṇu. Hence, he is known as Nārāyaṇa (having Nāra (waters) for abode).

26. The greatest in the world is Nārāyaṇa. The greatest among Devas is Nārāyaṇa. Truthfulness is devoted to Nārāyaṇa.

27-33. The element earth is devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the element water is devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the element fire is devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the element sky is devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the wind is devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the mind is devoted to Nārāyaṇa, the ego and the cosmic intellect are of the nature of Nārāyaṇa. The past, present, future, whatever is called by the name Jīva (living-organism) is of the nature of Nārāyaṇa.

Sound and other objects of sense-organs, ears and other sense-organs the Prakṛti and Puruṣa—these are of the nature of Nārāyaṇa.

Lord Nārāyaṇa occupies water, dryland, nether worlds, heaven, sky and mountains supporting all these visible objects.

Of what avail is much talk ? The whole universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings, from Brahmā to the blade of grass—is identical with Nārāyaṇa.

O Brahmins, I do not see anything greater than Nārāyaṇa. All these visible and invisible things in the world are pervaded by him.

34. The waters are the abode of Viṣṇu. He is the lord of waters. Hence, one should always remember Nārāyaṇa, the dispeller of sins, in the waters.

35. Particularly at the time of bath the pure devotee shall worship and remember Nārāyaṇa in the water. He shall meditate on him and perform the Nyāsa rite in the (fingers of hand and (the limbs of) body.

36-42. He should fix Omkāra and Nakāra (syllable *Na*) in the thumbs of his hands. The other syllables he shall fix in the index and other fingers covering the whole palm.

He shall fix Omkāra in the left foot and Nakāra (syllable *Na*) in the right foot. He shall fix the syllable *Mo* in the left hip and the syllable *Nā* in the right hip.

He shall fix the syllable *Rā* in the umbilical spot and the syllable *Ta* in the left arm. After fixing the syllable *Nā* in the right arm he shall fix the syllable *Ta* on the head. (The mantra is Om namo Nārāyanāya.

The learned devotee shall meditate on Nārāyaṇa, in the heart, at the sides, behind, in front, below and above and thereafter begin Kavaca¹ (coat of mail):—

May Govinda protect me in the East, Madhusūdana in the South, lord Śridhara in the West and Keśava in the North.

Similarly, may Viṣṇu protect in the South-East; the undwindling Mādhava in the South-West; Hṛṣikeśa in the North-West and Vāmana in the North-East.

May Varāha (Boar) protect the ground and Trivikrama above. After making Kavaca (the coat of mail) the devotee should think about the soul.

1. *Kavaca*—Protective armour, composed of mystic syllables to be essentially recited at the worship of a deity.

43. I am lord Nārāyaṇa who holds the conch, discus and club. After meditating on the Self he should repeat this mantra.

44-45. "You are the fire, O Lord of bipeds, he who provides (them) with Semen, he who excites their lust. You are Pradhāna (Prakṛti and chief) of all living beings; the unchanging lord of all individual souls. You are the Araṇi (Source of fire) of the nectar. O Lord of waters, you are the source of origin of Devas. O Tīrtharāja, (king of holy centres), remove my sins, obeisance be to you".

46. It is only after uttering this duly that one should perform the rite of ablution. Otherwise, O excellent brahmins, the holy dip there is not valued much.

47. After performing the rites of ablution and cleansing by means of the Mantras with the water as their divinity, the devotee shall thereafter repeat the Aghamarsaṇa Mantra three times (all the while) standing within water.

48. O brahmins, just as the horse-sacrifice removes sins so also does the hymn Aghamarsaṇa¹ remove all sins.

49-51. He should come out of water and wear two washed cloths free from impurities. He shall perform the Ācamana rite and the Prāṇāyāma. He shall then pray to the junction as well as the sungod. Thereafter he should offer a handful of water libation alongwith flowers. With his hands lifted up he should pray to the sun-god with the significant hymns pertaining to him. Thereafter, he shall repeat the sacred Gāyatrī Mantra, hundred and eight times. He shall stand there with perfect concentration after repeating other Mantras pertaining to the Sungod.

52. After circumambulating the sungod and bowing down to him he should sit facing the east and perform the rite of (vedic study, then he should perform Tarpaṇa rites to the Gods and sages.

53. He should perform Tarpaṇa rites for sages, manes and others. He the knower of Mantras, should perform Tarpaṇa by repeating their names and Gotras. The water shall be mixed up with gingelly seeds.

1. *Aghamarsaṇa* mantra : RV.X.190.

54. The brahmin shall be authorized in the Tarpaṇa rite to the manes only after performing Tarpaṇa rite to the deities at the outset with due attention.

55. At the time of Śrāddha, when the ball of rice is offered, the devotee shall offer it with a single hand. When performing the rite of Tarpaṇa he shall use both hands. This is the procedure to be followed always.

56. After repeating the name and Gotra (Spiritual lineage) he shall say 'Tr̥pyatām' (may be pleased). Otherwise he should not utter anything. The left-hand should be joined to the right hand (and thus the libation should be offered).

57. If out of delusion the devotee performs the rite of Tarpaṇa with the gingelly seeds kept on any of his limbs, it would be as though he had performed the rites of Tarpaṇa to the forefathers by means of skin, flesh, blood and bone.

58. One should not perform the rite of Tarpaṇa to the deities and Pitṛs with the gingelly seeds kept on any of the limbs. That water will turn into blood and he who offers it shall be sinful.

59. O leading sages, if the person who offers libation stands in water and if the libation is offered on the dry ground, that offering is made futile. It does not benefit anyone.

60. If the man stands on the ground and offers libation into the water, that water libation does not approach the manes. It turns futile.

61. One should not stand in water and offer water libation to the manes. He should come out and perform water libation on a pure spot.

62-65. The Tarpaṇa rite shall not be performed in water or in vessels. While performing the rite one shall not be wrathful nor should one perform it with a single hand. The water libation that is not made on the ground does not benefit the manes.

O brahmins, the earth has been given by me to the manes as their everlasting abode. Hence water libation should be offered there alone by one who seeks pleasure for the manes.

They were born on the surface of earth. They died on the surface of earth and merged with it. During life time it was

on this earth that they stood. Hence, one should offer water libation on the ground.

He should spread Kuśa grass with their tips to the East in regard to the Gods; to the South in regard of the manes. He should invoke gods and manes by repeating their Mantras separately.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Rules of Worship and Mantras

Brahma said :

1-2. After performing the rites of Tarpaṇa to Devas, Pitṛs and others and having performed the Ācamana rite silently, O Brahmins, the devotee shall draw the mystic diagram of a city on the shore of a great ocean. It should look very splendid with four corners and four gateways. The figure shall extend to a hand in size. In the middle of the city he should draw the mystic diagram of a lotus with eight petals and a pericarp.

3. After drawing the mystic diagram O brahmins, the devotee should worship Nārāyaṇa, the unborn lord by means of injunctions in regard to the eight syllabled Mantra.

4-6. I shall now mention the excellent means of cleaning the body. He should think of the (syllable *A*) in the heart alongwith a circular line. It should have three blazing tufts that burn and destroy sins. He shall think of the syllable *Ra* stationed in the middle of the lunar disc on the head. It should be white in colour, it should shower nectar and blood on the earth. After dispelling sins thus he is endowed with a divine body.

7. Then he should perform the Nyāsa rite with the eight-syllabled Mantra. He shall begin with the left foot and fix in due order.

8. The aspirant should perform the following rites with the basic Mantra viz. the five limbs belonging to lord Viṣṇu;

the four groups or arrays and the purificatory rite of the hand also belong to the lord.

9-12. Each of the Varṇas (colours, syllables) should be fixed in the figures separately. He should fix the syllable *Om* as the white earth in the left foot, the syllable *Nā* pertains to lord Śiva. It is dark-coloured and is stationed in the right foot. They call the syllable *Mo* Kāla (time, God of Death). The devotee should fix it in the left hip. The syllable *Nā* is the seed of everything. It is stationed in the right hip. They call the syllable *Rā* Tejas (fire). It is stationed in the umbilical region, The syllable *Ya* pertains to the wind and it resorts to the left shoulder. The syllable *Nā* should be known as omnipresent. It is stationed in the right shoulder. The syllable *Ya* is stationed in the head. It is in this that all the worlds are established.

13. *Om* obeisance to Viṣṇu—thus the head. *Om* obeisance to Jvalana (the fiery blaze)—thus the tuft. *Om* obeisance to Viṣṇu—thus the coat of mail. *Om* obeisance to Viṣṇu—thus the throbbing for the binding of quarters. *Om* *Hum phaṭ*—thus the miraculous weapon. *Om* Vāsudeva is white—in the head thus. *Om* *Am* Saṅkarṣaṇa is red—in the forehead. Garuḍa is the fire, the luminary sun thus. *Am* Pradyumna is yellow—in the neck. He is the wind and cloud. *Om* *Ar̥i* Aniruddha is black—in the heart. He is endowed with all power. Thus protected by four arrays the devotee shall start reciting Kavaca.

14-17. “Viṣṇu is stationed in front of me; Govinda in the right side; Madhusūdana in the left; Vaikuṇṭha above; Varāha on the surface of the Earth; Mādhava in intermediary spaces. My protection is afforded by Narasiṁha even as I move about or stay still, whatever I am awake or asleep. I am identical with Vāsudeva”. Thus the devotee will become identical with the lord. He shall start the holy rite. As in regard to the body so in regard to the lord he should join the principles (tattvas).

18-19. He should perform the rite of sprinkling with water with the mantra *Om̄kāra* and ending with *Phaṭ*, dispelling of calamities. The mantra is efficacious in warding off the evil effect of the malefic eye of the sun, moon and fire. He should fix Viṣṇu in the centre of the lotus between wind and ether.

20-21. He should think of *Om̄kāra* in the form of a luminary, in the heart. The eternal form of the luminary is seated

in the pericarp. He should perform the Nyāsa of the eight-syllabled Mātrā in due order. The greatest worship is rendered to the lord by that Mantra analytically and synthetically.

22. He should perform the worship of eternal lord by the twelve-syllabled Mantra; thereafter he should fix it up in the pericarp, at the outside, after retaining it in the heart.

23. He should meditate upon the eternal lord with four arms and possessed of great strength. He should think upon the lord with lustre of a crore suns. He should invoke the lord after duly thinking about him in his mind.

24. (The invocation is as follows) :—

May the Lord Nārāyaṇa, the bestower of boons come in front of me in the form of a Fish, Boar, Man-lion and a Dwarf. Om namo Nārāyanāya—thus is the mantra for invoking the lord (obeisance to Nārāyaṇa).

25. The establishment of the seat is as follows :—

At the extremity of foot-hills of the mountain Sumeru the seat is conceived of in the mystic lotus. "O Slayer of Madhu, stay here for the welfare of all animals. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya (Obeisance to Nārāyaṇa)—thus the establishment of the seat".

26. The Arghya is offered with the following mantra :—

"Om obeisance to Lord Viṣṇu, Hṛṣikeśa, the lord of Devas, of rulers of the three worlds. Om namo Nārāyanāya (obeisance to Nārāyaṇa), thus the Arghya.

27. Om the water offering for washing the feet. O Eternal Padmanābha, O Lord, the water is offered at your feet. O Viṣṇu, with eyes like the petals of a lotus, O Madhusūdana, please accept it. Om namo Nārāyanāya (Obeisance to Nārāyaṇa)—thus the Pādya.

28. The holy offering is made as follows :—"O Great Lord, the best among the Puruṣas, the Madhuparka as prepared by Brahmā and other sages is devoutly offered unto you. Please accept it, "Om namo Nārāyanāya"—thus the Madhuparka.¹

1. *Madhuparka* : a mixture of honey, curd and butter offered to the guest or the bridegroom on the wedding ceremony.

29. The water for ritualistic rinsing of the mouth is offered to you. The crystalline water of the Gaṅgā is auspicious and it dispels all sins. Accept this water for rinsing your mouth as devotedly offered by me.

30. The ablutionary rite is as under :—

“You are water, earth, fire, wind. O lord of the Universe, I am bathing you with water merely as a routine activity. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya” thus the ablution.

31. The two cloths are offered as follows :—

“O Lord, equipped with the principles, having the lustre and colour of sacrifice, O lord Keśava, two cloths having the lustre and colour of gold are offered to you. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the cloths.

32. The unguent is offered as follows :—

“O Keśava, I do not know your body nor your activities. The scent is offered by me. Let it be accepted to smear your body with. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the unguent.

33. The sacred thread is offered as follows :—“I dedicate the sacred thread wound into threefolds by the lotus-born deity through the R̥k, Yajus and Sāman. It has the blessing of Sāvitri. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the sacred thread.

34. Ornaments are offered as follows :—

“O Mādhava, equipped with divine gems, with the lustre like that of fire and the sun, may your body shine splendidly with ornaments. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the ornaments.

35-38. When worshipping, the words Om namaḥ shall be used alongwith each of the syllables of the basic Mantra. Or the worship can be performed with the basic mantra alone.

“May this offering of incense be accepted. The divine juice of the plant rendered fragrant by the addition of scents, has been offered by me with great devotion.

Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the incense is offered.

The light is offered as follows :—

The refulgence “as that of the sun and the moon, the bright-light of the lightning and fire—you alone are that, O Lord of luminaries; may this lamp be accepted. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the lamp.

The Naivedya is offered as follows :—

“The four varieties of cooked rice, equipped with six types of tastes O Keśava, this Naivedya (food offering) has been devoutly offered to you. Om̄ namo Nārāyaṇāya”—thus the Naivedya.

39-47. The devotee shall fix Vāsudeva in the petal in the East, Saṅkarṣana in the South, Pradyumna in the West and Aniruddha in the North, Varāha in the South-East, Narasiṁha in the South-West, Madhva in the North-West and Trivikrama in the North-East.

Similarly, he should fix Garuḍa in front of the Lord of eight syllables; he shall fix the discus at the left side and the couch at the right side. Similarly, he shall fix the great iron club on the right side, the mighty bow on the left. The two divine quivers on the right side and the sword to the left. After establishing Śrī to the right (i.e. the South) he should fix prosperity (puṣṭi) to the North. He should fix the garland of sylvan flowers, the scar Śrivatsa and the jewel Kaustubha in front. He should fix the weapons of the lord of Devas in the angular points. With the Tāntrika mantras he should fix Indra, Agni, Yama, Nairṛta, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Dhanada and Iśāna in the eight quarters and Ananta and Brahmā beneath and above and worship them.

Worshipping the lord of Devas thus, stationed in the mystic diagram, he shall obtain his cherished desires.

48. He who observes Janārdana who in accordance with this injunction is worshipped in the mystic diagram, shall enter the eternal Viṣṇu.

49. If Keśava is worshipped even for once in accordance with this injunction, the devotee will surmount birth, death and old age. He will attain the region of Viṣṇu.

50. An abode in the white Island (Śvetadvīpa) is allotted to the person who remembers Nārāyaṇa with devout attention.

51. His name with Omkāra at the beginning and Namah at the end is called the Mantra of all Principles.

52-53. He should offer scents and fragrant flowers in accordance with this very injunction. For each one of syllables he shall offer flowers in due order. He shall show mystic gestures in the order of their occurrence. He should perform

the rite of recitation of the bija Mantra. There are eight mystic gestures viz—lotus, conch, Śrīvatsa, iron club, Garuḍa, discus, sword, and the bow Śāringa. Repetition of the name may be for eight, twentyeight or hundred and eight times. In accordance with his capacity, or desires entertained or the frequency mentioned, the devotee shall perform the rite of recitation with great concentration and attentively.

The ritualistic dismissal of the deity is as follows :—“O Purāṇa Puruṣottama, go, go to the greatest abode where Devas viz. Brahmā and others live joyfully. Om namo Nārāyaṇāya”, thus the dismissal.

Those who do not know this mode of worship of Hari may worship him by reciting the basic Mantra.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

The Merit of a holy dip in the Ocean

Brahmā said :

1. After duly and devoutly worshipping the lord thus, the devotee should bend his head thereafter and propitiate the ocean.

2. O Lord of streams you are the vital breath and source of origin of all living beings. O king of sacred waters fond of Lord Viṣṇu, obeisance be to you. Save me.

3-4. O brahmins, by taking the holy dip perfectly in the ocean thus, in that excellent holy centre, by duly worshipping Nārāyaṇa devoid of ailments and by bowing to Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Subhadrā and the ocean the man attains the benefit of performing hundreds of horse-sacrifices.

5-6. He will be rid of all sins. He will be devoid of all miseries. He will be glorious like gods and be justifiably proud of handsome features and blooming youth. He can redeem twentyone generations of his family. He goes to the world of Viṣṇu on an aerial chariot with the lustre and colour of the

sun and glorified with the divine sound of music produced by the Gandharvas.

7-9. For the period of a hundred Manvantaras or more he will enjoy excellent pleasures and carry on dalliance with the celestial damsels. He will be devoid of old age and death. When his merit dwindles he returns to the world and is born in a family endowed with noble qualities. He will be handsome, fortunate, glorious truthful and celibate. He conquers his sense-organs. He is born as a brahmin conversant with the meaning of the Vedic and scriptural passages. He will be one who performs sacrifices. He will be a devotee of Viṣṇu. After performing the Yoga pertaining to Viṣṇu he will attain salvation thereby.

10-15. Intelligent devotees give charitable gifts to brahmins at that place on the following occasions. During eclipse of planets, during tropical, equinoctical or other transit of the sun from one zodiac to another, during Yugādi days, (i.e. during the transit of the sun at a particular juncture), during Vyatipāta (ill-owned occasion), when day comes to a close, during the full moon days of Aṣāḍha, Kārttika and Māgha or any other auspicious occasion. For these charitable rites the devotees attain a thousand times more benefit than the very same rites at other holy centres. If the descendants offer balls of rice to the manes in accordance with the injunctions at this place the manes derive everlasting satisfaction. Thus the benefit of holy dip in the ocean has been recounted by me. O brahmins, the benefit of charitable gifts and the benefit offering balls of rice at this centre have also been recounted by me. The holy dip confers the benefit of virtue, wealth and salvation, causes longevity, renown and fame, yields worldly pleasures and bestows salvation upon men. It destroys the evil effects of dreams, despels sins. It is holy and gives all desired benefits.

16-23. O excellent Brahmans, the knowledge of the Purāṇa should not be imparted to an atheist. O Brahmans, so long as the glory of this king of holy centres is not described the other holy centres such as Puṣkara roar with the pride of their manifold glories.

The Puṣkara and other holy centres confer only their res-

pective benefits. But the king of holy centres bestows the benefit of all rivers and holy centres. The rivers, brooks, and other holy spots enter this king of holy centres. Hence, it has acquired excellence. The ocean, the lord of rivers is the king of all holy spots since it bestows all cherished desires and it is more excellent than all other holy centres.

O brahmins, just as darkness perishes when the sun rises, so also the sins perish due to the holy dip in the Tirtharāja.

There never was nor will ever there be a holy centre on a par with Tirtharāja where lord Nārāyaṇa is always present. O brahmins, who can recount the excellent qualities of this Tirtharāja where ninetynine crores of holy centres abide peacefully.

Hence, brahmins, whatever is done there viz., the holy dip, charitable gift, sacrifice, recitation of mantras and the worship of Devas is done with a never-ending benefit.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Glory of five holy spots Pañcatirthi

Brahmā said :

1. O excellent Brahmans, thence the devotee should go to the holy spot of sacrifices where the splendid and sacred lake Indradyumna is situated.;

2. The intelligent devotee should go there with pure mind and body, and meditate mentally on lord Hari, approach the sacred waters, perform the Ācamana rite and repeat this Mantra :—

3. “O holy spot that is sanctified by the performance of horse sacrifice, and which destroys sins, I am taking a holy dip in you. Remove my sin. Obeisance be to you”.

4-5. After uttering this, he should duly bathe. With gingelly seeds and water he should perform Tarpaṇa to Devas, Pitṛs and others. He should perform Ācamana rite with restrained speech. He should offer balls of rice to the Pitṛs and

worship Puruṣottama. By performing these rites he obtains merits and benefits of ten horse-sacrifices.

6. He redeems seven former generations and seven subsequent generations of his family. Like a God he goes to the world of Viṣṇu on an aerial chariot that can go in all directions.

7. He can enjoy pleasures and happiness there, as long as the moon, sun and stars last. Falling off from that world he returns to the earth and attains salvation thereafter.

8-9. The devotee should conclude his pilgrimage to the five holy spots. He shall observe fast on the eleventh day. He who visits Puruṣottama on the fifteenth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, obtains the benefits and sport in the abode of Lord Viṣṇu. He then goes to that highest region from which he never returns.

The sages said :

10. O lord, great-grandfather, why do you praise the month of Jyeṣṭha in preference to Māgha and other months. Kindly tell us the reason thereof.

Brahmā said :

11. O leading sages, listen, I shall briefly mention why I praise the month of Jyeṣṭha in preference to other months.

12-14. All holy spots, rivers, lakes, lotus, ponds, wells, tanks, eddies, streams and oceans flow into the holy centre of Puruṣottama for seven days beginning with the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha. Hence, O brahmans whatever rite is performed there at that time such as holy ablution, charitable gifts, visiting the deity etc. should become inexhaustible in merits.

15. O excellent brahmans, the tenth day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha removes ten sins. Hence it is called 'Dasaharā'.

16. The man who visits Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa, and Subhadrā meditates upon them with concentration and mental purity will get rid of all sins and go to the world of Viṣṇu.

17. O Brahmans, by visiting Puruṣottama, Rāma and Subhadrā during the first day of the northern and southern solar transits the man goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

18. By visiting Govinda, the most excellent of all Gods, seated on the swing, on the full moon day in the month of Phālguna the devotee of great self-restraint shall go to the city of Govinda.

19-20. When the day of Viṣṇu arrives, O brahmins, the devotee will perform the holy pilgrimage to the five holy spots in accordance with the injunctions and visit Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Bhadra. He attains the rare benefit accruing from the performance of various sacrifices. Rid of all sins, he goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

21-22. He who sees Kṛṣṇa smeared with sandal paste on the third day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha goes to the palace of Lord Viṣṇu. He who sees Puruṣottama on the full moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha, when the constellation of Jyeṣṭha occurs will redeem twentyone members of his family and go to the world of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

In praise of Mahājyeṣṭhi Full moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha

Brahmā said :

1. When the Mahājyeṣṭhi occurs due to the contact of a zodiac and a constellation he should go to the holy place called Puruṣottama.

2. O brahmins, by visiting Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā on the Mahājyeṣṭhi day, the visitor obtains more benefit than that of twelve pilgrimages.

3-16. By visiting Kṛṣṇa on the Mahājyeṣṭhi day he obtains the benefit as is obtained when the rites of ablution and charitable gifts are performed in the following holy places, rivers, etc. during the solar eclipse. They are—Prayāga, Kurukṣetra, Naimiṣa Puṣkara, Gayā, Gaṅgādvāra, Kuśavarta, the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean, Kokāmukha, Śūkara, Mathurā, Marusthalā (the holy desert region), Śālagrāma, Vāyutirtha, Mandara, the confluence of Sindhu and the ocean, Piṇḍaraka, Citrakūṭa,

Prabhāsa, Kanakhala, Saṅkhoddhāra, Dvārakā, Badarikāśrama, Lohakuṇḍa, Aśvatīrtha that liberates one from all sins, Kāmālaya, Koṭitīrtha, Amarakaṇṭaka, Lohārgala, Jambūmārga, Soma-tīrtha, Pr̥thūdaka, Utpalāvartaka, Pr̥thutuṅga, Sukubjaka, Ekāmraka, Kedāra, Kāśī, Viraja, Kālañjara, Gokarṇa, Śriśaila, Gandhamādana, Mahendra, Malaya, Vindhya, Pāriyātra, Himālaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, Gomanta, Arbuda, Gaṅgā, Tīrthas on the bank of Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Gomati, seven rivers Brahmaputra, Godāvari, Bhimarathi, Tuṅgabhadrā, Narmadā, Tāpi, Payoṣṇi, Kāverī, Kṣiprā, Carmaṇvatī, Vitastā, Candra-Bhāgā, Śatadrū, Bāhudā, R̥ṣikulyā, Kumāri, Vipāśā, Dr̥śadvatī, Sarayū, Gaṅgā, Gaṇḍaki Mahānadi, Kauśiki, Karatoyā, Trisrotā, Madhuvāhini, Mahānadi Vaitaraṇī and other rivers not mentioned there. O excellent brahmins, of what avail is much talk? All holy centres, all holy shrines, oceans, mountains, rivers, lakes, etc. on the earth.

17. Hence, O excellent sages, those who are desirous of attaining their longed-for benefit, will assiduously go to Puruṣottama on the Mahājyeṣṭhī day.

18-20. By visiting Rāma and Kṛṣṇa together with Subhadrā on the Mahājyeṣṭhī day the devotee goes to the world of Viṣṇu after uplifting his family.

After enjoying great and excellent pleasures there, till the dissolution of all living beings he returns to this place when the merit dwindles. He will then be born as a brahmin mastering the four vedas.

He will be devoted to his own duty. He will be peaceful. He will be a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. He will conquer his sense-organs. By adopting the Yoga pertaining to Viṣṇu, he will attain salvation.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Holy Ablution in Propitiation of Kṛṣṇa

The sages said :

1. O lotus-born one, when does the holy dip of Kṛṣṇa take place? By what means and in accordance with what precepts? Mention this, O excellent one among the knowers of precepts.

Brahmā said :

2. O sages, even as I recount, listen to the rules of holy ablution (in propitiation) of Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā. It is meritorious and destroyer of all sins.

3. O brahmins if, in the month of Jyeṣṭha the constellation Mārgaśiras coincides with the full moon, that is the auspicious time for the ablution of Hari.

4. There is a pure well devoid of impurities. It is full of sacred water reservoirs. O brahmins, the sacred river Bhogavati becomes visible there at that time.

5-10. Hence, from that well, the devotee should draw water in golden vessels on the fullmoon day, for the ablution of Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā. O brahmins, the devotee, should make a raised rostrum for the ablution of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The rostrum should look splendid and well decorated with flags. It should be firm as well as comfortable to walk upon. It should be beautified with flowers and nice pieces of clothes. It should be spacious and fumigated with incenses. It should be enclosed with white clothes and decorated with pearlnecklaces dangling down. To the accompaniment of musical instruments and auspicious shouts of victory the idols of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā should be installed on the platform.

O brahmins, men and women, brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, Sūdras and people of other castes, householders, religious students newly wed, ascetics and celibate students should pour water over Kṛṣṇa and the ploughshare-armed Balarāma stationed on the platform.

11. O excellent brahmins, all the holy sacred waters mentioned above bathe the deities separately with their waters mixed with flowers.

12-14. Loud sounds are then heard from drums of various kinds such as Paṭha, Bherī, Muraja and Mṛdaṅga, from conches Kāhalas, cymbals, gongs, bells and various musical instruments. Women raise auspicious shouts along with the charming sounds raised by sages in the form of prayers, shouts of victory and sounds of flutes and lutes. The tumult raised there resembles the sound of rumbling sea.

15-16. The sages raise the chanting sound of Vedic Mantras and hymns from holy scriptures accompanied by Sāman songs. At the time of ablution, excellent devas eulogise them with great joy along with ascetics, householders old as well as those newly initiated religious students.

17-18. Rāma and Keśava are fanned with chowries with their handles studded with precious stones by dark-complexioned courtesans bending under the weight of their breasts. They are clad in yellow or red cloths and stoop down by the weight of garlands. They wear jewel-studded divine ear-rings with golden branches.

19-20. Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Sādhyas, Viśvedevas, Maruts, guardians of quarters and many others eulogise Puruṣottama. They are surrounded by Yakṣas, Vidyādharaś, Siddhas, Kinnaras and Apsaras all occupying the firmament. There are Devas, Gandharvas and Cāraṇas also :—

21. “Obeisance to you, O Lord of the chiefs of Devas, O ancient Puruṣottama, O lord, the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation, O lord of the world, O lord of the Universe.

22. Devoutly we bow to the lord holding the three worlds, who is favourably disposed to the brahmins, who is the cause of liberation and who bestows all desired benefits.

23. O excellent sages, Devas eulogised Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma of great strength and Subhadrā and remained in the sky itself.

24. Together with Gandharvas they sang auspicious songs while the celestial damsels danced, the divine musical instruments were played and the cool gentle winds blew.

25. The clouds gathered in the sky, showered water and strewed flowers. The sages, Siddhas and Cāraṇas shouted cries of victory.

26. (So also) Lord Indra and other Devas, sages, Pitrs, Prajāpatis, Nāgas and those others who resided in heaven.

27-45. Thereafter, Deva took the materials of ablution duly inspired by the recitation of Mantra together with other auspicious requisites. Indra, Viṣṇu of great strength, sun, moon, Dhātā, Vidyātā, Anila (Wind God), Anala (fire God), Pūṣan. Bhaga, Aryaman, Tvaṣṭṛ, Añśumān and Vivasvat accompanied by his consorts, Mitra, Varuṇa, the lord surrounded by Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, the two Aśvins, Viśvedevas, Maruts and Sādhyas alongwith the forefathers, were present there. There were Gandharvas, Apsaras, Yakṣas, the Rākṣasas, Nāgas, celestial sages, excellent brahminical sages, Vaikhānasas, Vālakhilyas who subsisted on winds and who drink lunar rays. Bhṛgus, Aṅgiras, the pious ascetics, Vidyādharaś, holy persons of Yogic achievement surrounded them. Pitāmaha, Pulastyā, Pulaha of great penance, Aṅgiras, Kaśyapa, Atri, Marīci, Bhṛgu, Kratu, Hara, Pracetā, Manu, Dakṣa, seasons, planets, luminaries, rivers in their embodied form, immortal Devas, ocean, eddies, different Tīrthas, Earth, heaven, quarters, trees, Aditi the mother of Devas; the wives of heaven-dwellers such as Hrī, Śrī, Svāhā, Sarasvatī, Umā, Śaci, Sinivāli, Anumati, Kuhu, Rākā, Dhiṣaṇā and others, mountains Himavān, Vindhya and Meru of numerous peaks, Airāvata with his followers. Kāla, Kāṣṭhās, fortnights, month, seasons, day, night, Uccaiśravas most excellent of horses, Vāmana, Airāvata king of elephants, Aruṇa, Garuḍa, the trees along with the medicinal herbs, lord Dharmā assembled together. Kāla, Mṛtyu, Yama and the servants of Yama, groups of Devas who have not been already mentioned because of their numerosity came for bathing the lord, from different quarters. O brahmins, the heaven-dwellers came upon the vessel which contained auspicious articles for ablution. The vessels of gold, O brahmins contained divine articles of requisites as well as holy and divine waters of the river Sarasvatī. Devas stationed in the firmament, bathed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with the water vessels mixed alongwith flowers.

46. So also the aerial chariots of Devas moved about in the sky. In these divine chariots they could go wherever they were pleased to go. The cars were of different type high and low. Some of them were stationary.

47. They were of wonderful workmanship with divine jewels studded in them. They were resorted to by Apsaras rendered beautiful by flags. Their charm was enhanced by songs and musical instruments.

48. They, O excellent sages, all these bathed Kṛṣṇa, Bala-rāma and Subhadrā and eulogised them with great joy.

49. Be victorious, be victorious, protector of the world. O saviour of devotees, be victorious, be victorious, one favourably disposed to one who bows down, be victorious, be victorious. O refuge of living beings, be victorious, be victorious. O primordial lord, O cause of many, be victorious, be victorious O destroyer of Asuras, be victorious, be victorious, be victorious. O most excellent one among the gods, be victorious, be victorious. O deity lying down in the ocean, be victorious, be victorious. O foremost one among the Yogins, be victorious be victorious. O deity with the sun for the eye, be victorious, be victorious. O king of Devas, be victorious, be victorious. O enemy of Kaiṭabha, be victorious, be victorious. O excellent one (eulogized in) the Vedas, be victorious, be victorious. O deity in the form of a tortoise, be victorious, be victorious O excellent deity in the form of sacrifice, be victorious, be victorious. O deity with the umbilical lotus, be victorious. O deity who move about on the mountains, be victorious, be victorious O Yogeśayin (one who sleep the Yogic slumber), be victorious, be victorious, be victorious. O holder of velocity, be victorious, be victorious, O Viśvamūrti (deity of Universal form), be victorious, be victorious. O holder of discus, be victorious, be victorious. O lord of living beings, be victorious, be victorious. O upholder of the earth, be victorious, be victorious. O Śeṣaśayin (one lying on the serpent Śeṣa), be victorious, be victorious. O yellow-robed one, be victorious be victorious. O Somakānta (one as lovely as the moon), be victorious, be victorious. O Yogavas (one residing in the Yogic power), be victorious, be victorious, O Dahanavaktra (one whose mouth emits fire), be victorious, be victorious. O abode of piety, be victorious, be victorious. O storehouse of good qualities, be victorious, be victorious. O abode of glory, be victorious, be victorious. O deity going about on the Vehicle Garuda, be victorious, be victorious. O abode of

happiness, be victorious, be victorious. O banner of virtue, be victorious, be victorious. O abode of the earth, be victorious, be victorious. O Gahana Caritra (One whose conduct is abstruse); be victorious, be victorious. O Yogigamya (one who can be realised by Yogins), be victorious, be victorious, be victorious. O deity comprehensible through Vedas; be victorious, be victorious. O deity spreading calmness and peace, be victorious, be victorious. O cause of nourishment, be victorious, be victorious, O Jñānamūrti (one whose form is perfect knowledge), be victorious, be victorious. O mine of fortune, be victorious, be victorious. O Bhāvavedya (one who can be understood only through emotional fervour), be victorious, be victorious. O (deity) that causes salvation; be victorious, be victorious. O deity with a physical body devoid of impurities, be victorious, be victorious. O abode of all living beings, be victorious, be victorious. O cause of sacrifices, be victorious, be victorious. O deity devoid of attributes, be victorious, be victorious. O Mokṣakara (Liberator), be victorious, be victorious. Bhūśaraṇya-refuge of the Earth, be victorious, be victorious. O resplendent one, be victorious, be victorious. O refuge of the worlds, be victorious, be victorious. O lōtus-eyed one, be victorious, be victorious. O cause of creation, be victorious, be victorious. O deity endowed with Yoga, be victorious, be victorious. O deity whose body is dark-coloured like the Atasi flower, be victorious, be victorious. O Samudrāviṣṭadeva (one whose body has entered the ocean), be victorious, be victorious. O deity acting as the bee in regard to Lakṣmi who is the lotus, be victorious, be victorious. O deity under the control of the devotee, be victorious, be victorious. O lover of the worlds, be victorious, be victorious. O extremely quiescent one, be victorious, be victorious. O greatest deity of essence, be victorious, be victorious. O holder of discus, be victorious, be victorious. O deity accompanied by those who enjoy, be victorious, be victorious. O bluerobed one (i.e. Balarāma), be victorious, be victorious. O bringer of peace, be victorious, be victorious. O liberator, be victorious, be victorious. O dispeller of sins, be victorious, be victorious. O Kṛṣṇa, lord of the universe, be victorious, be victorious. O younger brother of Saṅkarṣapa, be victorious, be victorious, O lōtus-eyed one, be victorious, be

victorious, O bestower of desired benefits, be victorious, be victorious. O deity whose chest is covered with garlands, be victorious, be victorious. O wielder of discus and ironclub, be victorious, be victorious. O lover of Lakṣmī (whose abode is the lotus) be victorious, be victorious, O Viṣṇu, obeisance be to you.

Brahma said :

50-51. Thus Indra and other Devas were delighted in their minds after eulogising thus. Siddhas, Cāraṇas and others who reside in heaven and the sages Vālakhilyas loved to Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā. O excellent sages, after bowing to them they stationed themselves in the firmament.

52-53. After visiting, eulogising and bowing to Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā, the heaven-dwellers went to their respective abodes. The aerial chariots of Devas moved about in the sky. Some were lofty. Some were low. Some could go as they pleased. Some were stationary.

54. The aerial chariots were of wonderful workmanship with divine jewels inlaid. They were resorted by the celestial maidens. They were beautified with flags and banners while musical instruments and songs enhanced their charm.

55. The devotees who visit Puruṣottama, Balabhadra and Subhadrā on that occasion go to the eternal region (whence there is no return to the earth).

56. By seeing Puruṣottama seated on the platform accompanied by Subhadrā and Balarāma the devotees go to the abode of Viṣṇu which is devoid of ailments.

57. O excellent sages, the man who performs auspicious rites and visits the Lord seated on the couch accompanied by Balarāma and Subhadrā obtains the benefit which is equal to the benefit of charitable gift of a hundred tawny cows at the holy centre Puṣkara.

58. By visiting Lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the benefit of charitable gift of a hundred virgins.

59. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the benefit of charitable gift of a hundred pieces of gold coins.

60. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the charitable gift of a thousand cows.

61. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the getting of land as prescribed in the Śāstras.

62. By visiting Lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit equal to the gifts of cooked rice and due hospitality to guests alongwith Arghya.

63. By visiting Lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefits which is equal to that of performing Vṛṣotsarga.¹

64. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the gift of water in summer or in any other season.

65. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the gift of Tiladhenu.²

66. By visiting Lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the gift of elephants, horses and chariots.

67. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the gift of a cow with its horns plaited with gold.

68. By visiting Lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the charitable gift of a water and cow.

69. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the gift of ghee and a cow.

70. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to that of performing Cāndrāyaṇa³ according to sacred injunctions.

1. *Vṛṣotsarga* : letting loose a bull or a bull and four heifers as a meritorious deed, especially on the occasion of a Śrāddha in honour of deceased ancestors.

2. *Tiladhenu*—a cow presented to a Brahmin.

3. *Cāndrāyaṇa* : This is a fast prescribed in the Dharmasāstra, so called because it is regulated by the moon, the food being diminished everyday by one mouthful for the dark fortnight and increased in like manner during the white fortnight.

71. By visiting lord Kṛṣṇa seated on the couch a man obtains the benefit which is equal to that of monthly observance of facts as laid down in the Śāstras.

72-77. Of what avail is much talk ? O excellent brahmins, the greatness of that lord is as follows. By visiting Kṛṣṇa accompanied by Balarāma and seated on the couch as well as Subhadrā, the man who performs an auspicious rite obtains the benefit which is glorified as the result of holy rites and charitable gifts in all the holy centres. Hence, O excellent sages, the man or woman must see Puruṣottama. Thereby he or she obtains the benefit of holy dip in all the holy centres.

With the water that remains after the ablution rite of Kṛṣṇa the devotee must bathe and sprinkle himself.

A barren lady, a lady whose child is dead, a lady in a wretched state or afflicted by evil planets, those who are seized by Rākṣasas, Bhūtas and Piśācas, those who are afflicted by ailments should be sprinkled with water that remains after the rite of ablution. They then attain their cherished desires.

78. She who seeks sons obtains sons; she who seeks happiness attains happiness. She who is afflicted by ailments is liberated from ailments. She who seeks riches obtains riches.

79. All those sacred waters on the face of the earth do not merit even a sixteenth part of the water that remains after the rite of ablution.

80. Hence, O brahmins, one shall sprinkle one's limbs with the water that remains after the rite of ablution of Kṛṣṇa has been performed. It is the bestower of all desires.

81. Those who visit Kṛṣṇa whose ablution is performed and who proceed ahead facing the south are liberated from the sins of brahmin slaughter and other major or minor sins.

82. By visiting Kṛṣṇa proceeding ahead facing the South, a man obtains that benefit which is mentioned in scriptures as the result of three circumambulations of the earth.

83. By visiting Kṛṣṇa proceeding ahead facing the South a man obtains the benefit which is derivable from the pilgrimage all over the earth.

84. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the South, a man obtains the

benefit which is derivable from visiting Nara and Nārāyaṇa¹ in the penance grove Badarī.

85. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit which results from the holy dip and charitable gift at Gaṅgādvāra² and Kurukṣetra.

86. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the benefit of (the holy dip) in Prayāga on the Mahāmāghī day i.e. (full moon day in the month of Māgha).

87. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit which is equal to the ablution and charitable gifts in Śālagrāma on the Mahācaitri day (i.e. full moon day in the month of Cītrā).

88. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains that benefit which is equal to the benefit of Mahākārttikī (i.e. full moon day in the month of Kārttika) at Puṣkara.

89. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit which is derivable from the holy dip and charitable gift at the confluence of Gaṅgā and the ocean.

90. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit which is the result of holy bath accompanied by charitable gifts in Kurukṣetra at the time of solar eclipse.

91-92. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit of the holy bath and the charitable gifts at the holy centres on the Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī and also on the banks of holy lakes etc.

93-94. By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south a man obtains the benefit that is usually obtained by holy dips and charitable gifts during the eclipse of the sun in the holy centres such as Puṣkara, Gayā, Amarakanṭaka, Naimiṣa and other holy shrines.

95-97. Of what avail is much talk? Of what avail is the repeated talk? By visiting Kṛṣṇa facing the south along with Subhadrā and Balarāma a man or a women obtains the bene-

1. *Nara-Nārāyaṇa*: two hermits who had spent many thousands of years in Badaryāśrama doing penance. Arjuna was the rebirth of Nara and Śrikrṣṇa was the rebirth of Nārāyaṇa.

2. *Gaṅgādvāra*—Haridvāra or Haradvāra, identifiable with the place where the river Ganges falls from the Himalayas.

fits mentioned in the Vedas, scriptures, Purāṇas, Bhārata and Dharmaśāstras (Ethical texts) by the learned men as the benefit of meritorious deeds.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Glory of the Holy Procession : Gundikā Yatra

Brahmā said :

1. Those who observe Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā seated in a chariot and going in a procession to the Maṇḍapa called Gundikā go to the abode of lord Viṣṇu.
2. Those who visit Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā occupying the Maṇḍapa for seven days, go to the world of Viṣṇu.

The sages said :

3. Who initiated the procession to the auspicious Gundikā Maṇḍapa ? What is the benefit of witnessing this procession ?
- 4-5. Why do Kṛṣṇa, lord of the universe, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Subhadrā leave off their (permanent abode and proceed in a chariot, to the Maṇḍapa in a holy secluded spot on the bank of that lake and stay there for seven nights ?

Brahmā said :

- 6-7. O brahmins, formerly lord Viṣṇu was requested by Indradyumna :

O lord of Devas, let there be a procession to the bank of my lake. It will yield worldly pleasure and salvation to us.

Puruṣottama the lord of Devas granted him this boon.

The Lord said :

8. O king, there shall be a procession for seven days on the banks of your lake. It will be called Gundikā. It will bestow all desired benefits.

- 9-12. O king, the devotees, whether Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, or Śūdras whether male or female shall worship me,

Samkarṣapa and Subhadrā occupying the Maṇḍapa. They shall worship with great faith by means of fragrant flowers, scents, incenses, lights, (food offerings), presents, obeisance, circumambulations, shouts of victory, hymns, charming songs, and musical instruments. Nothing is difficult of access to them. O excellent king, whatever benefit is desired by them will certainly befall them due to my favour.

Brahmā said :

13. After saying this to him the lord vanished there itself. That glorious and excellent king was fully satisfied.

14. Hence, O excellent brahmins, one shall by all means visit lord Viṣṇu, the bestower of all desires, at Guṇḍikā.

15. A man if he has no son, obtains sons, if poor, gets riches, if sick, is liberated from ailments. A virgin will get a good husband.

16. The man derives longevity, glory, fame, intelligence, strength, learning, courage and obtains cattle, progeny and the wealth of handsome features and blooming youth.

17. By visiting lord Viṣṇu a man or woman devotee attains whatever pleasure he or she wishes for.

18-19. By witnessing Guṇḍikā-procession with great concentration, O excellent brahmins, and by visiting lord Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā in the bright half of the month of Āśādha, the man or woman derives the benefit of fifteen horse sacrifices or even more.

20-23. He will redeem seven earlier generations and seven subsequent generations of his family—He will be fortunate and handsome as well as heroic. He will be bedecked in all ornaments studded with jewels. He will be served by Gandharvas and Apsaras vying with each other. In an aerial chariot that can go wherever one desires to go the devotee shall go to the city of Lord Viṣṇu. He will freely enjoy the desired pleasures. He will be devoid of old age and death. Till the ultimate dissolution of all living beings he will enjoy excellent pleasures. When the merit decreases he will return to this place and be born as a brahmin who has mastered the four Vedas.

Thereafter, he will adopt Yoga pertaining to Viṣṇu and attain salvation.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

The Twelve Holy Pilgrimages and their Benefits

The sages said :

1. Mention separately the benefit which a man or a woman with perfect self-control acquires by making holy pilgrimage.

Brahmā said :

2. O brahmins, even as I recount, listen to the benefit of holy pilgrimage severally, that a man acquires after undertaking the pilgrimage to that holy centre with great restraint.

3-4. A man who undertakes pilgrimage in accordance with the injunctions, visits and bows to Kṛṣṇa, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Subhadrā at the time of Guṇḍikā, Utthānadvādaśī (twelfth day in the bright half of Kārttika), the full moon day in the month of Phālguna, and during equinoctical transit will acquire the fruit thereof separately. As long as the fourteen Indras reign he will stay in the world of Viṣṇu.

5. A man undoubtedly enjoys pleasures for as many Kalpas as the number of times he undertakes pilgrimages in the month of Jyeṣṭha.

6-8. A devotee should undertake pilgrimage to that sacred excellent and beautiful holy centre of Śrīpuruṣottama, which accords worldly pleasures and salvation to men and which is conducive to the pleasure of every living being. Thereafter, the devotee, whether a man or a woman shall control the sense-organs. He shall continue pilgrimages till twelve such Yātrās are completed with great concentration and mental purity. He who, thereafter, eschews stubbornness and arrogance and installs the idols shall enjoy various pleasures and in the end acquire salvation.

The sages said :

9. O Lord, we wish to hear, even as you recount, the installation and worship of the lord of the universe and the mode of these rites as well as charitable gifts and the fruits thereof.

Brahma said :

10. O leading sages, listen to the installation of idols urged by Brahmā. By devoutly performing this, the man or the woman acquires the benefit.

11. O excellent brahmins, when the twelve pilgrimages are completed, the devotee should carry out the installation that destroy sin.

12-13. On the eleventh day in the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, the devotee with concentration should go to the holy reservoir. With purity and control he should perform Ācamana and invoke holy centres and sacred waters. Meditating on Nārāyaṇa with full devotion he should perform the rite of holy dip.

14. The rite of holy bath should be performed in accordance with the injunctions prescribed by the sages in regard to him.

15. After taking holy bath perfectly in accordance with the injunction (the devotee) who is conversant with the names, Gotras (spiritual lines) and the procedure, should perform Tarpaṇa rite to Devas, sages and manes as well as others.

16-17. Coming out of water and wearing two newly washed and dried cloths free from impurities, he should ritually touch water and stand or sit facing the sun. He should repeat the holy sacred and meritorious Mantra of Gāyatri, the mother of Vedas, the dispeller of all sins. He should repeat the holy Gāyatri one hundred and eight time.

18. He should repeat other holy passages and Mantras pertaining to the sun with faith and concentration. After making three circumambulations he should bow down to the Sungod.

19. In regard to the people of the first three castes the rite of holy bath and the repetition of Mantras is in the manner mentioned in the Vedas. The utterance of the Vedic passage is to be avoided by women as well as Śūdras.

20-22. The devotee shall go home silently and worship Puruṣottama after washing his hands and feet and after ritualistically touching and sipping water in accordance with the precepts. He shall bathe the Lord with ghee, milk, honey, scented water and the holy water mixed with sandal paste. Thereafter, the devotee shall dress the lord with an excellent pair of clothes with devotion. He shall smear the lord with sandal paste, Agallochum, camphor and saffron.

23. With great devotion he shall worship Lord Viṣṇu offering lotuses and other flowers pertaining to Viṣṇu (like jasmine etc.).

24. After worshipping the lord the ruler of the universe, the bestower of worldly pleasures and salvation, in this manner, he shall burn incense along with agallochum in front of the lord.

25. O excellent sages, he shall burn aromatic resin too along with scents. He shall light a lamp with devotion using ghee (instead of oil) according to the means.

26. With concentration he shall offer twelve other lamps, O excellent sages, he shall burn it with ghee or gingelly oil.

27. By way of Naivedya (food offering) he shall dedicate milk pudding, sweet Śākulīs, Vaṭakas (special kinds of baked or fried cakes) sweets, a little quantity of molasses and fruits too.

28. After worshipping Puruṣottama with five items of service (i.e. bathing, offering cloths, worshipping with flowers, showing lamps and incense and food offerings) the devotee shall repeat "Om obeisance to Puruṣottama" a hundred and eight times.

29-32. Then he shall devoutly propitiate lord Puruṣottama thus :— "Obeisance to you O lord of the worlds, O bestower of freedom from fear on the devotees, save me, O Puruṣottama, I am merged in the ocean of worldly existence. O Govinda, O lord of the Universe, may the twelve pilgrimages undertaken by me to you be perfectly completed owing to your grace".

After propitiating the lord thus and prostrating before him like a log of wood, the devotee shall worship the preceptor by means of flowers, cloths and unguents, since, O excellent sages, there is no difference between the two.

33. With faith and concentration, O excellent sages, the devotee shall make a flowery bowerlike Maṇḍapa over the lord.

34. Thereafter, he shall resolve to keep awake at night. For this purpose he shall arrange for the discourses on the divine story of Vāsudeva or devotional songs.

35-36. The learned devotee shall pass night meditating, reading or eulogising the lord. When the twelfth day dawns he shall invite twelve Brahmins who have mastered the Vedas, who are conversant with Itihāsa and Purāṇas, who have controlled their sense-organs and who have taken holy baths signifying their successful conclusion of holy rites.

37. After taking bath perfectly in accordance with the injunctions, the devotee shall control his sense organs and put on washed (and dried) clothes. Thereafter, he shall bathe lord Viṣṇu with devotion as before.

38-39. He should worship the lord with scents, fragrant flowers, presents, Naivedyas, lights, different items of service, obeisances, circumambulations, repetitions of mantras, eulogies, propitiations, charming songs and instrumental music.

After worshipping the lord of the Universe thus, he should worship the brahmins.

40-41. With faith and devotion he should offer twelve cows, gold umbrellas, and pairs of sandals to them.

O brahmins, he should offer wealth, clothes, etc. to them with great devotion since Govinda is propitiated and honoured with emotional fervour.

42. Thereafter, he should give the preceptor a cow, cloth, gold, umbrella, pair of sandals, foodgrain and bellmetal vessel with devotion.

43. He should feed brahmins. The food served should begin with milk pudding. There should be sweet cooked rice and various kinds of edibles prepared in jaggery and ghee.

44. After the brahmins have been fed to their satisfaction and their minds are at rest, he should give them twelve water pots together with sweets.

45. Devoid of revelry he should give them monetary gifts according to his capacity.

He should hand over the pot and the monetary gifts to the preceptor also.

46. O excellent brahmins, after worshipping those brahmins, he should devotedly worship his preceptor who is the bestower of perfect knowledge and who is on a par with Viṣṇu.

47. The learned devotee should honour him with gold, cloth, cow, foodgrains and other articles. Thereafter, he should repeat this mantra.

48. "May Lord Puruṣottama who has neither beginning nor end, who holds conch, discus and iron club and who is the omnipresent lord of the Universe be pleased with this.

49. After uttering this mantra he should circumambulate brahmins thrice. He should bid farewell to the preceptor by bending his head with devotion.

50. Thereafter, he should follow those brahmins with devotion to the boundary of the village. Thus following them he should pay homage and bid them farewell.

51. Accompanied by kinsmen and relatives he should take meals with proper restriction on his tongue. There may be other devotees, poor people, mendicants and hungry persons in need of food, with whom he should share food.

52. By performing this rite perfectly well, the devotee whether a man or a woman should derive the benefit of thousands of horse-sacrifices and a hundred Rājasūya sacrifices.

53-57. The noble devotee will take a divine form for his departure to heaven and will redeem a hundred generations of his ancestors. He will clear the way for a hundred future generations, O brahmins. He will be richly endowed with all characteristic signs and be bedecked in all ornaments. He will have all his desires realized, he will be devoid of fever like a God. He will be richly endowed with handsome features and blooming youth. He will be embellished with all good qualities. He will be eulogised by the celestial damsels. He will be admired by the Gandharvas who will flock around him. He will go to the world of lord Viṣṇu on the aerial chariot that has a steady speed, that has the lustre and colour of the sun, that can go wherever it is desired to go and that is embellished with all sorts of jewels, flags and banners. He will become a young man of great strength. While traversing the sky he will illuminate the

quarters and will not suffer from fatigue. He will grow intelligent.

58-65. In the world of Viṣṇu he will enjoy pleasures in consonance with his desires for the period of a hundred Kalpas. He will stay there devoid of sickness and fever. He will be eulogised by Siddhas, Apsaras, Gandharvas, Devas, Vidyādharaś, Nāgas and sages.

O brahmins, he will assume a form with four arms joyfully like Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe, holding conch, discus and iron-club. He will enjoy excellent pleasures there and sport with Devas. Then he will come to the abode of Brahmā that bestows all desires and that is beautified by Siddhas, Vidyādharaś, Devas and Kinnaras. He will enjoy there for a period of ninety Kalpas. O leading brahmins, from that he will come to the world of Rudra who bestows the desired benefits to the world which is frequented by Devas, which bestows happiness and salvation, which is adorned with hundreds and thousands of lofty mansions, which is beautified by Siddhas, Vidyādharaś, Yakṣas, Daityas and Dānavas. The man enjoys happiness there for the period of eighty Kalpas. At its conclusion he goes to the world of rays, Goloka which is equipped with all pleasures and which is charming, being adorned by Devas, Siddhas and Apsaras.

66-71. For a period of seventy Kalpas he enjoys there such excellent pleasures as are difficult of attainment in the three worlds. He is as steady-minded as an immortal being. From these he comes to the excellent world of Prajāpati. He is surrounded by Gandharvas, Apsaras, Siddhas, sages and Vidyādharaś.

For a period of sixty Kalpas, he enjoys various pleasures there. At its conclusion he goes to the abode of Indra equipped with different miracles. He is surrounded by Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Siddhas, Devas, Vidyādharaś, Nāgas, Guhyakas, Apsaras, Sādhyas and other excellent Devas. After coming there he enjoys happiness for a period of fifty Kalpas. From these he goes to the world of Devas beautified by lofty places. It is sacred, difficult of access and beautified by Devas. The intelligent devotee enjoys for forty Kalpas. Then he comes to the world of Nakṣatras which is also difficult of access.

72. For a period of thirty Kalpas he enjoys excellent pleasures there as he wishes. From there, O excellent brahmins, he comes to the world of the moon.

73-74. He enjoys the rarest of pleasures for a period of twenty Kalpas in that world where the moon shines splendidly in the company of all Devas. Then he comes to the world of the sungod which is honoured by Devas, which is divine, which is full of wonderful miracles and which is surrounded by Gandharvas and Apsaras.

75. O excellent brahmins, after enjoying splendid pleasures there for a period of ten Kalpas he comes to the world of Gandharvas which is most difficult of access.

76. After enjoying various pleasures to the fullest satisfaction for the period of a Kalpa, he comes to the earth and becomes a virtuous king.

77-78. He becomes an Emperor of great vigour embellished by noble qualities. After ruling over the kingdom virtuously, and after performing sacrifices where as much monetary gift is distributed he goes to the world of Yogins that is auspicious and bestower of liberation. There he enjoys excellent pleasure till the ultimate dissolution of all living beings. From there he comes to the world of mortals and is born in an excellent family of Yogins. O brahmins he is born in an excellent family of a devotee of Viṣṇu, which is difficult of access and is approved of by good men. He becomes an excellent brahmin mastering four vedas. He performs sacrifices with due monetary gifts. He adopts Yoga pertaining to Viṣṇu and attains liberation.

Thus, O brahmin, the benefit of pilgrimages has been perfectly cited by me. It yields worldly pleasures and liberation to men. What else do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

The World of Viṣṇu

The sages said :

1-3. O lord, we wish to hear about the world of Viṣṇu the world which is devoid of sickness, is lovely, delightful to the people and full of mystery.

O lord, mention the magnitude of that world, its pleasure, its splendour and its power. By what holy rites do virtuous men go there ? Is it due to the vision or touch of holiness or due to holy dips in the sacred waters of holy centres ? Mention in detail and factually. We are greatly eager to hear this.

Brahmā said :

4-5. O sages, listen all of you, even as I speak about that highest region which is wished for by the devotees. It is blessed, holy land and destructive of the world. It is most excellent of all the worlds. It is named (Viṣṇu-loka) after the name of Viṣṇu. It is a sacred abode full of all mysteries. It is honoured and worshipped by the three worlds.

6-11. It is filled with many trees such as Aśoka, Pārijāta, Mandara, Campaka, Mālatī, Mallikā, Kunda, Bakula, Nāgakesara, Punnāga, Atimukta, Priyaṅgu, Tagara, Arjuna, Pāṭala, Cūta, Khadira, splendid groves of Karṇikāra, Nāraṅga (Orange citron), Panasa (jack tree), Lodhra, Nimba (Margosa) Dāḍima (Pomegranate), Sarjaka, Drākṣā (Grape, vines), Lakuca, Kharjūra, Madhūka, Indraphala, wood apple, coconut palms, palmyra trees, Śrīphala, innumerable splendid trees of various kinds. Sarala, Candana (Sandal), Nipa, Devadāru, Subhañjana, Jāti, Lavaṅga, Kaṅkola, such trees as emitted the odour of camphor, creepers with plenty of betel leaves, Areca palms and various other trees appearing splendid in all seasons with their abundant fruits.

12-17. It is full of various flowers in branches in creepers. It is filled with water-reservoirs of diverse lands and different kinds of beautiful meritorious spots resonant with the chirping sounds of many birds. There are hundreds of tanks and lakes full of water and charming. Lilies, hundred-petalled lotuses, excellent Kokanada (a variety of lotus), Kalhāra flowers and other water flowers, splendid with different colours (are abundant in those ponds). They are full of swans and Kāraṇḍava ducks. They are rendered beautiful by ruddy geese. There are other aquatic birds such as Kāyaśṭikas, Dātyūhas, Cātakas, Priyaputras and Jivāñjivakas. There are other sweet-voiced divine birds moving about in water or flying in the air. Thus the world is adorned by many divine, miraculous trees and charming and holy water reservoirs.

18-22. In that city of Viṣṇu, worshipped by all, people walk about in divine aerial chariots. They are decorated with various jewels beset with pure gold; they can move about at their will. They are resonant with the divine music of Gandharvas. They are as resplendent as the midday sun. They are adorned by the celestial maidens. The beds and seats therein are made of gold. They are rich in means of pleasures of various kinds. Flags and pearl necklaces are suspended from them. They move about in the sky in groups. They are of diverse colours. The various parts of these aerial chariots are made of gold. They are rendered fragrant by the contact of flowers mixed admirably with sandal and agallochum. The instruments of music fill them with sweet sounds. The passages in these aerial chariots afford comfortable movements. They have the speed of wind and mind. Groups of tinkling bells are attached to them.

23-24. The people sport about with various young women of Gandharvas and the group of celestial clans. The young women look very splendid with their faces as charming as the moon. Their breasts are plump and lifted up. Their waists are beautiful and elegant. Some are dark in complexion and some fair. Their gait is like that of elephants in their rut.

25-28. Those women surround the excellent man and fan him with chowries of golden handles. They are bedecked in variety of jewels. They rejoice singing, dancing and having instrumental music. They are lethargic due to intoxication. This excellent world shines with the Yaksas, Vidyādharaś, Siddhaś, Gandharvaś, Celestial nymphs, Devaś and sageś. Those losty-minded persons by whom the lotus-eyed lord Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the universe, is seen near the royal banyan tree on the shore of the southern sea go to this world of Viṣṇu and enjoy great pleasures.

29. As long as the heaven stands alongwith the moon and stars, they dally with the celestial nymphs. They resemble heated gold. They are devoid of old age and death.

30. They are free from miseries. They are rid of thirst, fatigue and suffering. They assume the form of the lord :—They have four arms. They are adorned by garlands of sylvan flowers. They possess great vigour and power.

31. They have the scar called Śrivatsa. They hold conch,

discus and ironclub. Some are dark-complexioned like the blue lotus. Some resemble the gold.

32. Some appear worthy of being gazed at like the emerald, some resemble the lapis lazuli; some are dark complexioned with earings. Others are like the diamond.

33. O excellent brahmins, the worlds of other lords, and Devas do not shine in the same manner as does the world of Viṣṇu being full of mysteries and miracles.

34. O brahmins, by the power of that lord, there is no question of return till the ultimate dissolution of all living beings.

35. Those who visit Krṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadra in the holy shrine Puruṣottama move about in the divine city (justifiably) proud of their handsome features and blooming youth.

36. In the middle of the city shines the place of Viṣṇu which resembles molten gold, which has the lustre of the midday sun and which is embellished by jewels.

37. It is beautifully decorated with many hundred and thousands of buntins and banners. It is encircled by a golden rampart extending to ten thousand Yojanas.

38. With the charming well-arranged flags of various colours wonderfully displayed, the city shines like the autumnal moon surrounded by the stars.

39. It has four main gates. It is very extensive and well-guarded by watchmen. It is lofty and charming. It consists of seven city areas.

40-41. The first area is made of gold; the second is fitted with emiralds; the third is full of sapphire and beyond that it consists of dark blue precious stones; the fifth is brightly illuminated by brilliance. O brahmins, the sixth is full of diamonds and the seventh abounds in lapis lazuli.

42. With wonderful, brilliant pillars set with jewels and beautified by gold plates and coral that great mansion shines exquisitely.

43-44. The Siddhas walk about there. They brighten the ten quarters. Just as on the full moon night the moon shines with the stars so also lord Viṣṇu mounting a high seat shines alongwith Lakṣmī. He is dark-coloured, clad in yellow robes. He bears the scar Śrivatsa.

45. In his right hand lord Viṣṇu holds the terrible and shining discus Sudarśana that destroys all other weapons and that consists of all fiery splendour.

46-47. O excellent sages, in his left hand, lord Viṣṇu holds his conch known as Pāñcajanya.¹ It has the lustre of the Kunda flower, moon and silver. It resembles a white necklace and the cow's milk. By its sound it makes the whole universe agitated. It is adorned by a thousand curls.

48-52. In his right hand he holds Kaumodakī, the iron club which destroys Daityas and Dānavas, which is fiercely terrible and which destroys evil deeds. It has the shape of flame of the blazing fire and is unbearable even to Devas. In his left hand shines the bow Śārṅga that has the lustre of the sun. (It is with this bow and) the excellent arrows that resemble the sun and are agitated by the series of flames that the lord annihilates the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings. He is the cause of each and every bliss. He is glorious. He is expert in all scriptural texts. He is the lord and preceptor of all worlds. He is bowed to by all Devas.

He is the lord of Devas with a thousand heads, a thousand feet and eyes. He has a thousand names, a thousand limbs and a thousand arms.

53-55. The lord with large eyes like the petals of a lotus shines on his throne. The lord of the universe the preceptor of the universe, shines very clearly like the lightning streak. He is surrounded by Devas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Yakṣas, Vidyādhara, Nāgas, Cāraṇas, glorious sages, Suparṇas, Dānavas, Daityas, Rākṣasas, Guhyakas, Kinnaras and Devas of divine splendour. He shines eulogised by these people.

56-58. The following ladies of immortal beings are stationed there viz—Kīrti (Fame), Prajñā (Wisdom), Medhā (Intellect), Sarasvatī (Speech), Buddhi (Intelligence), Mati (Reasoning power), Kṣanti (Forbearance), Siddhi (Achievement), Mūrti (Form), Dyuti (Refulgence), Gāyatrī, Sāvitri, Maṅgalā, Sarvamaṅgalā, Prabhā, Matī and Kānti (Lustre) belonging to Nārāyaṇa. Then there is Śraddhā (Faith), goddess Kausiki, vidyut (Lightning) Saudāmini, Nidrā (Slumber),

1. Pāñcajanya—Kṛṣṇa's conch taken from the asura Pañcajana.

Rātri (Night), Māyā and other womenfolk of the immortal beings.

59. All these are established in the abode of Vasudeva. Of what avail is much talk? Everything is established there.

60-67. The following ladies dance every day at the place where Puruṣottama stays :—Gṛtācī, Menakā, Rambhā, Sahajanyā, Tilottamā, Urvaśī, Nimlocā, Vāmanā, Mandodari, Subhagā (fortunate one), Viśvācī, Vipulānanā, Bhadrāngī, Citrasenā, Pramlocā, Sumanoharā, (very charming), Munisammohinī (one who fascinates sages), Ramā, Candramadhyā, Śubhānanā, Sukeśī (possessed of good tresses), Nilakesī (possessed of blue tresses), Manmathadipani (one who kindles the fire of love), Alambuṣā, Miśrakeśī, Puñjikasthalā, Kratusthalā, Varāngī, (possessed of excellent limbs), Pūrvacitti, Parāvatī, Mahārūpā, Saśilekhā of auspicious face, Harīsalilānugāmīni, Mattavāraṇāgāmīni (one who walks like an intoxicated elephant), Bimboṣṭhī and Navagarbhā—these are the celestial ladies of Devas. These and other celestial ladies are proud of their beauty and youth. Their wrists are fine and their faces are beautiful. They are bedecked in all ornaments. They are endowed with the faculty of singing sweet songs. They are endowed with all noble signs. They are experts in vocal and instrumental music. They perform dance everyday at the place where lord Puruṣottama stays.

68. There is neither sickness nor fatigue. There is neither death nor snow and sunshine. There is no hunger, no thirst, no old age, no deformity, no unhappiness.

69. O brahmīns, I do not behold any other world better than the world of Viṣṇu. It is the cause of bliss and it bestows the desired benefits.

70. O brahmīns, all those worlds which we hear as the worlds in the heavenly sphere, all those who perform meritorious rites, do not merit even a sixteenth part of the world of lord Viṣṇu.

71. Thus O brahmīns is the greatest abode of Viṣṇu endowed with all enjoyable pleasures and attributes. It is conducive to the pleasures of everyone. It is holy and full of mysteries.”

72. Atheists and profligates do not go there. Nor do the following go there viz.—the ungrateful and those who are of uncontrollable sense-organs.

73. The devotees of Viṣṇu who worship Vāsudeva the preceptor of the universe with devotion, go to the world of Viṣṇu.

74-77. After visiting Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and Subhadrā in this rarest of holy centres on the shore of the southern ocean, excellent devotees cast off their bodies near the Kalpa tree. Those men who die in the holy centre Puruṣottama go to that world. He who remembers Puruṣottama in between the baniyan tree and the ocean and those who die in Puruṣottama go to that world. They go to that greatest abode.

Thus, O excellent sages, the eternal world of Viṣṇu, the cause of bliss unto all, the bestower of worldly pleasures and liberation, has been mentioned by me.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

The Glory of Lord Puruṣottama

The sages said :

1-9. O lord of the universe, the glorious world of lord Viṣṇu has been recounted by you. It has many mysterious features. It yields perpetual bliss, worldly pleasures and liberation. Puruṣottama, the rarest of holy centres in the world has perfectly been glorified by you. By casting off his body there, a man will directly go to the abode of Viṣṇu.

Wonderful, indeed, is this path of liberation that you have mentioned for helping men viz. the abandonment of body in the holy centre named Puruṣottama.

Without any strain, O lord of Devas, excellent men abandon their bodies in that holy centre and go to the region of Viṣṇu devoid of ailment.

O lord of Devas, by bearing the greatness of holy centres

we are extremely amazed. Hairs stand on end and we feel extremely satisfied.

There are other holy centres and shrines viz. Prayāga, Puṣkara etc. There are many holy centres on the earth, rivers and lakes. O excellent Deva, you do not praise them in the same manner as you praise the holy centre Puruṣottama. O grandsire, your intent has been understood by us whereby you praise the holy centres Puruṣottama that bestows liberation.

Certainly, there is no other holy centre on par with Puruṣottama. Hence, O excellent Deva, you praise it over and again.

Brahmā said :

10. O excellent sages, the truth, the very truth has been cited by us on all. There is no other holy centre on Earth that is equal to Puruṣottama.

11. All those holy centres and shrines do not deserve even a sixteenth part of Puruṣottama.

12. Just as Viṣṇu, the lord of all, is the most excellent of all excellent ones so also the holy centre of Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

13. Just as Viṣṇu has been cited as the most excellent one among the sons of Aditi so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent one among the holy centres.

14. Just as the moon among the stars and ocean among lakes so also the holy centre of Puruṣottama is the most excellent among the holy centres.

15. Like (fire) among the Vasus and Śāṅkara among the Rudras, so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

16. Like brahmins among the four castes and Garuḍa among the birds, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

17. Just as the Meru is the most excellent among mountains with lofty peaks, just as the Himālaya is the most excellent among the mountains so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent holy centre.

18. Like Lakṣmī among young women and Gaṅgā among the rivers Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

19. Like Airāvata among the leading elephants, like Bhṛgu among the great sages, Puruṣottama is the excellent of all holy centres.

20. Like Skanda among the commanders of armies, like Kapila among the saintly men of great achievements Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

21. Like Uccaiśravas among the horses, like Uśanas among the poets, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

22. Like Vyāsa among the sages, like Kubera among Yakṣas and (like Vibhiṣaṇa among) Rākṣasas, Puruṣottama^{*} is the excellent of all holy centres.

23. Like mind among the organs of sense, like earth among the elements, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

24. Like the holy big tree among all trees, like wind among those who float and spread, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

25. O brahmins, just as the crest-jewel is the most excellent of all ornaments, so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

26. Like Citraratha among the Gandharvas, like Kuliṣa among weapons, Puruṣottama is the most excellent among all holy centres.

27. Like the letter A among all syllables, like Gāyatrī among all vedic mantras, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

28. O excellent brahmins, just as the head is excellent of all limbs so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

29. Just as Arundhatī is excellent among chaste ladies so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

30. Just as the doctrine of salvation is the greatest of all doctrines and lores so also Puruṣottama is excellent of all holy centres.

31. Like the king among men, like the Divine cow among cows, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

32. Like a piece of gold among jewels, like Vāsuki among serpents, Puruṣottama is the most excellent among holy centres.

33. Like Prahlāda among all Daityas, like Rāma among

the wielders of weapons, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

34. Like the shark among fishes, like lion among violent animals, Puruṣottama is the most excellent among all holy centres.

35. Just as the milky ocean is excellent of all oceans so also puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

36. Just as Varuṇa is excellent of all aquatic beings, just as Yama is excellent of all Yogins. so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

37. O excellent sages, just as Nārada is excellent of all divine sages so also Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

38. Like gold among metals, like the gift of coins among all sacred gifts, Purusottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

39. Like Dakṣa among Prajāpatis, like Kaśyapa among sages, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

40. Like the Sun among planets, like Praṇava among Mantras, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

41. Just as the horse-sacrifice (aśvamedha) is glorified as excellent of all sacrifices, O excellent brahmins, so also that holy centre is the most excellent of all holy centres.

42. Just as the food-grain plant is the most excellent of all plants; like the cocoanut or palmyra among the grassy species, Puruṣottama is the most excellent of all holy centres.

43. Just as the holy rite of all sacred places is the means of redemption from worldly existence so also Puruṣottama is excellent of all holy centres.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Glory of Ananta Vāsudeva

Brahma said :

1-11. O excellent brahmins, the benefits of Japas, Homas, austerities and charitable gifts in the holy centres and shrines have been mentioned to you.

O brahmins, I do not see a holy centre which is equal to the holy centre Puruṣottama on the earth. Of what avail is much talk and repeated utterance. Truth, it is the truth, really the truth that the holy centre Puruṣottama is extremely great. By visiting the holy centre Puruṣottama but once, by touching the waters of the ocean but once, by knowing the doctrine of Brahman but once, there is no further staying in the womb.

The devotee should stay for a year or at least for a month in the excellent holy centre of Puruṣottama, the place where Lord Viṣṇu is present. In that case the Japa performed or Homa offered by him is great. A great penance has been performed by him.

He goes to the great abode where Viṣṇu the lord of Yogins is ever present. Accompanied by celestial women he enjoys pleasures of various sorts. At the end of Kalpa the excellent man returns to the mortal world. O brahmins, he is born in the house of Yogins. He endeavours to understand what should be understood. After acquiring the Yoga of Viṣṇu, he attains liberation. Know the glory of Kalpa tree, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Subhadrā, Mārkaṇḍeya's eddy. Indradyumna's lake is also mentioned. The glory of Śveta Matsya and of the heavenly door and the rules regarding bath in the ocean have been mentioned. The rules regarding ritualistic cleansing mārjana and the proper time of contact with Gaṅgā have also been mentioned by me. What more do you wish to hear ? The glory of Indradyumna has also been recounted. The Purāṇa that enables one to liberate himself, that is full of mysteries and miracles, that is holy and excellent and that is a great secret conducive to richness has also been mentioned fully by me.

The sages said :

12. We are not satiated by listening to the story of the lord. It behoves you to relate once again the great secret doctrine.

13. The details of Vāsudeva the infinite deity have not been explained perfectly by you. O lord, we wish to hear. Kindly mention it in detail.

Brahmā said :

14. O excellent sages, I shall mention the greatest essence, the greatness of the infinite deity Vāsudeva, the rarest in the three worlds.

15. Formerly, in the Ādikalpa (first of the Kalpas), O brahmins, I was born of the unmanifest. Viśvakarman spoke these words.

16-18. I urged Viśvakarmā the leading architect of Devas, whose activities are of the greatest nature—"Make an idol of Vāsudeva, carving it out of a rock. On seeing it, men and women in the South will worship it duly and devotedly. Once, Devas and the lord of Devas Indra sensed danger from Dānavas and Rākṣasas. Being afraid they had come to the peak of Sumeru in heaven. They propitiated Vāsudeva and stayed there without any calamity or agitation.

19-22. After hearing my words, Viśvakarmā made a pure idol holding conch, discus and iron club. It was endowed with all traits. It had eyes as large as the petals of a lotus. It had the scar-Śrīvatsa. The excellent idol was awe-inspiring. The chest was covered with garlands of sylvan flowers. It wore crown and shoulder-lets. It was clad in yellow robes. The shoulders were plump and round. It was bedecked with two ear-rings. Thus the divine idol was got made by me through secret mantras and the time for installation had come.

23-24. At that time, Indra, the king of Devas, came to my abode riding on Airāvata, his excellent elephant. He was surrounded by Devas. By means of ablution, charitable gifts, he propitiated the idol. Taking the idol with him he returned to his capital.

25-28. By propitiating the idol for a long time after restraining his speech, body and mind he gained in strength. He killed Vṛtra and other Asuras as well as the cruel and terrible Dānavas led by Namuci. He then enjoyed the worlds Bhuh, Bhuvah, Svar etc.

After the advent of Tretā Yuga, there was a valorous over-lord of the Rākṣasas, Daśagriva (Rāvaṇa). He had great prowess. For ten thousand years he performed holy rites and severe penance, abstaining from food and conquering sense-organs. This penance was very difficult to be performed by

ordinary persons. Pleased with that penance I granted him a boon.

29-30. He could not be killed by Devas, Daityas, Nāgas, and Rākṣasas. He could not be killed by the terrible attendants of Yama who had the power to curse beside their infallible weapons. After securing this boon the Rākṣasa defeated Yakṣas and their lord Kubera. He then attempted to conquer Indra.

31-36. He fought a terrible battle with Devas. The Rākṣasa defeated the king of Devas. The son of Rāvaṇa, Meghnāda acquired the title Indrajit by conquering him. Thereafter Rāvaṇa of great strength reached Amarāvatī. In the splendid abode of the king of Devas, Rāvaṇa saw the idol of Vāsudeva as resplendent as collyrium. It was endowed with the characteristic marks of Lord Viṣṇu. It had the scar Śrivatsa. It had large eyes like the petals of a lotus. The chest was covered by the garlands of sylvan flowers. It was bedecked in crown and shoulderlets. It held conch, discus and iron club in its hands. It was clad in yellow robes. It had four arms. It was bedecked in ornaments. It was the bestower of all benefits. Leaving off the heaps of jewels, (Rāvaṇa) immediately despatched the auspicious idol to Laṅkā by the aerial chariot Puṣpaka.

37. The glorious and righteous Vibhiṣaṇa, the younger brother and minister of Rāvaṇa was a devotee of Nārāyaṇa. He was entrusted with the administration of the capital Laṅkā.

38. On seeing that the divine idol was taken away from the abode of the lord of Devas, he experienced horripilation all over his body. He was struck with surprise.

39-40. With a delighted mind he bowed his head to the lord. After saying—"My birth is fruitful today. My penance is fruitful today", the righteous Vibhiṣaṇa made obeisance again and again. He went to his eldest brother. With his palms joined in reverence he spoke thus :—

41. O king, it behoves you to favour me with this idol. O lord of the worlds, I shall propitiate it and cross the ocean of worldly existence.

42-43. On hearing the words of his brother, Rāvaṇa spoke "O heroic one, take the idol. What shall I do with it? I have

propitiated the self-born deity and am conquering the three worlds. I shall also worship Mahādeva who wields various miraculous powers and who is the source of origin of all living beings.

44-45. Then Vibhīṣaṇa of great intellect worshipped the splendid idol for one hundred and eight years and acquired the boon of old age. He attained the attributes of Aṇimā (minuteness) etc. He acquired the realm and overlordship of Laṅkā. Even now, he enjoys all pleasures as he wishes.

The sages said :

46-47. On hearing this extremely immortal narrative the origin of the infinite deity-Vāsudeva, difficult of access on the earth, we are extremely surprised. O lord, we wish to hear the greatness of that lord, precisely and in detail. It behoves you to mention it fully.

Brahmā said :

48-49. That sinful ruthless Rāksasa (Rāvaṇa) defeated Devas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, guardians of the quarters, human beings, sages and Siddhas in battle. He kidnapped excellent women and settled them in the city of Laṅkā. Thereafter, he attempted the abduction of Sītā.

50-58. He deceived Rāma through Mārīca in the form of a golden deer.

Rāma and his brother Lakṣmaṇa the son of Sumitrā became infuriated and (resolved to slay Rāvaṇa. After killing Bāli of great prowess, he crowned Sugrīva as the king and Angada as the Heir-apparent. With eyes resembling the petals of a lotus Rāma was surrounded by extremely terrible monkeys of great strength such as—Hanumān, Nala, Nila, Jāmbavān, Panasa, Gavaya, Gavākṣa and others. They possessed great power and they were pure. With massive boulders of mountains he got the bridge built over the great ocean. With his vast army, Rāma crossed the ocean and fought an unparalleled war against the Rāksasas. The powerful Rāma slaughtered Yamahasta, Prahasta, Nikumbha, Kumbha, Narāntaka, Yamāntaka, Mālāḍhya, Mālikāḍhya, Indrajit Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa. He got Sītā the daughter of Janaka, the king of Videha tested

by the fire ordeal.¹ He bestowed kingdom on Vibhiṣaṇa and brought the idol of Vāsudeva to Ayodhyā formerly protected (by himself and his ancestors) riding in the aerial chariot Puṣpaka sportingly.

59-61. Out of affection he crowned his younger brother Bharata and Śatruघna as heir-apparents. Rāma who is favourite of his devotee, ruled over the kingdom as an Emperor. Propitiating his own ancient form born of Viṣṇu, Rāma enjoyed the ocean-girt earth for eleven thousand years. Thereafter he attained his own region i.e. the region of Viṣṇu.

62-67. Rāma gave that idol to the lord of oceans (saying) "You are blessed. You will protect this idol in your waters with perfect concentration".

In the Dvāpara Age, the lord the preceptor of the Universe, incarnated in the family of Vasudeva at the request of the earth on account of the emotional instability of the people due to the demons' activities. The lord incarnated for slaying Karṣa and was assisted by Balarāma. O brahmins, at that time, with some other purpose in view and for the welfare of worlds, the lord took out that idol, the bestower of all cherished desires and benefits, from the waters of the ocean—the lord of the rivers. He then placed it in that excellent holy centre, Puruṣottama, the rarest of all holy centres. Ever since then, O brahmins, that lord the dispeller of the agony of Devas, the bestower of all desires, stays there itself in that holy centre, the bestower of liberation.

68. Those who devoutly resort to the infinite lord of all, mentally, verbally and physically attain the highest region.

69. By visiting Ananta (infinite) even for once and by devoutly worshipping and bowing to him, the devotee derives ten times more than the benefit of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

70-71. The man redeems twenty-one generations of his family. He then goes to the city of Viṣṇu seated in a highly

1. *Divine Ordeal* (divya-parikṣā). Yājñavalkya prescribes ten ordeals viz tulā, agni, jala, viṣa, koṣa, tanḍula, tapta-māṣa, phāla, dharma, tulasi.

In the Yuddhakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa, Vālmiki has described Sītā's entering and standing in fire as a test of her purity.

refulgent aerial chariot that has the lustre and colour of the sun, that is richly furnished with all desirable things, that can go as one desires it to go and that has a row of tinkling bells. He shall be surrounded by the celestial ladies. Gandharvas will be singing in praise of him.

72-74. He will enjoy excellent pleasures there. He will be rid of old age and death. Assuming a divine form the glorious devotee will enjoy pleasures until the dissolution of all living beings.

When his merits dwindle he will return to the earth and be born as a brahmin who has mastered the four Vedas. By adopting Yoga of Viṣṇu he will attain liberation.

Thus, O excellent sages, the infinite deity Ananta has been glorified by me. Who is competent to recount all the merits of visiting the shrine even in hundreds of years ?

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

Glory of the Holy Shrine of Purusottama

Brahmā said :

1. Thus, the glory of (Infinite deity) and the holy shrine of Puruṣottama that yields worldly pleasures and liberation unto men has been recounted by me. It is very difficult of access.

2-3. It is the place where the glorious lord stays—the lord whose eyes resemble the lotus, who holds conch, discus and ironclub, who is clad in yellow robes and who has killed Kāṁsa and Keśin.¹

There is no doubt that those who see there Kṛṣṇa who is bowed to by Devas and Asuras, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Subhadrā are blessed.

1. *Ketin* : a follower of Kāṁsa who at the instruction of Kāṁsa went to Gokula, in the form of a horse, to kill Śrīkṛṣṇa. But Śrīkṛṣṇa killed him and got the name Keśava.

4. Those who meditate upon Kṛṣṇa the overlord of the three worlds, the bestower of all desired benefits, are liberated souls.

5. Those who are devoted to Kṛṣṇa, those who remember Kṛṣṇa at night (when they go to bed) and again when they get up enter Kṛṣṇa when their bodies are consumed on death like the ghee offering consigned to fire with due repetitions of Mantras.

6. Hence, O excellent sages, the lotus-eyed deity Kṛṣṇa should be assiduously visited in that holy centre by those who seek salvation.

7. The lofty-minded persons who visit Kṛṣṇa, (Balarāma) and Subhadrā at the time when the deities are laid to rest go to the world of Viṣṇu.

8. Those who devoutly visit Puruṣottama, Balarāma and Subhadrā at any time, go to the world of Viṣṇu.

9. He who stays in the holy centres of Puruṣottama for the four months of rainy season derives more benefit than the benefit accruing from the holy pilgrimage to the other centres of the Earth.

10. Those lofty persons who reside there itself during the seasons, after conquering sense-organs and controlling anger, derive the benefit of a penance.

11. Within a month a man obtains at Puruṣottama their benefit which others obtain after performing penance in other holy centres for ten thousand years.

12. Lofty-minded persons always obtain the usual benefit of penance, celibate life eschewed of attachment at the holy centre of Puruṣottama.

13. Lofty-minded persons obtain the benefit which is glorified as the meritorious benefit of ablution and charitable gifts in all other holy centres.

14. Everyday, the pure person derives that benefit which is mentioned as the result of perfectly performed pilgrimage, holy rites and observances.

15. A man of perfectly restrained sense-organs obtains everyday the same benefit as one obtains (on other holy centres) after performing different rites of sacrifice.

16. There is no doubt that the people who resort to the Kalpa tree in the holy centre of Puruṣottama¹ and abandon their bodies become liberated souls.

17. Those who abandon their bodies anywhere between the baniyan tree and the Ocean obtain the greatest liberation which is very difficult to get.

18. Even if the man is forced to give up his life against his wish, he will be liberated from misery. He will attain salvation which is very difficult to get.

19. Even the animals of low strata of species such as germs, worms, moths etc., attain the greatest salvation by abandoning their bodies there.

20. O brahmins, see the illusion of the world in regard to other holy centres. The fruits of all other holy centres are derived from the only holy centre Puruṣottama.

21. The man who faithfully visits Puruṣottama for once will become the most excellent man among thousands of men.

22. The lord is glorified as Puruṣottama in the Vedas, Purāṇas and in the world because he is greater than Prakṛti and more excellent than Puruṣa.

23. He who is cited as Paramātman (the Supreme Being) in the Purāṇas and in Vedānta is present for the uplift of universe. Hence, he is Puruṣottama.

24. Here in this centre whether it is on the road, or in the cemetery or in a house of a pupil or anywhere among different spots in the streets whether willing or otherwise the man who gives up his body derives liberation.

25. Hence, O excellent brahmins, one who gives up his body in this holy centre will achieve liberation.

26. Who can adequately mention the glory of Puruṣottama ? Just by visiting the baniyan tree there a man dispels the sin of brahmin slaughter.

27. Only a part of the good qualities of the holy centres has been related by me. Who can mention the entire merits adequately even in hundreds of years ?

28. O excellent sages, if you seek for perpetual salvation, stay in that holy centre alertfully.

1: *Puruṣottama-kṣetra* : a centre in Orissa, sacred to Viṣṇu.

Vyāsa said :

29. On hearing the words of Brahmā born of the unmanifest one, sages resided there and attained the highest region.

30. Hence, O excellent brahmins, you too stay in this holy centre—Puruṣottama, if you seek for perfect creation hereafter.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

Narrative of Sage Kandu

Vyāsa said:

1-4. O excellent sages, there was a great sage, Kaṇḍū in that holy centre Puruṣottama which is conducive to the happiness of all living beings and which bestows the benefit of virtue, wealth, love and liberation. The sage was extremely virtuous. He had great resplendence. He was truthful in speech, pure and engaged in the welfare of all living beings. He had control over his sense-organs. He had conquered wealth. He was a master of the Vedas and Vedāṅgas. By propitiating Puruṣottama he attained great Siddhi. There were other great sages too who had achieved much. They used to perform great holy rites. They were engaged in the welfare of the people. They had subdued their sense-organs and conquered anger. They were rid of rivalry and malice.

The sages said:

5. Who was this Kaṇḍū? How did he attain the greatest salvation? O excellent one, we wish to hear his story. Please narrate.

Vyāsa said:

6. O leading sages, listen to his interesting story. I shall mention in brief the activities of that sage.

7-9. O excellent sages, the hermitage of Kaṇḍu was on the holy banks of Gomati¹ river. It was a secluded and charming spot, full of fruits, roots and bulbous roots. It abounded in sacrificial twigs, Kuṣa grass and flowers. Many trees and creepers grew there. It was beautified by different kinds of flowers. It was a charming place resonant with the chirping sounds of various birds and those of different kinds of animals. The hermitage was adorned by a grove of plantain trees. It abounded in fruits and flowers in all seasons.

10. The sage performed a great penance. It was extremely wonderful on account of rites, fasts and observances, ablutions, vows of silence and restraint of senses.

11. During the summer he practised fivefold penance with four fires on the four sides and the sun overhead; during the rainy season he slept on the bare ground; during winter he stood in neck-deep water—thus he performed a great penance.

12. On seeing the power of penance of that sage, Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Vidyādharaś were struck with wonder.

13. O excellent sages, with the force of his strength Kaṇḍu scorched the three worlds, Earth, firmament and heaven.

14. On seeing him engaged in penance Devas said thus :— “Wonderful is his great courage ! Wonderful is his great penance !”

15. Without excitement they consulted one another. Including Indra they were bewildered and frightened. Hence, they wanted an obstacle to be put in the way of his penance.

16-17. Having come to know their intention, Indra, the destroyer of Bala, the lord of the three worlds, spoke to the beautiful celestial damsel Pramlocā. She was proud of her beauty and youth. She had slender waist and attractive breasts plump and beautiful. She was endowed with all characteristics.

Indra said :

18. O Pramlocā, go quickly to the place where this sage is performing penance. O splendid lady, in order to impede his penance make his mind agitated.

1. *Gomati* : a celebrated river of Puranic fame which flowed through Naimisā-forest where several sacrifices had been performed by the sages. The word ‘Gomati’ means ‘abounding in water’.

Pramlocā said :

19. O most excellent Deva, O my lord, I always carry out your behests. But in this matter, I have some doubts. My life has to be risked.

20. I am afraid of that excellent sage, who is steadfast in the vow of celibacy. He is very fierce and resplendent as fire and sun. His penance is brilliant.

21. When he comes to know that I have approached him to create impediment in his penance, sage Kaṇḍu of excessive splendour will curse me angrily. It will be unbearable.

22-24. There are many celestial damsels proud of their beauty and blooming youth such as Urvāśī, Menakā, Rambhā, Ghṛtācī, Puñjikā, Sthalā, Viśvācī, Sahajanyā, Pūrvacitti, Tilottamā, Alambuṣā, Miśrakeśī, Śaśilekhā, Vāmanā and others. They are slender-waisted. Their faces are attractive. Their breasts are plump and lifted up. They are experts in the extensive amorous dalliances. Employ them there.

Brahmā said :

25. On hearing her words the consort of Śacī said again;— Let others stay by. O splendid lady, you are very clever in this affair.

26. O lady of fine buttocks, I shall send Kāma, Vasanta (Spring) and the gentle breeze to assist you. Go with them to the place where this great sage lives.

27. On hearing the words of Indra that excellent lady of attractive eyes went with them by the aerial path.

28. After going there she saw the excellent and charming forest. She saw the pious sage, seated in the hermitage performing his brilliant penance.

29. Along with them, she surveyed the beautiful forest comparable to the Nandana forest. It contained excellent flowers of all seasons. It was agitated by groups of monkeys.

30-31. The forest was holy. It was endowed with clusters of lotuses. It was filled with trees with abundant sprouts. She heard sweet songs of birds pleasing to the ears. She saw trees laden with fruits and flowers of all seasons. They were resonant with the songs of birds.

32-37. The lady of wide eyes saw many trees there :—Āmra (Mango), Āmrātaka, coconut, palm, Tinduka, Bilva, Jiva, Dādima, Bijapūraka (pomegranate), Panasa (jack tree), Lakuca, Nipa, beautiful Śiriṣa, Pārvata, Kola, Arimeda, Amlavetasa, Bhallātaka, Amalaka (Embylic myrobalans), Śataparṇa, Kimśuka, Inguda, Karavīra, Haritaki, Vibhitaka, Aśoka, Punnāga, Ketaki, Bakula, Pārijāta, Kovidāra, Mandara, Indīvara, Pāṭala in full bloom, Devadāru, Śāla, Tāla, Tamāla, Nicula and Lomaka. These and other trees laden with fruits and flowers she saw there.

38-39. The forest was accompanied by many birds that chirped sweetly such as Cakora, Śatapatra, Bhṛingarāja, parrots, cuckoos, sparrows, Hāritas, Jivajivakas, Priyaputra, Cātaka and various other birds.

40-42. She saw beautiful lakes with crystal clear waters and full of waterborn flowers such as lilies, lotuses, splendid blue lotuses, Kalhāra etc. The lakes were beautified by these flowers. There were aquatic birds such as Kadambas, Cakravākas (ruddy geese), waterfowls, Kāraṇḍavas cranes, swans, tortoises, porpoises. The lakes were filled with these aquatic beings.

43-45. Alongwith Kāma and others Pramlocā wandered all round the forest. After surveying the beautiful and wonderful forest in their company that excellent lady was extremely wonderstruck. Her eyes beamed with pleasant surprise. O excellent brahmins, she said to Cupid, Spring and the gentle breeze.

Pramlocā said :

Assist me. Ye all severally be prepared.

Brahmā said:

46-49. After saying this, she who was proud of her ability to agitate the passion of everyone said thus:—I shall now go to the place where this sage is present. The sage is like a charioteer with the body as the chariot and the sense-organs as horses. I shall convert him into a bad charioteer with the reins, dropped by the weapons of Kāma. Whether he be a Viṣṇu, a Brahmā or a Śiva, I shall get him split up by the arrows of Kāma".

After saying this she came to the place where the sage was seated. Such was the power of the penance of the sage; the beast of prey in the penance-grove had become quiescent.

50. Standing on the banks of the river, only a very short distance from him, that excellent celestial damsel with the sweetness of the cuckoo in her voice began to sing songs merrily.

51. An untunely but sweet and charming note of the cuckoo was heard and Vasanta exerted his full force.

52. A gentle breeze with his abode in the Malaya mountain blew there making the excellent flowers fall down gently into small or big heaps.

53. Holding the flowery arrows, Kāma went near that sage and made his mind agitated.

54. On hearing the sweet sound of the song the sage was surprised and his mind was afflicted by the arrows of Kāma. He went to the place where the lady of beautiful eyebrows was standing.

55. On seeing her he was delighted with wonder; his eyes beamed. He experienced horripilation all over his body. His upper garment dropped down. He was completely upset.

The sage said :

56. O lady of good buttocks, who are you? Whom do you belong to? O fortunate blessed lady of attractive smiles, you have captivated my mind. O lady of fine eyebrows and slender waist, tell me the truth.

Pramlocā said :

57. I have come here to collect flowers. I am your servant-maid. Command me quickly? What shall I do at your bidding?

Brahma said :

58. On hearing her words the sage lost his courage. He was dubbed. Taking that damsel by her hand he entered his hermitage.

59. O excellent brahmins, then Cupid, Spring, Breeze became satisfied. They returned to heaven.

60. After going there they spoke to Indra of their activities, on hearing which Indra and Devas became delighted.

61. Immediately after entering the hermitage sage Kaṇḍu assumed a very beautiful form like that of a Cupid.

62. It was richly endowed with handsome features and blooming youth. It was very charming. It was bedecked in divine ornaments. It was the physical form of a blooming youth of sixteen years.

63. Suddenly, due to the power of his penance he assumed a form clad in divine garments, and beautified with divine garlands and unguents. It was lovely and capable of enjoying all pleasures.

64. On seeing his vim and vigour she was excessively surprised saying—"Wonderful, indeed, is the power of penance." She rejoiced much.

65-66. O excellent sages, eschewing his rites of holy bath, prayer during dusk and dawn, repetitione of holy names, sacrifices, study of the Vedas, worship of deities, observances of holy rites, fasts, and meditation he sported with her day and night with great joy. With cupid penetrating into heart he did not know that his penance was getting reduced.

67-68. With his mind drawn to sexual pleasures he was not aware of the passing time. Twilights, nights, days, fortnights, months, seasons and years sped on.

O brahmins, clever in secret amorons dalliance, that lady of fine buttocks, skilled in engaging conversation diverted his mind with various lustful emotions.

69. The sage Kaṇḍu engaged himself in vulgar sexual intercourse with her. Many hundreds of years he stayed with her in the valley of the Mandara mountain.

70. Once she said to that highly blessed sage—"O brahmin, I wish to go to heaven. It behoves you to permit me with a pleasant face."

71. Thus requested by her that sage whose mind was fondly attached to her said—"O gentle lady, please stay for a few days more."

72. Thus requested by him that slender-framed lady enjoyed sexual pleasures in the company of that noble sage for a further period of a hundred and odd years.

73. When requested by her thus—"O holy sir, please

grant me permission. I am going back to heaven," he once again replied—"Stay for some days more."

74. When a further period of more than a hundred years elapsed, that splendid-faced lady said with a lovely smile of great endearment—"O brahmin I am going to heaven".

75. When urged by her thus, the sage said to that lady of large eyes—"O lady of beautiful eyebrows, stay with me for a long time more: you will go later to heaven."

76. Frightened of being cursed by that sage, the lady of fine buttocks stayed with him for a further period of slightly less than two hundred years.

77. Repeatedly requested by that lady for permission to go to heaven that highly blessed sage merely said—"Stay further".

78. The timid lady was afraid of his curse. Amiably submissive she was aware of the agony of frustration in love. So, when requested by him, she did not part from the sage.

79. The great sage sported and diverted himself with her, day and night, with his mind overwhelmed by cupid. The more he indulged himself the fresher became the ways of expressing his affection.

80. Once the sage went out of his hut in a great hurry. As he rushed out the splendid lady said—"Pray, where do you go?"

81. When asked by her thus he said—"O auspicious lady, the day is coming to a close. I shall say my prayers for the dusk. Otherwise, it will be a great omission of my holy rites."

82. The delighted lady then laughed and said to the sage—"is it only now, O sage conversant with all holy rites, that the day is coming to a close? Has it not passed of many times before?"

The sage said :

83-84. "O gentle lady, you came to this splendid bank of the river this morning. O lady of fine buttocks, you were seen by me and you entered my hermitage, Now it is the dusktme. The day has come to a close. Why do you laugh at me now? Let it be mentioned to me in real feeling of earnestness".

Pramloca said :

85. "O brahmin, this is true that I came here in a morning. It is not false. But hundreds of years have passed by, since I came to you."

86. Thereupon, the brahmin asked the lady of large eyes in great perturbation—"O timid lady, even as I was engaged in dalliance with you, what period of time did pass by?"

Pramloca said :

87. "Nine hundred, seven years, six months and three days have passed off till date."

The sage said :

88. "O timid lady, are you telling me the truth or are you jesting with me? I think I have stayed here with you only for a day."

Pramloca said :

89. "O brahmin, how will I utter a lie in your presence? Particularly when asked by you as you proceed ahead along your path?"

Vyāsa said :

90. O excellent brahmins, on hearing her words that sage censured himself saying—"Fie upon me who have not adhered to disciplined good conduct".

The sage said :

91. My austerities have perished. The spiritual wealth of the knowers of Brahman is doomed. Sense of discrimination has been taken away. A woman has been created by someone only for delusion.

92. The Brahman that is beyond six Urnis (billows of worldly entanglement) should have been realized by me by the conquest of self. Fie upon this great evil element of Kāma by whom this adverse goal has been effected.

93. The vedas, and holy rites, all causes of welfare have been damned today by Kāma, the pathway leading to the hell."

94. After censuring himself thus, that sage conversant with piety spoke these words to that celestial damsel who was seated there.

The sage said :

95. O sinful lady, go away as you please. The task of the king of Devas has been duly accomplished by you by causing perturbation in me through your amorous gestures.

96-97. I am not reducing you to ashes by the fire of dreadful anger. Friendship is generated in good people through seven words or seven steps.¹ I have stayed with you for long. Or, what is your fault? What can I do to you? This is exclusively my own fault for I could not conquer my sense-organs.

98. Wastage of my austerities has been brought about by you who seek the favour of Indra. Fie upon you the despicable one, the cause of great delusion.

Vyāsa said :

99. When that brahminical sage said this to that lady of fine waist, she trembled excessively and perspired profusely.

100. To that chaste lady who was quaking with fear and whose tender creeperlike body was drenched in sweat, the excellent sage said furiously—"Go. Go away".

101. Rebuked by him she went out of his hermitage and traversing the path of firmament she mopped off her sweat drops by the sprouts of trees.

102. The young damsel moved from tree to tree. She wiped off her body from which perspiration flowed in profuse drops. With the pink sprouts she mopped off the sweat drops.

103. The foetus that had been implanted in her body by sage came out of her limbs in the form of sweat drops and the sense of horripilation.

104. Trees took up that foetus and unified it in a body. Developed through his rays by the moon that child in the womb grew up by and by.

1. One can befriend a person by speaking seven words or by footng seven steps together:

105. She became the lovely-eyed daughter of trees, Māriṣā by name. O brahmins, it was she who became the wife of Prace-tas and the mother of Dakṣa.

106. When his power of penance was exhausted, the excellent and holy sage Kaṇḍu went to the holy shrine of Viṣṇu named Puruṣottama, O brahmins.

107-111. He saw the rarest of holy centres on Earth that bestows salvation on the shore of the southern sea. It had plenty of flowers in all seasons. It was the bestower of happiness unto all men. It was the receptacle of all good qualities. It was conducive to wealth. Formerly, it had been frequented by Bhṛgu and other great sages and Siddhas. It was the bestower of all cherished desires. It appeared very beautiful with sands scattered all round. Clusters of Ketaki plants enhanced its beauty. Trees and creepers grew there in abundance. The auspicious chirping sound of various birds was heard everywhere. Everywhere the holy spot could be traversed comfortably. (It was always resorted to by Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Yakṣas and other persons seeking salvation. There, he saw Hari adorned by all Devas. He was resorted to by the people of brahmin and other castes in the various stages of their lives.

112. As soon as he saw the holy centre and lord Puruṣot-tama, the excellent sage considered himself contented as one who had fulfilled his duties.

113. There he sat with fully concentrated mind and propitiated Hari. The excellent sage, a great Yогin stood with his arms lifted up. With a singleminded attention he performed Japa (repetition of holy names) of Brahmapāra (Brahman the great redeemer).

The sages said :

114. O sage, we wish to hear about the excellent and great Brahmapāra whereby lord Keśava was propitiated by Kaṇḍu who performed this Japa.

Vyāsa said :

115. Viṣṇu is the greatest Pāra (the other shore—the destination after crossing the ocean of world by existence). He is Apāra-pāra (It is difficult to cross him—to comprehend him).

He is greater than the greatest Beings. He is of the form of the greatest Ātman. He alone is known as Brahmapāra (Brahman the great redeemer). He is the greatest Pāra (the other shore). He is greater than the greatest. He is Pārapāra (the redeemer of those who redeem).

116. He is the cause and also one who has resorted to the cause, the cause of that too, the greatest cause of cause. Thus, in the effects, it protects all by means of its manifold forms such as Karman (object) and Kārtṛ (the Agent).

117. The lord is Brahman, he is identical with every thing; Brahman is the lord of subjects. He is Acyuta (the unswerving). Viṣṇu is the unchanging, unborn, permanent Brahman. He is not contaminated by depreciation and other defects.

118. Just as Puruṣottama is the imperishable, unborn, permanent Brahman so also may the defects of passionate attachment subside.

Vyāsa said :

119-121. O excellent brahmins, on hearing the repetitions of the holy Mantra viz Brahmapāra by the sage and on realizing his great and steadfast devotion, lord Puruṣottama, favourably disposed towards his devotees, approached him with great pleasure riding on his vehicle Garuḍa the son of Vinatā. The slayer of Madhu (=Viṣṇu) spoke to him in a voice as majestic as the rumbling sound of the cloud. He seemed to make the quarters resonant.

The lord said :

122. O sage, mention to me the greatest task that is thought of by you in your mind. I have come to you as the bestower of boons. O sage of good holy rites, choose the boon.

123-125. On hearing these words of the discus-bearing lord of Devas (the sage) opened his eyes and saw Hari in front of him. He resembled the blue Atasi flower in complexion. His eyes were as large as the petals of a lotus. He held conch, discus and iron club in his hands. He wore the crown and shoulderlets. He had four arms and elegant limbs. The lord was clad in yellow robes. He had the Scar Śrivatsa. He was bedecked in garlands of sylvan flowers.

(*Extra Verse*) He was endowed with all the characteristic marks. He was bedecked in all jewels. He had smeared his limbs with divine sandal paste. He was embellished with divine garlands.

126. Then the sage was struck with great wonder. His hairs stood on end due to delight. He prostrated himself on Earth like a long staff and made obeisance.

127. After saying—"My birth is fruitful today. My penance is fruitful today," the leading sage began to eulogise the lord.

Kandu said :

128. O Nārāyaṇa, O Hari O Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the universe with the Śrivatsa scar, O seed of the universe, O abode of the universe, O witness of the universe, obeisance be to you.

129. O unmanifest one, O victorious one, O source of origin, O chief Puruṣottama, O lotus-eyed one, O Govinda, O lord of the worlds, obeisance be to you.

130. O golden-wombed one, O abode of Śrī, O deity with the umbilical lotus, O eternal one, O deity with the Earth in the womb, O steadfast one, O Iśāna, O Hṛṣikeśa, obeisance be to you.

131. O deity without beginning and end, O immortal and unconquerable one, be victorious, O most excellent one among those who conquer; O unconquered one, O Indra, O Kṛṣṇa, O resident abode of Śrī, obeisance be to you.

132. O deity with the Yogic Ātman, O incomprehensible Ātman; O soul of the world, you are eternal. O deity difficult to be realised, O deity as immovable and steady as the mountain peak. Obeisance be to you, the lord of Kuśa.

133. O excellent one, O bestower of boons, O infinite one, O source of origin of Brahmā, O mine of good qualities, O lord of dissolution, origin and contact, O Vāsudeva, obeisance be to you.

134. O Parjanya (Lord of Rain), O maker of holy rites, O Duspāra (one who cannot be easily comprehended), O Duradhiṣṭhita (one inadequately supported ?); O dispeller of misery and agony, O Hari lying down in the waters, obeisance be to you.

135. O Bhūtapa (lord of Elements), O unmanifest one, O deity not agitated by the elements and principles, O abode of living beings, O soul of living beings. O deity containing living beings in the womb, obeisance be to you.

136. O performer of Yajñas, O upholder of Yajñas, O creator of Yajñas; O bestower of fearlessness; O deity with the Yajña in the womb (?), O golden-limbed one, O deity born of Devakī, obeisance be to you.

137. You are the knower of Kṣetra (Physical form, holy centre) you are the holder Kṣetra; you possess Kṣetra; you are the destroyer of Kṣetra; you are the maker of Kṣetra; you have selfcontrol; O soul of Kṣetra, O deity devoid of Kṣetra, obeisance be to you, the creator of Kṣetra.

138. O abode of good qualities, O receptacle of good qualities, O support of good qualities; O deity who are conducive to good qualities; O enjoyer of good qualities; O garden of good qualities; O deity who abandon good qualities (i.e. attributes), obeisance be to you.

139. You are Viṣṇu; you are Hari; you are the discus-bearing lord; you are Jiṣṇu (victorious); you are Janārdana; you are the Element; and the Vaṣatkāra; you are the future one, the lord of the present one.

140. You are the creator of the Bhūtas (living beings); you are the unmanifest one; You are Bhava (source of origin); you are the holder of Bhūtas. You are lord conceiver and creator of Bhūtas. They call you the unborn overlord.

141. You are infinite; you are (deity) conversant with what is done; you are Prakṛti; you are Vṛṣākapi (Viṣṇu). You are Rudra; you are unthwartable; you are never futile; you are the supreme lord.

142. You are identical with Viśvakarman, you are Jiṣṇu. You are Śambhu riding on a bull (?); you are Śaṅkara (bene-factor); you are Uśanas, you are the Satya (world); you are the Tapas (world), you are the Jana (world).

143. You are the conqueror of universe, you are welfare; you are one worthy of being sought refuge in. You are the imperishable one; you are the selfborn Śambhu; you are the eldest; you are the greatest resort.

144. You are the sun; you are the Omkāra, you are the vital breath; you are the dispeller of darkness; you are Parjanya (god of Rain); you are well reputed; you are Brahmā; you are Indra, lord of Devas.

145. You are Ṛk. Yajus and Sāman; you are Ātman; you are the honoured and approved one, you are fire and wind; you are Kubera; you are Havis (ghee offering).

146. You are the creator; you are the enjoyer; you are the Hotṛ (one who performs Homa offerings), you are Havis (oblation) Kratu (sacrifice); you are the poet, you are Hari; you are the most excellent lord of worlds; you are Acyuta.

147. You are the glorious deity with the vision of everything; you are the destroyer of enemies suppressing everyone; you are the day; similarly, you are the night; learned men call you Vatsara (year).

148. You are the units of time such as Kāla; Kāṣṭhā, Muhūrta, Kṣaṇa and Lava; you are a boy; you are an old man; you are man, woman and eunuch.

149-150. You are the source of origin of the universe, you are the eye, you are Sthānu (Śiva, stump); you are the deity of pure ears; you are permanent; you are unconquered; you are Upen-dra (younger brother of Indra); you are an excellent one.

151. You are Ātman the support of all (?) You are not perceptible to sense-organs.

152. You are Agraṇī (leader); you are Grāmaṇī (leader of groups); you are Suparṇa (Garuḍa); you are one without a beginning, you are the collection; you are very great, you are one who held the Ātman; you are Acyuta (unswerving).

153. You are Yama; (Restraint); you are Niyama (observance of regulations); you are lofty; you are four-armed; you alone are the cooked rice and the immanent soul; you are mentioned as the greatest Ātman.

154. You are the preceptor and the weighty one; you are the weightier being; you are the left one (adverse one); you are the right one (the favourable one, clever one); you are Pippala (a variety of medicinal plant), you are one who do not go, you are the manifest one; you are the Prajāpati (patriarch).

155. You are one with golden umbilicus; you are the lord; you are the moon; you are one whose physical form cannot be specifically pointed out; you are Yama; you are the destroyer of the enemies of Devas.

156. You are lord Saṅkarṣaṇa; you are the eternal maker; you are Vāsudeva of unmeasurable soul; you alone are one devoid of attributes.

157. You are the eldest; you are the most excellent; you are one who endure; you are Mādhava; you are thousand-headed lord; you are unmanifest one with thousand Visions.

158. You are the thousand-footed lord, you are Virāṭ (Immense Being); you are the lord of Devas; O lord of Devas; you alone stand ten Āngulas beyond all.

159. You alone are mentioned as that which is past; you are the excellent Puruṣa; Indra; you are Iśāna and that which is going to occur in future; you are the Rta Divine law, you are Amṛta (Nectar).

160. It is from you that this world grows up; you art the great being without anyone to excel you; you are the elderly Puruṣa; O lord, you stay in ten forms.

161. A fourth part of yours constitutes the Universe; your nine parts are immortal in heaven; nine parts are stationed in the firmament; this part is the eternal manly being.

162. Two of your parts are stationed on the Earth; four parts were also here. (?) Yajñas originate from you, the cause of rain in the world.

163. The Virāṭ (Immense Being) originated from you; it is the Man who is in the heart of the universe; he excelled the elements by splendour, fame and glory.

164. It is from you that Pr̥ṣadājya (ghee mixed with coagulated milk), the diet of Devas originated. The medicinal plants of the village of the forests and the animals etc originated from you.

165. You are devoted to what should be meditated upon and the meditation; you created the medicinal herbs. O lord of Devas, having seven faces you are named Kāla; you have an illuminated physical form.

166. The whole universe mobile and immobile is born of you and established in you.

167. O lord, the most excellent one among Devas, the greatest refuge of the worlds you are Aniruddha, you are Mādhava, you are Pradyumna the destroyer of the enemies of Devas.

168. O lotus-eyed deity, save me O Nārāyaṇa, obeisance to you. O Puruṣottama, obeisance to you.

169. Obeisance to you, O lord of worlds, obeisance to you the abode of Lakṣmī; obeisance to you, O abode of attributes; obeisance be to you; O mine of good qualities.

170. O Vāsudeva, obeisance be to you. O most excellent Deva, obeisance be to you. O Janārdana, obeisance be to you; O eternal one, obeisance be to you.

171. Obeisance to you O deity comprehensible to the Yogins; O abode of Yoga, obeisance be to you. O lord of Lakṣmī; O lord of universe, obeisance be to you.

172. O lord of the universe, O source of origin of the universe, O lord of the men of perfect knowledge, obeisance to you. O lord of heaven, obeisance be to you. O lord of Earth, obeisance be to you.

173. Obeisance to you, to the slayer of Madhu; O lotus-eyed one, obeisance to you; O destroyer of Kaiṭabha, obeisance be to you; O Subrahmaṇya (Excessively favourable to the brahmins). Obeisance be to you.

174. O great Fish, obeisance be to you. O Acyuta, holding up Śrutiś on your back. Obeisance to you who agitated the oceanic water and delighted the lotus-born lady.

175. O Horse-headed deity of great snout, O deity, having the great manly frame, O Horse-faced deity, obeisance to you the annihilator of Madhu and Kaiṭabha.

176. Obeisance to you, to the great tortoise, to the deity with the great body of a tortoise, to the deity who lifted up the Earth, to that form that held the mountain aloft.

177. Obeisance to the great Varāha (Boar), to (the deity) who lifted up the Earth. Obeisance to the Primordial Varāha, to the creator of the form of the universe.

178. Obeisance to the infinite one, to the subtle one, to the chief one, to the most excellent one. Obeisance to you of the form of the atom, to one comprehensible to the yogins.

179. Obeisance to the greatest cause of causes; to the abode of the circle of leading Yogins; to the being very difficult to be known. Obeisance to you who lie down on the couch of the great serpent stationed in the milky ocean; obeisance to the deity with fine ear rings made of gold and studded with jewels.

Vyāsa said :

180. Eulogised thus by him Mādhava was delighted and he said—"O excellent sage, tell me quickly what you wish from me.

Kandu said :

181-185. O lord of the universe, I am deluded by your Māyā. I wander about in the ocean of worldly existence which is very difficult to be crossed, which causes hairs to stand on end, which is impermanent, full of miseries and restless like the plantain leaf. It has no support. It has no base. It is a support. It is as fickle as bubbles in water, it is full of all calamities; it is difficult to be crossed; it is terrible to behold. My mind is drawn to and afflicted by sensual objects. I do not find any end to this worldly Existence, O lord of Devas. I am afflicted by the fear of worldly existence. I seek refuge in you O Kṛṣṇa. Redeem me from the ocean of worldly existence. O lord of Daityas, Dānavas and Devas, I wish to go to that eternal great region of yours from which it is difficult to return.

The lord said :

186. O excellent sage, you are my devotee. Propitiate me continuously. Due to my favour you will certainly attain the desired liberation.

187. Even Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, women folk, Śūdras and the lowcaste people attain great Siddhis if they are my devotees. What doubt then about you, O excellent brahmin.

188. Even a cāṇḍāla, if he is my devotee and if he is endowed with perfect faith, attains the desired end. What doubt then about others?

Vyāsa said :

189. O brahmins, after saying thus to him, Viṣṇu the lord

favourably disposed to his devotees, the lord whose movement is very difficult to comprehend vanished there itself.

190. After he had gone, O excellent sages, Kāṇḍu eschewed all lustful desires. He became delighted in his mind and he attained a proper mental quietude.

191-92. He restrained all his sense-organs. He was rid of the feelings of "my-ness". He was free from egotism. With single-minded devotion he perfectly meditated on Puruṣottama who is free from smearing attachment, who is devoid of attributes, who is quiescent and who is established in his sole existence. He attained the greatest of liberation that is difficult of access even unto Devas.

193. He who reads or listens to the story of the noble Kāṇḍu shall be liberated from sins. He goes to the heavenly world.

194-195. Thus, O excellent sages, the land of holy rites has been cited by me. So also the greatest holy centre for liberation named Puruṣottama has been recounted. It pertains to Lord Puruṣottama.

Those men devoid of impurities who visit the omnipresent lord, who eulogise the lord who grants boons, and devoutly meditate upon the deity named Śrīpuruṣottama who bestows salvation, who dispels worldly miseries and who is devoid of old age, enjoy the pleasures of a king. Later they enjoy divine pleasures in heaven. Freed of all defects they later go to the unchanging abode of Hari.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Doubts raised by sages

Lomaharṣaya said:

1. On hearing the words of Vyāsa, the sages of restrained sense-organs became satisfied, delighted and struck with wonder again and again.

The sages said:

2. Wonderful indeed are the attributes of the sub continent Bhārata mentioned by you. So also of the shrine named Śri-puruṣa in the holy centre Puruṣottama.

3. O sage, the most excellent among eloquent ones, who will not be delighted and surprised on hearing about the excellent greatness of the shrine named Puruṣa?

4. We have a doubt in our hearts. It has been there for a long time. Excepting you, there is no one on the Earth to clarify that doubt.

5. O great sage, it is about the origin of Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and Subhadrā on the Earth that we wish to ask. We would like to understand it thoroughly.

6. Why were the heroic Kṛṣṇa and Saṅkarṣaṇa (Balarāma) born in the house of Vasudeva? Why was she too born in that house there, O sage ?

7-8. How did the terrible ordeal of a stay in the womb appeal to them? The womb that is sling and lubricious due to urine and faeces? It is painful, distressful and miserable. Why were they born in this mortal world that consists mostly of miseries? Though it is devoid of essence and very fickle like a watery bubble, yet it is very terrible and it causes hairs to stand on their ends.

9. O sage, the most excellent among the eloquent ones, recount to us in detail the activities that they pursued on being born on the Earth.

10-12. Mention their wonderful and superhuman story, how did the lord of Devas, the most excellent and intelligent one among Devas attain the state of Vāsudeva in the house of Vasudeva?

He left off the holy world of Devas surrounded by the immortal beings and adorned by meritorious persons and came over to the mortal world here.

Why did that leader of Devas and human beings, the unchanging source of origin of the Earth unite his divine soul with mortal bodies?

13-20. Alone, the lord makes the circle of human beings whirl without ailments. Why did that wielder of discus and

ironclub decide to be born among human beings? It is Viṣṇu the lord who protects all living beings in the universe. Why did that lord come over to the Earth and carry on the activity of a cowherd?

He is the soul of Elements. He created and sustained the great elements. He is one whose glory is hidden in the womb. How was it that he was conceived in the womb by an ordinary women who walked about on the Earth? In his incarnation as the Dwarf at the request of Devas he won over three worlds by means of three paces. The excellent threefold path of the three aims of life (virtue, love and wealth) was immediately restored. He is the lord who, at the hour of dissolution, converts the universe into an aquatic body and drinks it up. He makes the world a vast sheet of water and lies therein with his form partly manifest and partly unmanifest.

He is the ancient lord, the soul of ancient beings, the destroyer of enemies. He assumed the form of a Boar. By the tip of his curved fangs, he lifted up the Earth.

He is the most excellent among Devas, who on behalf of Indra conquers the three worlds and gave it over to Devas as their realm.

He assumed the form of a lion and split it further into two (i.e. half man, half lion). The Daitya of great prowess, Hiranya-kaśipu was killed by him.

21-26. Formerly, lord Hari became the Aurva and Saṁvara-taka fires (submarine fire and fire of dissolution). Stationed in the nether regions he drank the watery essence of the ocean. In every Yuga they call him Brahman with a thousand feet, with a thousand rays. They call him the lord who bestows thousands, the lord with a thousand heads.

In his umbilicus a lotus grew up. It was the abode of Brahmā. It was a lotus of molten gold in the vast sheet of water, in the world of serpents.

In the war called Tārakāṁmaya,¹ many Daityas were killed by him with the weapons presided over by Devas.

1. *Tārakāṁmaya* : a war which arose in consequence of Soma (Moon) having carried off Tārā, the wife of Brhaspati.

The arrogant demon Kālanemi¹ was struck down by the lord seated on Garuḍa.

He adopts the perpetual Yoga and lies down at the northern end of the milky ocean. He envelops everything in great darkness.

27-28. Aditi conceived the ancient lord in her divine womb. Indra who was challenged by Daityas was held in womb by Aditi and saved.

By his Yogic powers he created regions and made Daityas stay there embedded in waters. After creating Devas and the leaders of Devas he made Indra their lord.

29-30. By Gārhapatya and Anvāhārya rites he created the material essential for Yajñas while his hand was hanging downwards, Āhavaniya fire, Vedas, initiation, sacrificial twig, Prokṣaṇīya vessel, Sruva ladle, Avabhr̥tha, and the persons partaking of their shares in havya.

31-33. He made Devas the partakers of Havya and Pitr̄s the partakers of Kavya. He assigned shares to them in the sacrificial rites and laid down rules regarding Yajña. Vessels, monetary gifts, initiation, Caru offerings, Ulūkhalaś (Mortars) sacrificial post, Soma juice, Pavitras (ringlike loops made of Kuśa grass), paridhis (sacrificial sticks placed round the fire), articles required for sacrifice such as Camasas, all these the lord created. He classified Sadasyas (audience) and Yajamānas (performers of Sacrifice); He made the various excellent sacrifices such as Medhā etc.

34. He divided sacrifices according to Yugas and the power (of endurance) of the people. The rites of Parameṣṭhin were also classified in accordance with Yugas.

35-38. He created some units of the time such as Kṣaṇas, Nimeṣas, Kāṣṭhās and Kalās. He created three forms of time past, present, future. He created Muhūrtas, Tithis (days of the lunar fortnight), months, days, years and seasons. The various groups of time, units, three types of magnitude (length, breadth, bright), span of life, centres (?) increase, characteristics, beauty of form—all these were created by the lord. Three worlds, three Devas, three lores, three fires, three time factors

1. A great asura, son of Virocana and grandson of Hiranyaśaśipu.

(past, present, future), three holy rites, three castes and three Gunas were created by him. Formerly, all the worlds were created by that lord of infinite activities. He is present in all living beings in the form of attributes.

39-40. The lord diverts himself through the contact of sense-organs of men. He is the leader of to-and-fro travel. He is the creator and overlord. He is the goal of those who possess virtue. He is the non-goal of persons of sinful rites. He is the origin of division of four castes. He is the custodian of division of four castes.

41-44. He is one who knows the fourfold division of lores. He is the seat of support for the four divisions of society, four stages of life. He is the intervening space between the quarters, Earth, wind and fire. He is luminary in the forms of sun and moon. He is the lord of Yugas. He walks about at night. He is the greatest luminary; he is (mentioned) as the greatest penance; they call him the greatest without anyone else greater than himself; he is the great Supreme soul. He is the lord of sons of Aditi, the lord is the annihilator of Daityas. He is the destroyer during the concluding days of yugas. He is the smiter of the destroyers of worlds: he is the bridge of bridges of worlds; he is the holiest of all holy rites.

45. He is the deity worthy of being known unto the Vedic scholars; he is the greatest lord among those who are sources of origin; among the gentle he is Soma; among those of fiery resplendence he is fire.

46. He is one who is the overlord of Indra; he is the penance of those who perform penance; he is the humility of those whose behaviour is conditioned by statesmanship, he is the brilliant splendour of those who are resplendent.

47-48. He is the physical form of those who deserve physical forms; he is the goal of those who deserve goal.

The wind originates from Ether, fire originates from wind (that is the vital breath) (?), the vital breath originates from heaven. The lord, (the destroyer of Madhu) is fire and vital breath. From juice originates blood and flesh originates from blood.

49. Fat is produced from flesh; bone is produced from fat;

marrow is generated from bone and semen is produced from marrow.

50-56. Foetus is evolved out of semen, due to that activity at the root of which is Rasa (juice). There the first part is that of waters. It is called heap pertaining to the moon. The second heap should be understood to have been born of the heat of the womb (?) One should know that the semen is of the nature of the moon; and the menstrual blood is of the nature of fire. Emotional fervour follows the Rasa. The moon and fire are present in the seed (?). The semen comes under the category of Kapha (Phlegm) and the menstrual blood in the category of Pitta (bile). The heart is the place of the phlegm and the bile is established in umbilicus. The heat is in the middle of the body and it is remembered as the seat of the mind. The place in between the umbilicus and belly (?) is the place where fire-god is present. The mind is the lord of subject. The phlegm is thought of as the moon. The bile is fire. Thus the universe is of the nature of fire and moon. When the foetus has thus begun to function and when it increases in size like a lump of flesh, the wind enters the body and comes in contact with the greatest Ātman. It becomes split into fire within the body and grows in size.

57-63. The winds are Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Udāna and Vyāna. Prāṇa moves round increasing the great Ātman (?) Apāna increases the hinder body; Udāna (increases) half of the embodied soul (?); Vyāna is so called because it pervades the body. The Samāna makes it return. Then the elements are attained and they become perceptible to the sense-organs. The five elements are Earth, wind, firmament, waters and fire.

The Elements permeating the sense-organs create their respective parts (in the body). They say that the mass body pertains to Earth; Vital breath is the part of air; pores and hollow cavities originate from firmament; exudations function from watery element. Eyes and the warmth of the body is the fiery element. The guide of all these is the mind.

The villages and territories function through the power of the lord. Puruṣa, the lord, creates the eternal worlds.

The sages said :

Why did Viṣṇu attain the form of a man in this mortal world O brahmin, this is our doubt. It gives us a great surprise.

64-65. How did the goal of those who deserve the goal take up the human body? Viṣṇu is mentioned by Devas and Daityas as a great wonder. O great sage, tell us the wonderful story of the origin of Viṣṇu whose splendour is unmeasured and whose strength and prowess are well known.

66-69. May the real principle of Viṣṇu who is a great miracle on account of his activities, be mentioned. How did that lord, the dispeller of the agony of Devas, Puruṣottama (take birth as a human being) ? The lord of the universe is omnipresent; he is the great lord of all the worlds; he is the lord and cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation; he is the cause of happiness of everyone; he is inexhaustible, permanent, infinite. He is devoid of both decline and increase. He is unsmeared, free from attributes, subtle unafflicted and unsullied. He is free from all conditioning factors. He is stabilised in his sole form of Existence. He undergoes no change or transformation; he is the eternal, perpetual great soul. He is unmoving and all-pervading. He is devoid of impurities. He is ever satisfied and he has none to support him.

70-75. In the Kṛta Yuga the state of being Viṣṇu and Hari is heard of; among Devas, he has the state of Vaikunṭha and among mortals he has the state of Kṛṣṇa.

We wish to hear about the inscrutable way of activities of this lord for ever, both past and future. The lord is unmanifest but his symbols are clearly manifest. Nārāyaṇa is the infinite Ātman. He is the unchanging source of origin. Hari the eternal lord became Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā, Indra, Rudra, Dharma, Śukra and Bṛhaspati. Formerly, this lord in the form of Ātman of Pradhāna created Brahmā. That primordial Puruṣa created Prajāpatis in the previous Kalpa. Thus the lord Viṣṇu is the over-lord of lords of all the worlds. Why, then, did Hari go to the family of Yadus in the mortal world?

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Lord's Incarnation

Vyāsa said :

1-9. Having bowed to Viṣṇu, the lord of Devas, I shall mention the story. Obeisance to the powerful ancient Puruṣa, to the unchanging permanent lord.

Obeisance to the lord in the form of four arrays; to the lord without attributes and to the lord with attributes; to the excellent one, to the weightied one; to the most excellent one, to the unmeasured one; to the deity forming part of the Yajña, to the part of all; to one attainable by Vedas etc; there is nothing minuter than that lord. There is nothing larger than that unborn lord by whom this universe is pervaded—the universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings. The universe is of peculiar nature different from what is manifest and what is unmanifest. It appears and vanishes. They say that such a world is created by the lord and in the same way it is withdrawn by him.

With great concentration I bow down to Brahmā the primordial lord. Obeisance to one without aberration, to the pure one, to permanent and greatest Ātman, to the deity who has the same sole form always; to Viṣṇu the conqueror of every one.

Obeisance to Hiraṇyagarbha (Brahmā), Hari and Śāṅkara to Vāsudeva, the essential one, to the cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution.

Obeisance to the single-formed and multiformed deity; obeisance to the gross-formed and subtle-formed deity; obeisance to the manifest and unmanifest-formed deity; obeisance to Viṣṇu the cause of salvation.

Obeisance to Viṣṇu who is identical with the universe and who is the root cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. Obeisance to the greatest Ātman.

10-13. I bow down to Acyuta, Puruṣottama who is the support of the universe; is the minutest of all minute beings; who is stationed in all living beings; whose form is that of knowledge, Who is extremely devoid of impurities in fact but who stands in the form of objects as a result of erroneous per-

ception. I bow down to Viṣṇu who swallows the universe and who is competent to create and sustain the universe; I bow down to the lord of world who has no beginning, who is unborn, who has no decline and who has no change. (After bowing down thus) I shall recount in the same manner as the lotus-born deity Brahmā said when formerly he was asked by Dakṣa and sages.

14-15. After bowing down to the lord Brahmā who sanctifies the three worlds by uttering the R̥k and Sāman mantras through his mouths who came out of the vast sheet of water and whose behest is certainly carried out by Asuras and human beings, I shall mention fully the opinion of Brahmā born of unmanifest one.

16-20. Holy rites are revealed by him after directing creation The waters are called Nāras by the sages, the seers of the principles since waters constitute his place of resort (Ayana) of lord Viṣṇu as Nārāyaṇa.

Nārāyaṇa, the omnipresent lord, envelops everything. Brahmā who is both Saguna (with attributes) and Nirguna (attributeless) is stationed in four forms. One form cannot be specifically mentioned. Learned men see it in white form, encircled by clusters of flames. It is the form which Yogins steadfastly adhere to. It should be known as staying nearly as well as far off. It is beyond the Guṇas (attributes). It is called Vāsudeva. It appears free from the felling of myness. Forms, colours and similar things, that are conceivable, but not real are not present in it. It is always pure, single-formed and well-established.

21-25. The second form called Śeṣa upholds the Earth with its head. It stands below in the nether regions. It is called Tāmasa (having Tamas attribute and hence assumed the status of a lower species of animal).

The third form is interested in protecting the subjects and it performs activities. It should be known as predominantly possessing Sattva attribute. It is the cause of stabilizing Dharma.

The fourth form is stationed in the middle of waters. It lies on the couch of a serpent. Its attribute is Rajas. It always creates. ~

The third form of Hari is interested in protecting the

subjects invariable. It establishes virtue on the Earth. It destroys the haughty Asuras who break the laws of virtue.

26-28. It protects Devas and Gandharvas and all those who are interested in protecting virtue.

Whenever there is any drawback in virtue and evil gains the upper hand, this form creates itself, that is, it takes up incarnations.

Formerly, it assumed the form of a Boar. With its snout it pierced through the water and lifted up the Earth with single curved fang as though it was a lotus plant. After assuming the form of a man-lion Hiranyaśākū was killed by it.

29-35. Other Dānavas too such as Vipracitti were struck down by it. He assumed the form of a Dwarf; bound Bali by his Māyā. Covered the three worlds with his steps and defeated the sons of Diti.

The valorous son of Jamadagni was born in the family of Bhṛgu. Remembering the murder of his father, Paraśurāma killed Kṣatriyas. Born as Dattātreya, the valorous son of Atri, he related the eightfold Yoga to the noble Alarka. The same lord became Rāma the valorous son of Daśaratha and in a battle killed Rāvaṇa who had terrified the three worlds.

When the lord of Devas, the lord of the universe was lying asleep in the vast sheet of water he adopted the Yogic slumber on the couch of the serpent for the period of a thousand Yugas. He was established in his own greatness.

He had kept the three worlds in his belly, the whole universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings. He was then eulogised by Siddhas and sages who were in the world of Janaloka.

36-42. From his umbilicus there grew up a lotus. The quarters were its petals with which it was adorned. It had the fulgence of fire and the sun. It was embellished by the mountains that acted as the filaments. The winds were its blossoms. It was the excellent abode of Brahmā. It was there that four-faced lord of Devas, Brahmā was born.

At that time, two Dānavas, Madhu and Kaiṭabha were born of the impurities from his ears. Those two Dānavas of great strength and prowess attempted to kill Brahmā. The lord got up from his bed in the ocean and killed them. I do not attempt to enumerate these and other activities fully. But

the incarnation of the unborn lord at Mathurā is relevant to the context now.

Thus the form of Sattvaguṇa undertakes incarnations. It is called Pradyumna and is engaged in the activity of protection. It can assume the forms of Devas, human beings and lower animals. It will have the respective nature (of the species where incarnation is taken). It is due to the will of Vāsudeva.

O excellent brahmins, if it is worshipped it bestows desired benefits. Though the lord is contented he undertakes the form as human beings. Listen to the sequel now.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Incarnations of Hari

Vyasa said :

1. Listen, O leading sages, I shall recount to you briefly the incarnations which Hari took up in order to remove the burden of the Earth.

2-4. O brahmins, whenever there is increase in evil and virtue dwindles down, lord Viṣṇu takes incarnation by dividing his body into two in order to protect the good, establish virtue and chastise the wicked and other enemies of Devas. He is born in every Yuga for protecting the subjects.

5-6. O brahmins, formerly, the Earth was afflicted by excessive burden. The Earth went to the assembly of heaven-dwellers. After bowing down to Devas including Brahmā, the Earth narrated every thing speaking piteously in her grief.

The Earth said :

7. Fire is the preceptor of gods; sun is the preceptor of cows, Nārāyaṇa is the preceptor of those worthy of being saluted by me as well as other people.

8. Now, Daityas, the followers of Kālanemi have come to the mortal world. Day and night they harass the subjects.

9. That Asura Kālanemi who was slain by all powerful Viṣṇu is now born as Karṇa the great Asura and a son of Ugrasena.

10-11. There are many other very powerful asuras such as Ariṣṭa, Dhenuka, Keśin, Pralamba, Naraka, Sunda, Bāṇa, the fierce son of Bali and many others. They are wicked souls born in the abodes of kings. I do not attempt to enumerate them all.

12. O Devas holding divine forms, there are many Akṣauhiṇis (huge armies, of haughty leading Daityas of great strength), on me.

13-14. O lords of immortal beings, afflicted and distressed by their excessive burden I am unable to steady myself. I hereby submit to you, O highly blessed ones, may the extra burden be removed from me lest I should sink into the nether worlds in my bewilderment.

Vyāsa said :

15. On hearing these words of the Earth Brahmā was requested by Devas to remove the burden of the Earth.

Brahmā said :

16-18. O heaven-dwellers whatever the Earth says is true. You all, I and Hara—all of us are the excellent and elegant powers of Nārāyaṇa. Among these powers there is superiority and inferiority complex by way of hindering others and being hindered by them. Hence come ye. We shall go to the excellent shore of the milk ocean. There we shall propitiate Hari and intimate everything to him.

19. That lord is the Ātman of all. He is identical with the universe. He will always work for your benefit. With a small part of himself he will be born over the Earth and he will establish virtue.

Vyāsa said :

20. After saying thus Brahmā went along with Devas. With full concentration, he eulogised the Garuḍa-emblazoned deity.

Brahmā said :

21. O lord with thousand forms, obeisance, obeisance be to you; O thousand-armed one, O many-armed and many-footed one, obeisance, obeisance to you, O lord engaged in creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, O incomprehensible one.

22. You are the subtlest of all subtle beings; you have a great magnitude, O lord, you are weightier than the weightiest. O lord, possessed of Pradhāna, cosmic intellect and sense-organs, O lord identical with the chief worlds, be pleased.

23. On account of the mighty Asuras born on the Earth, O lord, this Earth is extremely afflicted. She is pained under the heavy weight of suffering. In order to get the burden removed she has approached you the ultimate resort of worlds, the redeemer without any other greater being.

24-25. O lord of Devas, all of us are ready to carry out your orders viz—Indra, the slayer of Vṛtra, Nāsatya and Dasra (Aśvins), Varuṇa, Rudras, Vasus, Sun, wind, fire and Devas. What should be done by these and by me, O lord, command us. We shall await your behest for even eschewing defects.

Vyāsa said :

26-27. O excellent brahmins on being eulogised thus, the great lord, plucked out two hairs from his head, one white and the other black. He then spoke thus to the Devas. "These two hairs of mine will incarnate on the Earth distressed due to excessive burden.

28. May all Devas incarnate on the Earth. Let them fight with the mighty proud Asuras who are already born before.

29. Then, there is no doubt about it, all those Asuras on the Earth will be exterminated after being reduced to powder by means of different weapons.

30. O immortal ones, this hair of mine will be born as the eighth child in the womb of Devaki, the wife of Vasudeva who is comparable to a goddess.

31. After birth on the Earth it will kill Kāṁsa born of Kālanemi. After saying this, Hari vanished there itself.

32. Those Devas then bowed down to the noble lord who became invisible, went to the top of Meru and then descended on the Earth.

33. The holy sage Nārada said thus to Kāṁsa—"The eighth child in the womb of Devakī born in the Earth will kill you".

34. On hearing it from Nārada, Kāṁsa became infuriated. He kept Devakī and Vasudeva as prisoners in their own house and guarded them well.

35. O brahmins, whenever a son was born Vasudeva immediately handed over that son to Kāṁsa as he himself had told him before.

36. The sons of Hiranyakaśipu became well known as these six children in the womb. Urged by Viṣṇu, his (Yogic) slumber joined them gradually to the womb of Devakī.

37. This Yogic slumber pertaining to Viṣṇu is also called Mahāmāyā and Avidyā. The entire universe is deluded by her.

Lord Hari said to her :

38. O slumber, go hence. One by one take these children (of Hiranyakaśipu) who are in the nether worlds now to the belly of Devakī at my behest.

39. When they have been killed by Kāṁsa, my sinless part named Śeṣa will become the seventh child in the womb of Devakī by means of a small part.

40-41. In the cowherds' colony, there is another wife of Vasudeva named Rohinī. At the birth of Devakī's child, it should be taken to the belly of Rohinī. People will then say that there was an abortion of the seventh child in the womb of Devakī due to her fear from Kāṁsa and also due to the rigours of imprisonment.

42. Since the child in the womb has been dragged away, the heroic boy comparable to the peak of Meru, Saṅkarṣaṇa will be born in the world.

43. Then, I shall be born in the auspicious womb of Devakī. You should also go to the womb of Yaśodā without delay.

44. I shall be born at night on the eighth day in the dark half of the month of Śrāvāna during the rainy season. You will be born on the ninth day.

45. O uncensured lady, urged by my Śakti, Vasudeva will take me to the bed of Yaśodā and you to that of Devakī.

46. O gentle lady, Kamsa will seize you and hurl you against a rocky slab. Thereafter, you will attain an abode in the firmament.

47. With due deference to me, Indra will bow down to you a hundred times; with his head bent down in obeisance he will accept you as his sister.

48. Thereafter, you will kill thousands of Daityas. With various abodes (i.e. shrines) you will adorn the entire Earth.

49. You are identical with the following deities :—Bhūti (Existence), Sannati (Obeisance), Kirti (Renown), Kānti (Splendour), Pr̥thivī (Earth), Dhṛti (Courage), Lajjā (Bashfulness), Puṣṭi (Nourishment), Umā and other goddesses whoever they may be.

50-51. If the devotees eulogise you in the morning and in the afternoon with their forms bent down in humility, and address you as Āryā, Durgā, Vedagarbhā, Ambikā, Bhadrā, Bhadrakālī, Kṣemyā and Kṣemakarī, they will have whatever they desire, due to my favour.

52. Worshipped by means of wine, meat and other presents and various items of foodstuffs you will become delighted and fulfil all desires of men.

53. Undoubtedly, all of them will have welfare always due to my favour. It need not be suspected at all. O gentle lady, go, in the manner mentioned before.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The nativity of Śrīkṛṣṇa

Vyāsa said :

1. In accordance with what was mentioned by the lord of Devas formerly, the mother of the universe i.e. the Yogic slumber Māyā took the six children to the womb of Devaki one by one and removed the seventh forcibly.

2. When the seventh child in the womb was transferred to the womb of Rohini, Hari entered the womb of Devakī for helping the three worlds.

3. On the same day the Yogic slumber took birth in the belly of Yaśodā in accordance with what was mentioned by Brahmā.

4. O brahmīns, when the part of Viṣṇu entered the Earth the seasons became auspicious. The planets in the sky moved perfectly (and favourably).

5. No one dared to look at Devakī due to her excessive resplendence. On seeing her blazing splendidly, the minds of onlookers became excited.

6. Day and night the deities eulogised Devakī who held Viṣṇu in her womb.

Devas said :

7. You are Svāhā, you are Svadhā, you are Vidyā, you are Sudhā (Nectar), you are splendour. For the protection of worlds, you have incarnated on the Earth.

8. Be pleased, O gentle lady, do what is auspicious to the universe. For the delight of all, bear Iśāna in your womb. It is by him that the entire universe has been sustained.

Vyasa said :

9. Thus eulogised by Devas, she conceived the lord in her womb, the lotus-eyed lord, the cause of safety and security of the world.

10. The entire universe is like the lotus. In order to make it bloom the noble deity Acyuta manifested himself like the sun. It was Devakī's womb that bore him even as the sky at dawn bears the sun.

11. When at midnight, Janārdana the support of all, was born, the clouds produced gentle sounds and Devas showered flowers.

12-13. On seeing the lord born, the lord whose lustre was like that of the petals of a full-blown blue lotus, who had four arms and whose chest was marked by the Śrīvatsa scar, Vasudeva eulogised him.

O excellent brahmīns, after eulogising him with pleasing

words, the highly intelligent Vasudeva who was afraid of Kāṁsa intimated to him thus :

Vasudeva said :

14-15. O lord of the chiefs of Devas, bearing conch, discus and iron-club, you have been realised by us as the lord. O lord, be pleased to withdraw this divine form. O lord, today itself Kāṁsa will begin to torture me on coming to know that you have incarnated in my abode.

Devakī said :

16. May that lord of Devas be pleased, the lord of Devas who has now revealed an infant's form by means of his own Māyā, whose form is endless, whose form is this entire universe and who bears the world in his womb.

17. O lord, the Ātman of all, withdraw this four-armed form. O destroyer of Asuras, sons of Diti, let not Kāṁsa know about your incarnation.

The lord said :

18. Formerly, O gentle lady, I had been eulogised by you, desirous of a son. Since I am now born of your womb, your prayer has become fruitful.

Vyāsa said :

19. O excellent sages, after saying thus, the lord became silent. During the night itself Vasudeva took him and went out.

20. When Vasudeva set out, the watchmen became deluded. The porters and watchmen of the city of Mathurā were enchanted and deluded by the Yogic slumber.

21. When the clouds discharged a heavy and fierce down-pour during that night, Śeṣa shielded Vasudeva by means of his hoods.

22. Bearing Viṣṇu, Vasudeva waded through Yamunā with the waters reaching only upto his knees though the river was majestic and agitated due to whirlpools.

23. On the bank of Yamunā he saw Nanda and other elderly cowherds who carried revenue to be paid to Kāṁsa.

24-25. At that time, O sages, Yaśodā too was deluded by Yogic slumber. She gave birth to a girl who was Māyā herself. When the people were enchanted, Vasudeva of unmeasured lustre, placed the boy on the bed of Yaśodā, took the baby girl and came away quickly.

26. On waking up, Yaśodā saw her new-born son, dark in complexion like the petals of a blue lotus. Thereat she rejoiced very much.

27. Taking the baby girl back to his abode, Vasudeva placed her on the bed of Devakī.

28. O brahmins, thereafter the watchmen heard the crying sound of the infant and got up suddenly. They intimated to Kāṁsa about the birth of a child to Devakī.

29. Kāṁsa rushed to Devakī and seized the baby girl from her even as Devakī tried to prevent him crying aloud "Leave off, leave off" till her throat ached.

30. He hurled her on the top of a rocky slab. On being hurled thus she flew up and took up a position in the sky. She assumed a formidable form with eight large hands armed with weapons. She laughed aloud (in derision) and furiously spoke to Kāṁsa thus :

Yogamāyā said :

31-32. O Kāṁsa, what do you gain by seizing me? He who will kill you is born. He is the entire possession of Devas. Formerly, he had been Death unto you. After considering this, you may do something quickly that may be conducive to your own welfare.

Vyāsa said :

After saying this, the goddess with divine garlands, scents and ornaments went away through the sky even as Kāṁsa stood watching. She was eulogised by Siddhas.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Karṇa takes steps to ward off his danger

Vyāsa said :

1. Distressed in mind (due to this) Karṇa called all Asuras, Pralamba, Keśin and others and spoke to them thus :

Karṇa said :

2. O Pralamba of great arms, O Keśin, O Dhenuka, O Pūtanā, may my words be heard by Ariṣṭa and others.

3. It seems attempt is made by the wicked immortal beings, to kill me. Of course they are scorched by my prowess. I do not consider them heroic.

Indra's younger brother (i.e. Viṣṇu) has been sent by Devas due to the words of the Earth. O my heroic friends, he is already scorched by my valour. I do not mind him at all.

4. O leading Daityas, I am surprised at what is mentioned by that girl. O my heroic friends, the fact that they are straining themselves provokes only my laughter.

5. Still O leading Asuras I have to exert myself to harm those wicked ones, more than what those evil ones may do.

6. "The lord of the past, present and future is born to bring about my death", So says the girl born of the womb of Devakī.

7. Hence, we have to endeavour very much in regard to boys on the Earth. If any extraordinary strength is visible in any boy he should be killed assiduously.

Vyāsa said :

8. After commanding the Asuras thus Karṇa came back to his abode. Without any ill will unto them he spoke to Vasudeva and Devakī.

Karṇa said :

9. It was in vain that all your children were killed by me. An entirely different boy has been born to bring about my death.

10. Hence grieve not for what has happened. Who is not

killed when his span of life comes to a close? Moreover, it is certain that more sons will be born to you two.

Vyāsa said :

11. O excellent brahmins, after consoling them thus, Kāṁsa delighted them by releasing them. Thereupon, he entered his inner apartment.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Pūtanā slain and Cart smashed

1. Vasudeva who was released went to Nanda's cart. He saw Nanda who was delighted because a son was born to him.

2. Vasudeva then said to him with great respect :— Good luck, good luck, even in your old age a son is now born to you.

3. The yearly revenue to the king has been paid: The purpose for which you all came here has been served. Hence, my noble friends should not stay here.

4. O Nanda, the task for which you came here has been accomplished; why do you tarry then? You must all go back to the cowherds' colony quickly.

5. That son of mine born of Rohinī should be looked after by you in the same manner as your own son.

Vyāsa said :

6. Thus urged, the powerful cowherds led by Nanda paid the revenue and went back after loading their carts with vessels and articles of trade.

7. While they were staying in the cowherds' colony a certain (ogress) named Pūtanā who had been going about killing children took up Kṛṣṇa who was asleep at night and fed at her breasts.

8. All the children whom Pūtanā fed at her breasts during the night used to die instantaneously.

9. Kṛṣṇa seized her breasts and pressed them forcibly with both of his hands. He sucked the breast furiously and drank up even her vital breath.

10. The terrible Pūtanā groaned loudly as she died with the nervous cards snapping one by one. She fell on the ground.

11. Frightened on hearing her loud cry the residents of the cowherds' colony woke up and saw Pūtanā lying dead and Kṛṣṇa was in her lap.

12. O brahmins, then the extremely frightened Yaśodā took up Kṛṣṇa from her (dead body). She warded off the evil effects on the boy by whirling the cow's tail over him and by similar rituals.

13. Nanda the cowherd took some cow-dung and smeared Kṛṣṇa's forehead with it, according him protection thereby. Even as he did so he uttered these Mantras :—

Nanda said :

14-20. May Hari the source of origin of all living beings save you; the universe originated from the lotus that grew up from his umbilicus. May lord Keśava who assumed the form of a boar and by whom the Earth was held at the tip of his curved fang, protect you. The whole universe was thus supported by the Earth. May the lord Keśava in the form of Man-lion protect you everywhere; the lord who split open the chest of his enemy with his claws. May Viṣṇu protect your private parts along with the belly; may Janārdana protect your calves and feet. May Vāmana protect you always, Vāmana who instantaneously became very huge, covering up the three worlds in as many steps and whose weapons shone (in all the three worlds). May Govinda protect your head. May Keśava protect your neck. May the unchanging Nārāyaṇa whose prowess is unimpeded, protect your face, arms, forearms, mind and the sense-organs. May Govinda protect you in all the quarters. May Madhusūdana protect you in the intermediary quarters. May Hṛṣikeśa protect you in the sky and may Mahidhara protect you on the Earth.

Vyāsa said :

21. The boy for whom the benedictory rites were performed

by Nanda the cowherd, was laid in the child's cradle beneath a cart.

22. On seeing the huge body of the dead ogress Pūtanā, the cowherds were frightened and surprised.

23. Once (the infant) Śrīkrṣṇa who was lying beneath the cart cried out for breast milk and kicked up his legs.

24. Hit by his legs the cart was upset. With all the vessels and utensils broken the cart lay there topsy turvy.

25-29. O brahmins, all the cowherds and the cowherdesses came there crying, "Alas, Alas." Knowing that the child was safely lying supine, the cowherds asked—"By whom was the cart upset?" The boys there said—"It was kicked down by this infant boy who was crying. We saw the cart being overturned when struck by the legs of the boy. No one else has done this."

Thereat the cowherds became still more surprised. Nanda who was extremely surprised caught hold of the boy and held him close to himself.

Yaśodā who too was bewildered worshipped the broken cart with curds, flowers, fruits and raw rice grains.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

Cowherds' colony shifted to Vṛndāvana

Vyāsa said :

1. Thus urged by Vasudeva, Garga went to the Cowherds' colony disguised and unknown to the cowherds. He performed the postnatal ceremonies and rites for the two boys.

2. The highly intelligent Garga, the most excellent among the wise ones, gave the name Rāma to the elder boy and Krṣṇa to the younger one.

3. O brahmins, in a short while the two boys became well known as very powerful. They began to crawl on their knees.

4. With their bodies smeared with the ashes of cowdung cakes they roamed about here and there. Neither Yaśodā nor Rohini was inclined to stop them.

5. They played about in the middle of the kine-enclosure. Then they stepped into the folds of calves. They were eager to pull the tail of the new-born calf.

6-7. When Yaśodā could not prevent those restless boys from playing about and walking about as they pleased, she bound Kṛṣṇa of unimpaired activities to the middle of a mortar by means of a rope and then spoke in anger.

Yaśodā said :

8-15. Now, O restive one, go about if you are strong enough.

Vyāsa said :

After saying thus that housewife became busy with her household activities. As she was engaged thus the lotus-eyed lord dragged his mortar through a pair of Arjuna trees. As he drew the mortar sideways between the two trees two Arjuna trees with lofty branches broke down. On hearing the 'Kaṭakaṭa' sound of the snapping trees the frightened people of the Cowherds' colony came there and saw the trees lying down on the Earth with broken branches. They saw the smiling infant boy with a tooth or two in his mouth, lying in between the trees with a rope tied firmly round his belly. Since he was tied with a rope round his belly he became to be called Dāmodara.

The elderly cowherds, Nanda and others took counsel together in their great dejection. They were excessively frightened due to the great calamities.

"We have nothing to do with this spot. We shall go to some other place."

16-19. "Many evil portents are seen here indicating destruction, such as the death of Pūtanā and the upsetting of the cart. Without any such cause as gust of wind the two trees have fallen down. Hence, we shall go away from this place. We shall go to Vṛndāvana. Do not delay. Better to get away before these portentous great calamities overwhelm the Cowherds' colony completely."

After deciding to go thus, the residents of Vraja spoke to their family members. "Hurry up. Do not tarry."

Thus in a trice, they set off with their cattle wealth and carts.

20-24. Thus the residents of Vraja went along with their herds of cattle and calves in groups.

O brahmins, within moments, that place of cowherds' colony became scattered with multitudes of male and female crows as broken bits and remnants of various articles lay strewn about.

Kṛṣṇa of unimpaired activities desired the prosperity of the cows. In his auspicious mind the lord meditated upon Vṛndāvana. Thereat, O excellent brahmins, fresh shoots of grass grew all round as if in the rainy season although it was the middle of summer when everything remained parched up.

The cowherds now colonized Vṛndāvana with their carts, cattle enclosures and camping sites arranged in the form of a big crescent. Rāma and Kṛṣṇa then began to tend the calves.

25-28. Continuing their childish sports they stood or moved about (as they pleased) among the cattle. Peacocks' tail embellished their crests. They adorned themselves with the flowers of the forest. They made noise among the cowherds with their flutes and various musical instruments evolved out of leaves and twigs of trees. With hanging forelocks, the boys shone like fire. They roamed about in that great forest laughing and playing (as they pleased). They played together as well as with other children. Along with them they tended the calves and moved about here and there. As time passed they reached the age of seven.

29-32. The protectors of the universe tended the calves in that great colony of cowherds.

Then the rainy season arrived with patches of clouds covering up the sky. It seemed to bind the quarters by the currents of downpours of rain. Fresh blown flowers and glow-worms covered the Earth. So it appeared as though set with emerald and adorned with rubies. Everywhere the river waters flowed down and astray like the minds of indisciplined persons immediately after inheriting a large fortune. The powerful boys reached the colony at the proper time and played in the company of cowherd boys equal to them in age. They played like the immortal beings.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

Suppression of Kāliya

Vyāsa said :

1. Once, Kṛṣṇa went to Vṛndāvana forest without Rāma. Surrounded by cowherd lads he moved about. He shone splendidly in garlands of forest flowers.

2. He went to the river Kālīndī that had gently moving ripples and waves and that appeared to be smiling all round by the clusters of foams sticking to the banks.

3. There he saw a hideous and extremely terrible whirlpool of serpent Kāliya, which had been defiled by sparks of poisonous fire.

4. As the fire of poison spread, the great trees that grew on its banks were burnt. Even the birds (that flew over it) had been burnt when they came into contact with its watery spray as the wind wafted it up.

5. On seeing that highly terrible serpent which was like another jaw of Death lord Kṛṣṇa thought thus :

6-7. In this whirlpool lives that wicked Kāliya with poison for his weapon. Formerly, he had been left in the ocean by me. The evil fellow had not been conquered then as he disappeared in the ocean. The whole of the ocean-going river Yamunā has now been defiled by him. Hence, the water of Yamunā is not being used by the thirsty travellers or cows that constitute our wealth.

8. This king of serpents should be curbed and restrained by me whereby the residents of the cowherds' colony who are continuously frightened now should move about with comfort.

9. It is for this purpose that I have incarnated in the world of human beings. So I should chastise these wicked souls who have gone astray.

10. Therefore, I shall climb this great tree of Kadamba which is not very far off from it, I shall jump into the eddy of the serpent that causes destruction.

Vyāsa said :

11. After thinking thus and girding up his loins, he quickly fell into that whirlpool of the king of serpents.

12. As he jumped into it, the great eddy was stirred up by him. He sprinkled even the trees growing far away.

13. Those trees that were sprinkled with the hot water heated by the flames of the defiled person of the serpent blazed suddenly. The flames then spread over all the quarters.

14. Lord Kṛṣṇa clapped and dashed against the whirlpool with his arms. On hearing that sound the king of serpents approached him.

15. His eyes turned red due to wrath; his hoods became agitated through poisonous flames. He was surrounded by pink-coloured serpents of great poison.

16. There were hundreds of wives of the serpent. They appeared splendid by their attractive necklaces. Their earrings sparkled as they moved along with their jerking trembling bodies.

17. Kṛṣṇa was then encircled by those serpents which bound him with their bodies. With their fangs rendered nasty by poisonous flames, they bit Kṛṣṇa.

18. On seeing him fallen there afflicted by the bodies of serpents, the cowherd lads went back to Vraja (the colony of cowherds) and lamented in their excessive grief.

The Cowherds said :

19. In his delusion Kṛṣṇa went into the eddy of Kāliya. He has sunk into it. He is being bitten by the king of serpents. Hence, all of you come. Do not delay.

Vyāsa said :

20. On hearing these words comparable to the stunning blow of the thunderbolt, the cowherds and the cowherdesses, Yaśodā and others, hastened to the eddy.

21. "Alas, Alas where is this (beloved) person of cowherdesses (lying) extremely perturbed ?" Saying thus, the people accompanied Yaśodā. They were confused. They were faltering in their steps.

22. Rāma of wonderful exploits, Nandagopa and other cowherds hastened to Yamunā, desirous of seeing Kṛṣṇa.

23. And surely did they see Kṛṣṇa, but he was encircled

by the serpent. He was completely under his control. His effort to release himself had been made ineffective.

24. O excellent sages, staring anxiously at the face of his son, Nandagopa stood motionless. The highly blessed Yaśodā was also like that.

25. The cowherdresses and others looked on helplessly. In their extreme distress and grief they wept continuously owing to their love for Keśava. Those ladies said in the frightened timidity of their minds:

26. All of us shall now enter this great eddy of the king of serpents alongwith Yaśodā. It is not proper on our part to go back to our colony.

27. What is that day without the sun? What is that night without the moon? What are those cows without milk? What is that cowherds' colony without Kṛṣṇa? We will never go back to the cowherds' colony without Kṛṣṇa.

28. *Vyāsa said :*

On hearing these words of cowherdresses, the son of Rohini of great strength steadily looked at those distressed cowherds and said.

29. He saw Nanda extremely distressed with his eyes fixed to his face. He saw Yaśodā perturbed and fainting without being fully aware of his greatness.

Balarāma said :

30-33. O lord of the chiefs of Devas, why is this human feeling revealed too much? Don't you know own Ātman? You are the pivot of this universe: you are the support of Devas. You are the maker, protector and destroyer of the three worlds. You are identical with the three Vedas. To both of us, O Kṛṣṇa, who have taken incarnations here the cowherds are the real kinsmen. So also the cowherdresses. Why then do you neglect them, your kinsmen who are distressed? You have exhibited the human traits. You have demonstrated puerile fickleness. So, O Kṛṣṇa, may this wicked fang-weaponed serpent be suppressed.

Vyāsa said :

34. Kṛṣṇa who was thus reminded kept his legs slightly

parted in a gentle smile with a sudden dash and blow. He released his body from the bondage of the serpent's coil.

35. With both of his hands he made the middle hood bend down. As the head of the serpent king became bent he rode and danced on it.

36. The hood of the serpent became wounded due to the kicks from the feet of Kṛṣṇa whenever the hood was raised. After the kick his head bent low.

37. By frequent hits and blows from Kṛṣṇa the serpent became unconscious and deluded. Due to the fierce kickings he vomited blood.

38. On seeing that serpent had been compelled to bend his head and neck to shed blood from his mouth the wives of the serpent lord sought shelter in Kṛṣṇa.

The wives of the Serpent lord said :

39-42. O lord of the chiefs of Devas, you have been understood. You are the excellent lord of all. You are the greatest and inconceivable splendour, a portion of which is Parameśvara. You are that lord not born of anyone else. Even Devas are not competent to eulogise you (adequately). How can women describe his form? The whole cosmic Egg consisting of the entire Earth, sky, water, fire and wind is only a bit of a part of that lord. How can we describe him and eulogise him adequately. Hence, O lord of the universe, be pleased with one who is distressed and fatigued. This serpent is about to die. May our husband be given to us even as alms are given to the beggars.

Vyāsa said :

43-49. After this had been mentioned by them, the serpent with the timid eyes and exhausted body spoke slowly.

"Be pleased, O lord of Devas, your eight-fold lordship is very natural. It has nothing else that surpasses it.

How can I eulogise it ? You are the greatest being, the first among the great. You are of the nature of great being. You are the greatest, greater than the greatest. How can I eulogise you ? O lord, I am created by you with certain form in a certain species with certain traits in the characters and my

activities have conformed to them. If I had acted contrary to that, O lord of Devas, the punishment that had been meted out to me has been endured by me. It is not punishment but only a boon. Let there not be any other boon for me. O Acyuta, my vigour has been destroyed; my person has been dispelled, I have been suppressed. May life be spared unto me. Commend me, what shall I do?

The lord said :

50. O serpent, you must not stay any longer in the waters of Yamunā, go to the waters of the ocean along with your sons and attendants.

51. O serpent, when he sees the imprints of my feet on your head during your stay in the ocean, Garuḍa the enemy of serpents will not strike you.

52. After saying this lord Hari released the king of serpents. The serpent lord bowed down to Kṛṣṇa and went to the ocean.

53. Even as all the living beings stood watching, the serpent king abandoned his white eddy and went away along with servants, children and kinsmen accompanied by all his wives.

54-57. When the serpent had gone, the cowherds embraced Kṛṣṇa with a joy as though the dead man had come to life. They sprinkled Govinda on his head with tears of joy. The joyous cowherds and others eulogised Kṛṣṇa of unimpaired activities with surprised minds. On seeing the river flowing with auspicious water once again they were glad. Kṛṣṇa returned to the colony of cowherds with the cowherdresses singing songs about his charming activities and the cowherds eulogising him.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Dhenuka and Pralamba are slain

Vyāsa said .

1. Once again, Bala and Keśava started tending the cows together. Wandering along the forest they came to the beautiful grove of palmyre trees.

2. The Asura Dhenuka occupied that palmyra grove after assuming the form of a donkey. Human flesh and beef constituted his diet.

3. On seeing the beautiful palm grove richly endowed with plenty of fruits, the cowherds became desirous of plucking those fruits. They said thus:

The cowherds said :

4-5. "O Rāma, O Kṛṣṇa, this spot of land is always guarded by Dhenuka. Hence, these fruits of palm trees had been avoided by us. These fruits have a joyous fragrance. We wish to let them be struck down if it pleases you."

6. On hearing these words of the cowherd lads, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Kṛṣṇa knocked down the palm fruits to the ground.

7. On hearing the sound of the falling palmyra fruits the evil-minded king of Asuras, a son of Diti who had assumed the form of a donkey came there in great fury.

8-9. With the pair of his hind legs the powerful asura kicked him in the chest. He was immediately seized by means of those two legs. After catching hold of him thus Kṛṣṇa whirled him in the sky. When he lost his life thus, he hurled him on a big palm tree.

10. As he fell down from the top of the palm tree the dead donkey brought with him many fruits on the Earth like a gust of wind bringing down clouds.

11. Kṛṣṇa and Balabhadra playfully seized other asuras too in the form of donkeys—this asura's kinsmen came there (to attack them) and hurled them on to the top of the palm trees.

12. Within a short while, O sages, the Earth was adorned by the ripe palm fruits and the dead bodies of the asura donkeys. The whole area shone well.

13. O brahmīns, thereafter without any obstruction the cows comfortably grazed fresh shoots of grass in that palmgrove where they had not been grazing before.

14. When that asura donkey had been struck down along with his younger brothers, the palmgrove appeared splendid and fearless to the cowherds and cowherdesses.

15. Then those two sons of Vasudeva much delighted after killing asura Dhenuka, went to the Bhāṇḍira forest.

16. Jesting and shouting, singing and collecting the fruits of the trees those two noble boys shone splendidly like two bulls with tiny horns.

17-21. They grazed the cows in the forest. When they strayed far off (into the forests) they used to call them by their names. They kept a noose ready on their shoulders in order to bind the straying cows. They were adorned by garlands of sylvan flowers. They were clad in robes of golden colour or of the colour of collyrium. (i.e, yellow and blue). They resembled the weapon of lord Indra (i.e. the thunderbolt). They were like the black and white clouds. They moved about delighting each other by means of sports usually indulged in by the people. They were the lords of worlds. They were engrossed in human activities and they honoured human qualities. They roamed about in the forest with sports having human traits and attributes. They engaged themselves in various exercises through swings or through wrestling bouts or through hurling huge stones. Thus the powerful lords performed exercises.

22. An Asura named Pralamba, desirous of catching them, came there, even as both of them were sporting about thus. He was disguised as an ordinary cowherd.

23. That inhuman being, the excellent Dānava Pralamba, unhesitatingly entered the midst of those cowherds assuming a human form.

24. He considered ways and means to find about a vulnerable point in them very quickly. He desired to kill Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.

25-26. The boys were playing a children's game called Hariṇa Kṛiḍana (Deer play). In this game the boys jumped in pairs, Govinda with Śridāman, Bala with Pralamba (the asura in disguise) and the other cowherds with similar other cowherds. Thus they jumped together.

27-28. Kṛṣṇa defeated Śridāman; the son of Rohinī defeated Pralamba. Other cowherds were defeated by those belonging to Kṛṣṇa's side. (According to the rules) those who

were defeated carried victors upto the stem of Bhāṇḍīra tree and returned to the starting place).

29. The Dānava carried Saṁkarṣaṇa on his shoulders and walked quickly. He did not stop (at the stipulated place). He appeared like the cloud carrying the moon.

30. Unable to bear the weight of Rauhṇeya the excellent asura increased in size with his body like a cloud in the rainy season.

31-32. On seeing him with a huge body comparable to a burnt mountain, with garlands suspended round the neck as his ornament, with a crown over his head Balarāma was dismayed. The asura was terrible. His eyes were like the wheels of a cart. When he walked, the Earth appeared to shake. As he was thus carried off Balarāma said to Kṛṣṇa:

Balarāma said:

33-34. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, I am being carried off by a certain Asura with a terrible form like that of a mountain. See, he is disguised like a cowherd. O slayer of Madhu, what should be done now—please tell me. This wicked one is going at a rapid pace.

Vyāsa said:

35. The noble Kṛṣṇa who was aware of the magnitude of strength and prowess of Balarāma said to Rāma with a gentle smile splitting his lips apart:

Kṛṣṇa said:

36-39. Why is this human feeling resorted to so very specifically? O soul of all, you are the most worthy of being concealed among all concealable persons. O lord of the entire universe, O elder brother, remember the cause, the one Ātman and similarly that person who is in the universe turned into a vast sheet of water (i.e. supreme Being). You and I, O soul of the universe, are the only cause. For the sake of the universe, for the sake of Earth, we are stationed as separate ones. Let the Ātman be remembered O unmeasurable Ātman and kill the Asura. Resorting to human trait alone let what is conducive to the welfare of the kinsmen be carried out.

Vyāsa said:

40-42. O brahmins, reminded thus by Kṛṣṇa the great Ātman, the powerful Balarāma laughed and then began to injure Pralamba; with his eyes turned red due to anger he bit him on his head with his fist. Due to this blow his eyes came out. The brain was expelled. Vomiting blood the excellent Asura fell down on the ground dead.

43-44. On seeing Pralamba killed by Balarāma of wonderful deeds the cowherds were delighted. They eulogised him saying "well done, well done. Pralamba."

When Pralamba the daitya was killed Rāma was eulogised by the cowherds and Kṛṣṇa. They then came back to the cowherds' colony.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

Worship of Govardhana Mountain

Vyāsa said :

1. Even as Rāma and Keśava sported about thus, the rainy season passed off and the season of Autumn set in when lotuses blossomed forth.

2. The season in which the sky was devoid of impurities and the stars sparkled arrived at the cowherds' colony. Kṛṣṇa then saw the residents of Vraja engaged in preparations for Indra's festival.

3. On seeing the cowherds enthusiastic and desirous of celebrating the festival the highly intelligent Kṛṣṇa spoke to the elders out of curiosity.

Kṛṣṇa said :

4. "What is this festival of Indra wherein you are so very delighted?"

As he asked thus with great eagerness, Nandagopa said to him :

Nanda said:

5. Śatakratu, king of Devas, is the lord of clouds and waters. It is on being urged by him that the clouds shower juice in the form of rain.

6. Plants and foodgrains are produced by that rain. We and other embodied beings sustain ourselves by eating them. So we propitiate the Deities.

7. It is through the plants and foodgrains grown by him that these cows become nourished and delighted. They yield calves and produce milk in plenty.

8. The land without plants and grass and people afflicted by hunger are not seen in the places where rain-bearing clouds are seen.

9. The cloud squeezes the terrestrial water through the rays of the sun. Parjanya, lord of the cloud, showers it on the Earth for Existence and growth of the world.

10. Hence, during the rainy season, the joyous kings, we and other embodied beings, worship Indra the lord of Devas in the festival.

Vyāsa said :

11. On hearing the words of Nandagopa in regard to the worship of Indra, Kṛṣṇa spoke thus, in order to rouse the anger of the lord of Devas.

Kṛṣṇa said :

12. O dear father, we are not agriculturists. Nor do we sustain ourselves by trading activities. The cows are our deities since we are persons roaming about in the forests.

13. The four lores are Ānvikṣīki (Metaphysics), Trayī (The three Vedas), Vārtā (Profession for livelihood) and Daṇḍa Nīti (Civil and Military administration). Of these listen to (the divisions of) Vārtā from me.

14. O highly blessed one, the lore Vārtā consists of three main professions viz. Agriculture, trading activity and cattle breeding.

15. Cultivation is the occupation of agriculturists, trade that of businessmen. To us, cows provide the greatest of occupa-

tion. With these three different activities, the lore of Vārtā is practised by people.

16. Whatever be the calling one has adopted, it should be considered as his great deity. It should be honoured and worshipped. Only that calling renders him true help.

17. If after reaping the fruits of one profession a man honours another, O dear father, he does not derive any thing splendid both here and hereafter.

18. Let our borderlands and outskirts be worshipped ; our forest extends to them, the mountains mark the boundary of the forests ; and the mountain is our ultimate goal.

19. Let a sacrifice unto the mountain or a sacrifice unto the cows be performed. What have we to do with Mahendra? The cows and the mountains are our deities.

20. The brahmins are devoted to Yajñas with the chanting of Mantras; the farmers are devoted to Yajñas with their ploughshares. We who depend upon the mountains and forests shall practise Yajñas of the mountains and cows.

21. Hence, let the mountain Govardhana be honoured and worshipped with all due offerings after killing the sacrificial animal in accordance with injunctions.

22. Let the whole quantity (of milk and milk products) of the entire colony of the cowherds be taken. Do not be anxious and worried over anything. Let the brahmins and other persons who desire be fed thereby.

23. When it is worshipped, the homas are performed, the brahmins are fed. Let herds of cows, with the autumnal flowers adorning their crests go round the mountain that has been worshipped.

24. O cowherds, this is my proposal. If this is carried out with pleasure, the cows, mountain and I myself would have been propitiated.

Vyasa said :

25. O brahmins, on hearing these words of his, Nanda and other residents of the colony became delighted with their faces beaming with pleasure. They said "Well said, well said, my boy."

26. "O dear one, your suggestion is very splendid. All of us

shall carry out what has been proposed by you. Let the sacrifice unto the mountain be performed.

27. Accordingly the residents of colony performed Yajña unto the mountain. They offered oblations unto the mountain by curds, milk puddings, meat etc.

28-32. They fed hundreds and thousands of brahmins. The cows that were duly decorated and worshipped circumambulated the mountain. So also the bulls that bellowed like the rainbearing rumbling clouds.

O brahmins, saying "I am Indra" Balarāma stood on the top of the mountain and ate many kinds of food-stuffs brought by the leading cowherds. Then Kṛṣṇa climbed up to the top of the mountain and worshipped the mountain. The cowherds had secured boons after performing the festival of the mountain. Once again, they returned to their colony.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Caronation of Lord Kṛṣṇa

Vyāsa said :

1. When his festival was thus hindered, Indra became extremely infuriated. He spoke thus to the clouds named Saṁvartaka.

Indra said :

2-5. O clouds, even as I speak, listen to my words and immediately thereafter carry out my behest without any lingering thought or hesitation.

The wicked Nandagopa, puffed up with the pride of the strength he derives from the support of Kṛṣṇa, and assisted by other cowherds has now broken (the line of) my festivals.

Hence, at my instance, let their cows be harassed due to a heavy downpour. It is the cow that supports them to a large extent and contributes to their successful cattle breeding.

I too shall assist you, riding on my lofty elephant that resembles the peak of a great mountain. You will have the collaboration of winds as well.

Vyāsa said :

6. O brahmans, on being commended thus by the lord of Devas, those clouds let down a terrible gust of wind and downpour for the annihilation of cows.

7. Then, O brahmans, Earth, sky and quarters became one as it were, due to the great showers that filled them all.

8. The cows began to tremble as the winds blew and the showers fell. They gave up their lives and fell down with their heads and faces directed sideways.

9. O excellent brahmans, other cows stood over their calves covering them with their laps. Still other cows were deprived of their calves by the heavy downpour of water.

10. The distressed calves exhibited their wretched faces. The chill wind made their necks shiver. They seemed to tell Kṛṣṇa "O save us, O save us" by uttering few feeble words.

11. On seeing the entire cowherds' colony bewildered with the cows, cowherds and cowherdesses in utter confusion, Hari thought of the means of saving them. He said.

12-13. "This is wrought by lord Indra who is opposed to us due to the break in the sense of festivals in his honour. Hence this entire cowherds' colony should be protected by me now. I shall uproot this mountain with my prowess. I shall hold up its big rocky ridge over the cowherds' colony like a big umbrella."

Vyāsa said :

14. After thinking thus, Kṛṣṇa uprooted the Govardhana mountain and playfully held it aloft with a single hand.

15-16. The lord of the universe said to the cowherds after uprooting the mountain: "Enter ye all together. The shower has been prevented (here). Be seated in befitting places where there is no terrible gust of wind. Be fearless. After entering this place you should not be afraid of this that the mountain may fall.

17. On being advised thus by him the cowherds and the cowherdesses who had been afflicted by the heavy downpour, entered the sheltered spot along with their cattle wealth. They kept their utensils and belongings loaded in carts.

18-19. Kṛṣṇa held the mountain, aloft very steadily. He was then watched by the residents of the cowherds' colony with delight and wonder manifest in their eyes. He was observed by cowherds and cowherdesses with their eyes widely dilated due to joy. His conduct and exploit was eulogised by them. Thus Kṛṣṇa held the mountain aloft.

20. The great clouds prompted by Indra who was desirous of destroying the cowherds showered for seven nights in the cowherds' colony.

21. As the great mountain was thus held aloft and the herds of cows were saved, Indra's vow became falsified. So he withdrew the clouds.

22. When the sky was cleared of clouds, when Indra's device became futile and the lord of Devas became disappointed the delighted colony of cowherds was re-established in its own place.

23. Kṛṣṇa then released the great mountain Govardhana and replaced it in its spot, closely watched by the residents of Vraja with wonderment evident in their faces.

Vyāsa said :

24. When the mountain Govardhana was held up and the herds of cows were saved by Kṛṣṇa, the chastiser of Pāka (i.e. Indra) desired to visit Kṛṣṇa.

25. The lord of Devas, the conqueror of enemies rode on Airāvata his great elephant and paid a visit to Kṛṣṇa on the mountain Govardhana.

26. The lord of great prowess, the protector of the universe had assumed the form of a cowherd. Surrounded by cowherd lads he was grazing the cows there.

27. O brahmins, he saw Garuḍa the leading bird, who had created a shadow over the head of Hari from above by means of his wing and who remained invisible for others.

28. Dismounted from his elephant Airāvata, with his eyes enlarged due to pleasure Indra smilingly spoke to Viṣṇu.

Indra said :

29. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa of mighty great arms, listen, why I have come near you. This should not be misunderstood (and thought otherwise) by you.

30. You are indeed the great lord, the support of everything. You have incarnated on the surface of the Earth in order to remove the burden of the Earth.

31. Becoming inimical to you because of the break in the series of my festivals great clouds had been directed by me to destroy herds of cows. This great havoc was perpetrated by them.

32. The cows were saved by you by uprooting the great mountain. O heroic one, I am delighted by this extremely wonderful feat of yours.

33. O Kṛṣṇa, I think, the purpose of Devas has been served today. This excellent mountain has been held aloft with a single hand by you.

34. Moreover, O Kṛṣṇa, I have come near you, after being prompted by the cows saved by you. It is very much for your sake also, you are the cause of causes.

35. Urged by the words of cows, I shall crown you as Upendra (younger brother of Indra). You shall become Govinda, the lord of cows.

36. Then he brought the bell from his vehicle, Airāvata. Filling it with sacred waters he performed the rite of coronation.

37. When Kṛṣṇa's coronation was performed, the cows made the Earth wet with the milk flowing from their udders.

38. After crowning Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the instance of cows, the husband of Sacī, Devendra spoke to Kṛṣṇa again humbly and lovingly.

Indra said :

39-41. This has been done due to the utterance of cows. Similarly, listen to another matter also which I am going to say, O Highly blessed one, due to my desire to remove the burden of the Earth.

O sustainer of the Earth, my own part, a tiger among men

named Arjuna has incarnated on the Earth. He should always be protected by you.

He will be your associate and friend in the act of removing the burden of the Earth. O slayer of Madhu, he should be protected by you in the same manner as your soul.

The lord said :

42. I know Pārtha born into the Bharata family from a part of yours. As long as I continue to live on the surface of the Earth, I shall protect him.

43. O Indra, lord of Devas, O suppressor of foes, as long as I stay on the Earth, no one will conquer Arjuna, in battle.

44-45. O lord of Devas, when the asura of mighty prowess named Karīsa, other ones (named) Ariṣṭa, Keśin, Kuvalayā-piḍa and Naraka have been killed there shall be a great battle. O thousand-eyed one, know that in the course of that battle the burden of the Earth shall be removed.

46. Go, it does not behove you to be sad and anxious for the sake of your son. No enemy of Arjuna, howsoever great, will be too powerful in my presence.

47. For the sake of Arjuna I shall protect Yudhiṣṭhira and others also. When the Bhārata battle is concluded I shall hand over to Kunti all these persons led by Yudhiṣṭhira, (safe and) unwounded.

Vyasa said :

48. On being assured thus the king of Devas embraced Kṛṣṇa and mounted on his elephant Airāvata went back to heaven once again.

49. Accompanied by cowherds and cows Kṛṣṇa returned to the Vraja along the path sanctified by the loving glances of cowherd lasses.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Ariṣṭa is slain

Vyāsa said :

1. When Indra went away, the cowherds who had witnessed Kṛṣṇa of unimpaired activities holding aloft the mountain Govardhana said to him lovingly.

The Cowherds said :

2. O highly blessed one, from this great danger all of us and the cows have been protected by you through this activity of holding up the mountain.

3. (If this is only) a childish play, it is (really) unrivalled. O dear one, tending of the cows is a profession viewed at with abhorrence. But your activities are divine. How is this ? May it be explained to us.

4. Kāliya was suppressed in the water. Pralamba was struck down. (Now) this Govardhana has been lifted up. (Really) our minds are full of doubts.

5. Truth. It is the truth : O excessively valorous one, we swear by the feet of Hari, on observing your prowess we do not think that you are an ordinary person.

6. Whether you are a Deva or a Dānava, whether you are a Yakṣa or a Gandharva—You are our kinsman in our consideration. Obeisance be to you.

7. O Keśava, the love of the entire cowherds' colony including women and children is heaped on you. This feat is impossible to Devas too.

8. Your boyhood and this excessive valour, your birth amidst us, not very splendid in itself—all this, on being considered, O Kṛṣṇa of immeasurable Soul, produces suspicion in us.

Vyāsa said :

9. On being addressed thus by the cowherds, O excellent brahmins, Kṛṣṇa remained silent for a while with feigned anger (in spite of his) love and said.

Śrīkrṣṇa said :

10. O cowherds, if due to your relationship with me you are not ashamed and if I am worthy of being praised, of what avail is your pondering over other matters ?

11. If you have any love for me, if I am worthy of being praised by you, O my kinsmen, let that venerable offering befitting a kinsman be made unto me.

12. I am neither a Deva nor a Gandharva, neither a Yakṣa nor a Dānava. I have become your kinsman. Hence, nothing other than this should be thought of me.

Vyāsa said :

13. On hearing these words of Hari and realizing that he had feigned anger due to love, the highly blessed cowherds kept quiet. They gained in strength thereby.

14-15. Kṛṣṇa observed that the sky was clear and devoid of impurities; that the bright light of the autumnal moon spread everywhere; that the cluster of lilies was full-blown rendering the quarters fragrant and that the forest region was charming due to the humming swarms of bees. He was therefore inclined to indulge in amorous sports with the cowherd lasses.

16. The lotus-footed lord sang sweet songs in the company of Rāma, pleasing to the womenfolk. He feigned that he was observing holy rites there.

17. On hearing the sweet and charming sound of the songs, the cowherd lasses left off their abodes and hurriedly came to the place where Kṛṣṇa stood.

18. A certain cowherd lass followed his footsteps and sang slowly. Another one listened to it attentively and mentally remembered him.

19. A certain lass uttered "O Kṛṣṇa O Kṛṣṇa" and became bashful. A certain lass who was blindly in love with him went near him without shame.

20. A certain lass who was standing within her abode saw her father (father-in-law) standing outside. She closed her eyes and meditated on Govinda completely identifying herself with him.

21. Surrounded by the cowherd lasses and eager to begin the charming dance of Rāsa, Govinda approved of the night, charming with the autumnal moon.

22. The cowherdesses were fully engrossed in the activities of Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa went to a different spot those lasses walked about in the forests of Vṛndāvana in groups.

23. Eager to see Kṛṣṇa, the cowherdesses wandered here and there, O brahmins, on seeing the footprint of Kṛṣṇa during that night.

24. Thus in the course of different types of activities and sports of Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd lasses became agitated simultaneously and roamed about in the beautiful forest of Vṛndāvana.

25. From there the cowherd lasses losing their hopes of seeing Kṛṣṇa, came back to the banks of Yamunā and sang about his conduct.

26. Thereupon, the cowherdesses saw Kṛṣṇa of unimpaired activities, the saviour of the three worlds coming to them with his face beaming like a full-blown lotus.

27. A certain lass became extremely delighted on seeing Kṛṣṇa coming. With wide open eyes she shouted "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa".

28. A certain lass looked at Hari with knit eyebrows over her broad forehead. She seemed to squeeze honey from his lotus face through her bee-like eyes.

29. A certain lass closed her eyes after seeing Govinda. Meditating on his own form she appeared to be in Yogic slumber.

30. Then Kṛṣṇa humoured, delighted and consoled some ladies with pleasing conversations, some by glances with knit eyebrows and some by gently touching them with hands.

31. Hari of elegant conduct sported about and diverted himself with those cowherd lasses who were delighted in their minds by means of Rāsa dances enthusiastically pursued.

Extra Verses : (According to another reading)

[Women of the cowherds' colony assembled together for the group dance of Rāsa. They tried to be by his side. They never stayed steadily in any single spot. Hari caught each of the cowherd lasses by her hand from the midst of group

assembled for the Rāsa and made each close her eyes by gently stroking her with his hand.]

32. Then began to function a series of music with songs of autumn along with the sounds of the moving bangles.

33. Kṛṣṇa sang about the autumnal moon, the moonlight and the lily pond, but the womenfolk of the cowherds uttered the name of Kṛṣṇa alone again and again.

34. One (of those ladies) after dancing round and round became fatigued. The heat warmed up her moving bangles. That cowherd lass put her creeper-like arms on his shoulders.

35. A certain cowherd lass whose arms moved about gracefully and who was an expert in singing, eulogising found pretexts, embraced and kissed him emotionally.

36. Hari's arms came into contact with the cheeks of cowherd lasses and acted like the clouds. The downpour from these clouds was the series of sweat drops and the plants issuing therefrom were the hairs standing on end.

37. When Kṛṣṇa sang the usual songs of Rāsa in highly shrill notes, the ladies shouted "Well done, Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa" with notes twice as shrill.

38. When he went anywhere they followed him; when he moved in a circle they stood in front of him. The womenfolk of the cowherds' colony resorted to Hari both directly and inversely.

39. At that time Kṛṣṇa sported himself together with the cowherd lasses. Even when he was away from them for a moment they felt that period of time equal to a crore of years.

40. Though prevented by their fathers, husbands and brothers the cowherdesses who were fond of sexual intercourse delighted Kṛṣṇa during the nights.

41. The slayer of Madhu, whose soul is immeasurable who had destroyed his enemies and who was in the prime of youth honoured them and sported together with them.

42. He was the lord in the form of Ātman. He permeated all living beings including them and their husbands. He stood pervading everything.

43. Just as Ether, Earth, fire, water, wind and Ātman are present in all living beings so also he stood pervading everything.

Vyāsa said :

44. Once in the evening when Kṛṣṇa was engrossed in Rāsa the asura Ariṣṭa came there, arrogantly terrifying the people of the cowherd colony.

45-50. The asura had assumed the form of a bull, with sharp horns. His eyes sparkled like the sun. His form was like that of a rain-bearing cloud. He was kicking and tearing up the surface of the Earth with his hoofs. With lips, often rubbing and striking them, in his fury he raised his tail. The muscles of his shoulders were hard and tough. The hump on his back was large and raised up. He could never be surpassed in majestic magnitude. Dung and urine stuck to his hind quarters. He was repulsive to the cows of that colony. The loose dewlap hang down from his neck. There were markings of his butting against trees in front of him. He appeared as though he would cause abortion among the cows. He hit and killed everything on his way with great force. He always roamed through the forest (?). His eyes were terrifying. On seeing him the cowherds and the cowherdesses were excessively frightened. They shouted "Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa." Thereupon Kṛṣṇa roared like a lion and clapped hands to make a loud report.

51-56. On hearing that sound the bull ran towards Kṛṣṇa. With the tips of his horns pointed ahead and his eyes fixed to the belly of Kṛṣṇa, the evil-minded Daitya in the form of a bull rushed along. On seeing the demoniac bull of great strength rushing towards him Kṛṣṇa did not move from his seat. Smilingly and playfully he stood there with contempt towards the asura. But when he approached him, Kṛṣṇa seized him like a crocodile seizing his prey. Catching hold of his horns he made him incapable of moving. Then he hit his belly with his knee. After catching hold of him by his horns he dispelled his arrogance and strength. He seized and twisted the neck of Ariṣṭa in the manner as one does with a wet cloth (in order to squeeze out water). Thereafter Kṛṣṇa uprooted one of his horns and struck him with the same.

Thereat, the great asura vomited blood through his mouth and died. When the asura was killed the cowherds eulogised

Kṛṣṇa like Devas who praised the thousand-eyed Indra formerly when Vṛtra was killed.¹

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

Keśin is slain

Vyāsa said :

1-4. When Ariṣṭa was killed thus, when Dhenuka had been struck down, when Pralamba had been slain, when the mountain Govardhana was held up, when the serpent Kāliya had been suppressed, when the two lofty trees had been broken, when Pūtanā was killed and when the cart had been overturned, Nārada narrated everything to Kamsa in the manner it had happened. He narrated the exchange of children between Yaśodā and Devakī and all other details in full. On hearing these details from Nārada of divine vision, the wicked Kamsa became furious with Vasudeva.

5. Due to his excessive wrath he taunted everyone in the assembly of Yādavas. He rebuked Yādavas and thought of what should be done next.

6. “Bala and Kṛṣṇa are small boys (now). Before they grow stronger they should be killed by me. Once they attain youth they cannot be checked from their evil activities.

7. Here I have Cāṇūra of great prowess and Muṣṭika of great strength. I shall get those two haughty boys killed through these two in a wrestling bout.

8. Under the pretext of a great sacrifice in the name of Dhanurmaha (festival of bows) I shall fetch them here from the cowherds’ colony. I shall do those things strenuously that will reduce their power and destroy them.

Vyāsa said :

9. After thinking like this, the wicked Kamsa decided to

1. Refers to the Rgvedic legend (Rv 1.80) of Vṛtra and Indra. Vṛtra was more powerful than Indra but the latter killed him deceitfully.

kill Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Accordingly he said to the Valorous Akrūra.

Kamsa said :

10. O lord of charitable gifts, may the following task be carried out at my instance for my pleasure. Drive in a chariot from here and go to the cowherds' colony of Nanda.

11. There, two sons of Vasudeva are born from the parts of Viṣṇu. They are born for my destruction. The wicked ones are flourishing day by day.

12. The great sacrifice the festival of bows will take place on the fourteenth day of the lunar fortnight. They should be brought by you there for taking part in the wrestling bout.

13. My wrestlers Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika are experts in duels. Let the people see duel between the two combatants.

14. Then there is the elephant Kuvalayāpīda. Prompted by its mahout the elephant will kill the wicked boys the sons of Vasudeva.

15. After killing them I shall kill the wicked Vasudeva and Nanda too. I shall kill my father Ugrasena as well.

16. Thereafter, I shall seize the cattle-wealth of the cowherds. I shall confiscate the wealth of all those wicked ones who are desirous of killing me.

17. O lord of charitable gifts, excepting you all these Yādavas are wicked in my opinion. I shall endeavour to kill them also one by one.

18. Thereafter, I shall make this kingdom devoid of Yādavas. As it is rid of all thorns I shall rule it through you. Hence, O heroic one, go for my love.

19. You should speak to them in such a manner as to make the cowherds bring as present unto me ghee and curds the products of buffalo's milk.

Vyāsa said :

20-21. O brahmins, thus commanded, Akrūra the great devotee of the lord became delighted because he could see Kṛṣṇa the next day. Saying 'So be it' he (Akrūra) who was fond of seeing Kṛṣṇa got into a chariot and hurried out of the city of Mathurā.

Vyāsa said :

22. Keśin who too was urged by Kamsa as his powerful messenger came to Vṛndāvana desirous of killing Kṛṣṇa.

23. He came to the colony of cowherds. With his hoofs he dug up pits on the ground. When he waved his manes he shook and scattered the clouds. He traversed through the aerial path of the moon and the sun.

24. Frightened by the neighing sound of the asura in the form of a horse the cowherds and cowherdesses sought refuge in Kṛṣṇa.

25. On hearing their words—"Save us, O save us", Kṛṣṇa spoke in a loud tone like the rumbling sound of the rain-bearing cloud.

Kṛṣṇa said :

26. O cowherds, do not be afraid. You belong to the clan of cowherds, why are you so afraid of Keśin ? Why are you losing courage and prowess befitting the heroes ?

27. This wicked horse has only very little strength. He is making a proud display of the loud neighing sound. He is only an ordinary messenger in the army of asuras. He is vaunting and galloping—Of what avail is this ?

28. O wicked one, come, come. I am Kṛṣṇa. Just as the Pināka-bearing lord knocked off the teeth of Pūṣan, so also I shall knock off the teeth from your mouth.

Vyāsa said :

29. After saying thus, Kṛṣṇa stood face to face with Keśin. The asura too rushed at him with a wide open mouth.

30. Then Kṛṣṇa enlarged his arm and thrust it into the mouth of the wicked horse, Keśin.

31. His teeth were knocked off by the arm of Kṛṣṇa that was thrust into the mouth of Keśin. They looked like the bits of white clouds.

32. O brahmins, Kṛṣṇa's arm that went into the body of Keśin became the cause of his destruction like the ailment that is neglected in the early stages by trustworthy persons (attendants, relatives or oneself).

33. His lips were torn off. The corners of the mouth were made gapingly wide. He vomited frothful blood. The tendons were loosened and untied.

34. Stretching his legs he fell on the ground and discharged dung and urine in plenty. His body was drenched in sweat. He became exhausted and ultimately ceased to struggle for life.

35. With his mouth torn apart by the arm of Kṛṣṇa, that extremely terrible Asura fell down like a tree that is severed into two by the lightning stroke.

36. The two halves of the dead horse Keśin, each having two legs, one ear, one eye, one nostril and a moiety of the back and the tail shone remarkably.

37. After killing Keśin, Kṛṣṇa was surrounded by the joyous cowherds. His body had no sign of strain. Hale and hearty he stood there laughing.

38. When Keśin was killed, the cowherds and the cowherdesses were surprised. They eulogised the lotus-eyed lord in charming words indicative of their love.

39. The sage Nārada hurriedly came there seated on a cloud. On seeing Keśin killed his mind was extremely delighted.

Nārada said :

40. Well done. Well done, O lord of the universe, O Acyuta ! Keśin, the tormentor of heaven-dwellers, has been killed by you playfully.

41. (?) You were eager to bring about his death in this battle between a man and a horse. Killed by you here that wicked asura has gone to heaven.

42. O slayer of Madhu, good rites have been performed by you in this incarnation that caused surprise in me (?) But by virtue of this action, my mind is delighted and satisfied.

43. O Kṛṣṇa, Devas and Indra had been afraid of this horse that used to shake off his manes, neigh (loudly) and see the clouds high up in the sky.

44. O Kṛṣṇa, since this wicked Keśin was killed by you, you will become worthy of being sung about in the world by the name of Keśava.

45. Hail to you. I shall go now. O slayer of Keśin, day

after tomorrow I shall meet you once again in the course of battle with Karīsa.

46. When Karīsa, the son of Ugrasena, is struck down along with his followers, O supporter of the Earth, you will remove the burden of the Earth.

47. O Kṛṣṇa, I shall be there witnessing matches, old duels as told by you.

48. I shall now go, O Kṛṣṇa, great task of Devas has been accomplished by you. I have been honoured by you. Hail to you. I shall go now.

Vyāsa said :

49. When Nārada had gone, Kṛṣṇa who was not dismayed entered the cowherd's colony as the sole receptacle of beverage to be drunk by the eyes of the cowherd lasses.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Akrūra comes to the Cowherds' colony

Vyāsa said :

1. Akrūra who was eager to see Kṛṣṇa set off in a chariot that went very fast to the cowherds' colony of Nanda.

2. Akrūra thought thus :—There is no one more blessed than I am because I shall be seeing the face of the discus-bearing lord who has incarnated with a part of his.

3. Today my birth is fruitful. My night has turned into a bright morning, since I shall be seeing the face of Viṣṇu which has the eyes resembling the petals of a full blown lotus.

4. I shall be seeing that face of Viṣṇu which has lotus-like eyes and which dispels the sin of men even if it is fancied.

5. I shall be seeing the face of the lord from which the Vedas and Vedāṅgas have come up and which is the greatest abode of Devas.

6. I shall be seeing that lord of the universe who is worshipped as the best of Puruṣas to whom the offering is made in the sacrifice and who is the support of every one.

7. I shall be seeing that Keśava who has neither a beginning nor an end and by worshipping whom with a hundred sacrifices, Indra attained the overlordship of immortal beings.

8. I shall see that lord of the universe whose form neither Brahmā nor Indra nor Rudra nor Aśvins nor Vasus nor Ādityas nor Maruts know.

9-10. He will speak to me, he who is the soul of all, who is omnipresent, who is all, who is stationed in all living beings, who is unchanging, who is all-pervading, who is Existence, alone, who is himself the lord, who performed Yogic feat and who stationed himself in the forms of Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-lion, etc.

11. The lord of the Universe has attained a human form and is stationed in the cowherds' colony for certain (specific) tasks. He is the unchanging lord who can take up any form as he wishes.

12. That infinite lord who holds the Earth stationed on the top of the peak and who has incarnated himself for removing the burden of the Earth will call me—‘O Akrūra’.

13. Obeisance, obeisance to the lord whose Māyā the universe is incompetent to dispel, the Māyā that consists of kinship with father, kinsman, friend, brother, mother and other kindred relations.

14. Obeisance to that soul of learning by keeping whom in the heart, the mortal beings surmount ignorance, the Yogic illusion.

15. I bow unto him who is called Yajñapuruṣa by the sacrificial priests, who is called Vāsudeva by devotees and who is called Viṣṇu by those who are experts in Śāstras.

16. He is the receptacle of universe in whom Existent-non-existent is retained. May he of the Sattva Guna be gentle to me ?

17. Continuously do I seek refuge in Hari the most excellent of Puruṣas; On remembering him one becomes the recipient of all auspicious things.

Vyāsa said :

18. Thinking about Viṣṇu thus, humbly and devoutly in his mind, Akrūra reached the cowherds' colony when there was still some sunlight (a little before sunset).

19-22. There he saw Kṛṣṇa engaged in milking the cows. He was in the midst of calves. His lustre was like the lustre of petals of the blue lotus. His eyes resembled the petals of a full blown lotus. His chest was marked with the scar Śrīvatsa. His arms were long hanging down (on either side). His chest was broad and raised up. The nose protruded (prominently). He possessed a lotus-like face that supported a graceful smile. His nails were red and raised. He had fixed his legs steadily on the ground. He wore a pair of yellow garments. He was bedecked in sylvan (flowers) and peacock feathers. His hands resembled creepers and were of dark blue colour. He embellished himself with white lotuses.

23. O brahmins, near him he saw Balabhadra, a scion of the family of Yadus. He was white in complexion like the swan, moon and Kunda flower. He was clad in blue robes.

24. He was tall with prominent arms; his face was like a full-blown lotus. He appeared like another Kailāsa mountain surrounded by layers of clouds.

25. On seeing them, O brahmins, that highly intelligent Akrūra experienced horripilation all over the body. His face beamed like a blowing lotus flower.

26. Akrūra then thought within himself thus :—Here is the greatest of splendours. Here is the greatest of regions. Vasudeva is stationed here in two forms.

27. May both of my eyes simultaneously attain fruitfulness when the creator of the universe in the form of Kṛṣṇa is seen. Will this limb (of mine) on coming into contact with his body due to the grace of the lord be on the path of fruition ?

28. Touching my lotus-like hand today itself the lord of infinite form will make it glorious. Excellent achievement is attained by men whose sins are entirely dispelled by a touch of his fingers.

29. With his large hands be will embrace me, the greatest friend, the kinsman who has no other deity. Then itself my soul will be sanctified. The bondage of the nature of Karman breathes thereby (?)

30. After getting into contact with his limbs when I bow down with palms joined in reverence, he of big ears (of great

renown) will say to me 'Akrūra'. At that time alone do we feel that we are alive. Fie upon the birth of that person who is not at all respected by the great one.

31. To him there is no one who is the most beloved, the greatest of friends. He has no one who cannot be a friend or who has to be hated or who has to be neglected. Still the lord resorts to his devotees in the same manner as the divine trees which when sought after bestow riches.

32-33. (Defective) Devas led by Aśvins, Rudras, Indras and Vasus grant boon when they are delighted. The spaces between the eyes (?) of the womenfolk of asuras were removed by him as he struck the army of the lord of asuras. By pouring water therein (i.e. into the hands of the lord) Bali attained charming pleasures even when staying on the Earth. Similarly, Indra, the lord of immortal beings, attained the lordship of Devas for the duration of a Manvantara.

34. Still it is possible he may not honour me because although I have no defects, I am considered blameworthy for I have been taken over by Karīsa. Fie upon that person who is excluded by good men.

35-36. Is there anything which is not known to this lord who is of the nature of perfect knowledge, who is a mass of Sattva elements, who has no defects, who is always unmanifest and who is stationed in the heart of all persons in this world. Hence, I shall go unto the lord of the Universe with a devoutly humble body. He is the lord of lords. He is the partial¹ incarnation (*amśāvatāra*) without beginning, middle or end, of Puruṣottama the unborn lord Viṣṇu.

1. But the devotees consider Kṛṣṇa Pūrṇa avatāra (complete incarnation) and not the partial incarnation (*amśāvatāra*).

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Return of Akrūra

Vyāsa said :

1. Thinking thus on his way and approaching Kṛṣṇa, that scion of the family of Yādavas bowed his head to the feet of Hari saying - 'I am Akrūra'.

2. The lord too stroked him with his hand marked by the lines of flag, thunderbolt and lotus. He dragged him with love towards himself and closely embraced him.

3. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were duly greeted and honoured by him. The two who were delighted took him with them and entered their chamber.

4-6. After being greeted by them and having taken his meals Akrūra precisely mentioned everything to them; how Vasudeva was rebuked by Kāṁsa; how Devakī was insulted by that wicked Kāṁsa, how that wicked Kāṁsa behaved towards Ugrasena and why he had been sent by Kāṁsa.

7. On hearing everything in detail the lord, the slayer of Keśin said—"O lord of charitable gifts, all this has been understood by me.

8. O highly blessed one, I shall undertake what is the most proper expedient in this matter. It should not be considered otherwise. Know that Kāṁsa is already killed by me.

9. Rāma and I shall go to Mathurā along with you, tomorrow. The elderly cowherds will accompany us taking many presents with them.

10. O heroic one, let this night be passed off. It does not behove you to worry over anything. Within three nights I shall kill Kāṁsa alongwith his followers."

Vyāsa said :

11. After directing cowherds in regard to Akrūra, Keśava and Balabhadra went to the abode of Nandagopa and slept there.

12. When the day dawned with pure atmosphere, the extremely powerful Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa began their preparations to go to Mathurā in the company of Akrūra.

13. On seeing this, the cowherd folk were full of tears. The bangles in their hands got loose. They heaved sighs in their misery and spoke to one another thus:

14. "After reaching Mathurā how will Kṛṣṇa return to the cowherds' colony? He will imbibe honey of the sweet tale of the city-lasses by his ears.

15. After getting involved in the net of elegant speech of the city lasses how will his mind revert to the cowherd boys and cowherd lasses of vulgar nature?

16. The ruthless wicked Fate has struck at the cowherd damsels since it removes Kṛṣṇa who is the essence of our colony.

17. The following attributes of the city lasses are extraordinary--their words are uttered with smiles couched in emotional fervour; their movement is graceful and elegant; their side-glances are very attractive.

18. If our rural and vulgar lord is held up by the fetters of their seductive charms, by what expedient will he return to us.

19. This Keśava goes to Mathurā driving in a chariot. He has been duped by Akrūra who is really Krūra (cruel) and who is one who has dashed our hopes.

20. Does not this wicked Akrūra know us earnestly in love with him? Wherefore does he take our lord elsewhere, lord who provides us with imperishable delight?

21. This excessively merciless Kṛṣṇa is going away accompanied by Rāma and seated in a chariot. May steps be taken hurriedly to prevent him.

22. What do you say? Is it this—"It is not proper on our part to say anything in front of our elders"? But what will the elders do to us who already are burnt by the fire of separation?

23. All these cowherds, led by Nandagopa, are ready to accompany him. No one attempts to make Govinda return.

24. In regard to the womenfolk residing in Mathurā the night has turned into a bright morning. The lotus-like face of Acyuta can now be enjoyed by their eyes which resemble the bees.

25. All those persons are blessed who will unobstructedly view Kṛṣṇa on the way, as he starts from here and will experience the sense of horripilation.

26. It will be a festive occasion to the eyes of the residents of Mathurā, after seeing the face of Kṛṣṇa.

27. What auspicious dream was seen by those fortunate ladies? Without any impediment they will see the lord with their wide attractive eyes.

28-30. Alas, after showing them a great treasure the eyes of the cowherd lasses have been plucked by the merciless Fate. Love for us (in the heart) of Kṛṣṇa who is going to Mathurā has become feeble. Even the bracelets in our hands have become loose suddenly. Akrūra with a cruel heart is hurriedly driving the horses. Is there a man who will not have any sympathy for the women who are distressed thus?

31. May this column of dust raised up by the wheels of Kṛṣṇa's chariot be seen. Now even that dust is not seen—the dust by which Kṛṣṇa has been taken away from us."

32. So lamented the cowherd lasses. Even as they were watching him with great sincerity and affection, Keśava left that land of cowherds' colony (far behind) in the company of Rāma.

33. Travelling thus in a chariot fitted with quick horses, Rāma, Akrūra, and Śrīkṛṣṇa reached the banks of Yamunā at midday.

34. Then Akrūra said to Kṛṣṇa:—"Both of you be waiting here, until I complete rites in the waters of Yamunā."

35. O brahmins, after they had consented saying "So be it", Akrūra of great lustre entered the waters of Yamunā, had his bath and then performed Ācamana.

35-45. There in the waters of Yamunā he saw Balarāma with a thousand hoods. His physical form was as pure and white as the Kunda flower. His eyes were large resembling the petals of a full blown lotus. He was surrounded by a large number of serpents, sons of Vāsuki.¹ He was being eulogised by them. He was bedecked in garlands of fragrant sylvan flowers. He was clad in blue garments. He had handsome features and

1. King of Nāgas with a thousand heads; according to Puranic legend he was incarnate in Balarāma.

beautiful ornaments. His ear-rings were fine. He was inebriate and was stationed on the bottom bed of the river water. In his lap he saw Kṛṣṇa. He was dark in complexion like the cloud. His large eyes were copper-coloured. He had graceful limbs and four arms. The discus and other weapons were like ornaments unto him. He wore two yellow clothes. He was bedecked in garlands with flowers of onion colour. He was like a cloud rendered wonderful by Indra's bow (i.e. rain-bow) and many streaks of lightning. The Śrivatsa scar marked his chest. He shone with beautiful armlets and coronet. He was unafflicted and bedecked in lotus. He was being meditated upon by Sanandana¹ and other sages who had achieved yogic power, who were devoid of sins and who were seated there with their eyes fixed to the tips of their noses on recognizing Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Akrūra was struck with wonder. He thought within himself—"How did they come here so quickly?" As he was about to say something, Kṛṣṇa stunned his faculty of speech. Thereafter, he came out of the water and went near the chariot. There too he saw both of them seated in the chariot. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa were there as before, in human form. Coming back and diving under the water once again he saw them in the same manner as before. They were being eulogised by Gandharvas, sages, Siddhas and Nāgas.

47. Thereupon, he understood the real nature of the lord as existence. The lord of charitable gifts then eulogised lord Acyuta full of all perfect knowledge.

Akrūra said

48. Obeisance, obeisance to the great Ātman of the form of Cit (Consciousness) alone; to the all-pervading lord of unimaginable greatness, to one of single form, to one of many forms.

49. O unimaginable one, obeisance to you, of the form of sound; obeisance to you who have become identical with the sacrificial offering of ghee, obeisance to the lord of the form of perfect knowledge, O lord, greater than Prakṛti.

1. *Sanandana* : belonged to the Sanakādi group and was the mental son of Brahmā, having taken incarnation long before Brahmā started his work of creation.

50. Though one, you are stationed in five different forms viz—the Ātman of Elements, the Ātman of sense-organs, the Ātman of Pradhāna; the Ātman (i.e. individual soul) and the supreme soul.

51. Be pleased, O lord identical with all virtuous rites, O Maheśvara, O imperishable being amongst the perishable ones. You are praised with the conception of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

52. O deity whose form, nature, purpose and aim cannot be adequately expressed; O deity whose name cannot be specifically mentioned, I bow to you, the greatest lord.

53. O lord, you are the unborn one. You are the greatest eternal Brahman without aberrations wherein there are no imposed ideas of name, caste and the like.

54. Since, without some sort of conception, no matter can be comprehended, you are being worshipped under the names: Kṛṣṇa, Acyuta, Ananta and Viṣṇu.

55. O unborn lord, O soul of all, by means of these different conceptions, you are identical with Devas and the Universe. O soul of the universe, you are devoid of differences and aberrations. In every object of the world there is nothing which is different from you.

56-58. You are Brahmā, Paśupati, Aryamā, Vidhātā, Dhātā, lord of Devas, wind-god, fire-god, lord of waters, lord of wealth and annihilator. Although you are the one and only Being, you are differentiated through different Śaktis and rule over the whole universe. In the form of a ray (?) you create and destroy the universe. O unborn lord, this universe is full of your attributes. Your greatest form is imperishable; it is expressed by the word ‘sat’. I bow into that deity of perfect knowledge, the existent and the non-existent. Om obeisance to Vāsudeva; obeisance to Saṅkarṣaṇa; obeisance to Pradyumna; obeisance to Anuruddha”.

Vyāsa said :

59. After eulogising Kṛṣṇa thus under the water that scion of the family of Yādavas worshipped the lord of all by means of incense and flowers mentally conceived.

60. After eschewing other objects, fixing the mind therein

in the deity who had become identical with the Brahman and staying there for a long time he returned from Samādhi.

61. Considering himself contented and blessed, O excellent brahmins, he came out of the waters of Yumunā and approached the chariot once again.

62. There he saw Rāma and Kṛṣṇa seated as before. Kṛṣṇa spoke thus to Akrūra who was evidently surprised as was indicated by his eyes.

Srikṛṣṇa said :

63. O Akrūra, what wonderful thing was seen by you within the waters of Yamunā ? Since your eyes are wide open due to surprise (I ask you thus).

Akrūra said :

64. O Acyuta, here itself standing in front of me in its embodied form I see the same miracle as was seen by me inside the water.

65. This universe itself is a great wonderful form of yours, O noble Kṛṣṇa. I had come into contact with you who are interested in miracles.

66. But, of what use is this ? O slayer of Madhu, we shall go to Mathurā. I am afraid of Kāṁsa. Fie upon one's life if one has to sustain oneself by the doles offered by others.

Vyāsa said :

67. After saying this, the scion of the family of Yadu drove those horses as swift as the wind. In the evening Akrūra reached the city of Mathurā. Observing the city of Mathurā and looking at Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma he spoke this.

Akrūra said :

68. You two of great vigour and prowess will go on foot. I shall alone go in with my chariot. You two should not go to the house of Vasudeva. It is for your sake that the old man is expelled by Kāṁsa.

Vyāsa said :

69. After saying this Akrūra entered Mathurā. Balarāma

and Kṛṣṇa too entered the city and reached the Royal Highway.

70. They were glanced at with delighted eyes by the citizens men and women. The two heroic boys went ahead sportingly like two elephant cubs.

71. As they wandered here and there they saw a washerman and dyer. They requested him for beautiful clothes of good colour.

72. He was the special washerman of Kāṁsa. He was very arrogant because he had the special favour of Kāṁsa. He hurled many abuses against Balarāma and Keśava.

73. With a blow of his palm in anger, Kṛṣṇa struck down the head of that wicked washerman and let it fall on the ground.

74. After killing him and taking clothes from his house Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, clad themselves in yellow and blue robes, joyously and went to the gardener's abode.

75. Seeing them with a wide gaping eyes, the gardener was struck with wonder and he thought mentally—"In which family are these two born ?"

76. On seeing those two charming boys clad in yellow and blue robes he resolved that they were two Devas who had come to the Earth.

77. He was requested for flowers by those two boys whose faces beamed like full-blown lotuses. Thereupon, he supported himself on his hands and touched the ground with his head.

78. That gardener who maintained himself by selling garlands spoke to them—"O my lords, you two have come to my house with delighted gentle faces. I am blessed. I shall worship you."

79. Then with his face beaming with delight he gave them whatever flowers they desired. He tempted them by offering them more.

80. The excellent gardener bowed to them again and again and gave them beautiful fragrant and pure flowers.

81-85. Kṛṣṇa was delighted and granted a boon to the gardener—"O gentle one, Śrī (Goddess of glory) who is supported by me will never forsake you. O gentle one, you will never have loss of strength or of wealth. Your progeny, sons

and grandsons, will continue (to be born as long as the earth and sun last. After enjoying extensive pleasures, you will in the end attain my bliss due to my grace. You will then attain divine world. O gentle one, at all times your mind will dwell in virtue. The children born as your progeny will have longevity. Among your progeny there will never be calamities and faults. O highly blessed one, your family will last as long as the sun and moon last.

86. After saying this, O excellent sages, Kṛṣṇa came out of that house in the company of Balarāma. He was duly worshipped by the gardener.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

Kaṁsa is slain

Vyāsa said :

1. Thereafter, Kṛṣṇa saw a hump-backed lady in the prime of her youth, coming along the royal high-way with the vessel of unguent in her hand.

2. Kṛṣṇa gracefully said to her :—"O lady with the eyes like the blue lotus, to whom is this unguent being taken by you ? Speak the truth.

3. She was addressed by him with love. She too had the feelings of love towards Kṛṣṇa. That hump-backed lady looked at him attentively and said gracefully.

The hump-backed lady said :

4. O loving one, why don't you know me ? I have been employed by Kaṁsa in the task of preparing unguents. I am well known as Naikavakrā.

5. The unguent ground and pasted by anyone else is not conducive to the delight of Kaṁsa. I am highly favoured by him and I am given much wealth too.

Srikṛṣṇa said :

6. May this fragrant unguent beautiful and befitting kings, be given to us at least as much as will suffice our bodies.

Vyāsa said :

7. On hearing that, she spoke to Kṛṣṇa with respect and eagerness "May it be taken." She gave them unguent enough for their bodies.

8. Embellished and smeared with the unguents, the two leading mainly ones shone like a white and a black cloud adorned with the rain-bow.

9. Thereafter, Kṛṣṇa who was well conversant with the mode of suggestive talks and hints, talked to her lovingly, caught hold of her chin with two of his fingers and raised it up.

10. Kṛṣṇa then pulled both of her legs and made her straight. With the body straightened she became the most excellent one among women.

11. In a charming and graceful manner she caught hold of Kṛṣṇa by his robes and said in lingering words couched in love

—'Come to my house'.

12. "I will come to your house", said Kṛṣṇa to her and bade her farewell. Looking at Rāma's face he laughed aloud.

13. With their bodies embellished and smeared with unguents, clad in blue and yellow garments and with their handsome features enhanced by garlands of flowers of various colours—the two went towards the chamber of bows.

14-15. After occupying (the chamber) they asked the guards there, about the most excellent bow. When that was mentioned by the guards Kṛṣṇa immediately took up that bow and bent it. As he was stringing it, the bow broke and made a loud report. The whole of Mathurā was filled with that sound.

16. When the bow was broken they were asked by the guards to explain. They hit the army of the guards and came out of the chamber.

17. After getting information of the return of Akrūra, and after hearing that a bow was broken, Kāṁsa said to Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika.

Kāṁsa said :

18. "The two cowherd boys have come. They are the destroyers of my life. Just in my presence they should be killed by you in a wrestling bout."

19. If they are destroyed in a mutual combat by you, I will be satisfied and will give you all desired benefits. This cannot be otherwise, O strong ones.

20. Whether by just or unjust means, these enemies of mine should be killed by you. By their death the kingdom will be common to you both."

Vyāsa said :

21-23. After commanding the wrestlers thus, he called the mahout and told him loudly—"The intoxicated elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa should be placed by you at the entrance to the assembly. With that those two cowherd lads who will be coming to the stage door for the purpose of wrestling, should be killed." After commanding him also thus and seeing that all the couches and cushioned seats had been brought, Kamsa whose death was imminent awaited sunrise.

24. Then all the citizens occupied the common couches and seats and the kings occupied the royal couches and sofas along with their attendants.

25. The wrestlers, umpires and judges were kept in the middle of the stage by Kamsa, very near him. Kamsa himself occupied a raised sofa.

26. Separate couches, seats and platforms were assigned to the residents of the royal harem, the chief courtesans and the ordinary ladies of the city.

27. Nandagopa and other cowherds were seated in their (specially reserved) couches. Akrūra and Vasudeva occupied extremities of the platform.

28. In the middle of the common ladies of the city was seated Devakī who was very fond of her son. Though it be the time of death, I shall see the face of my son.

29-31. The instruments of music were played; Cāṇūra jumped and bounced frantically, the common people shouted "Ha Ha", Muṣṭika slapped and clapped his arms. After killing Kuvalayāpiḍa who was driven against them by the Elephant driver, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa entered the stage. Proudly and playfully they looked on, like two lions in the midst of deer. Their limbs had been smeared with the ichor and the blood of

elephant. The elephant's tusks now became their excellent weapons.

32. Afterwards there was a tumultuous loud sound all over the stage, along with the wonder of the people—"O this is Kṛṣṇa. O this is Balarāma."

33. "This is the boy by whom the terrible ogress Pūtanā had been killed; he by whom the cart had been upset and the pair of Arjuna trees were broken."

34. "This is the boy who mounted the serpent Kāliya and danced; this is he by whom the great mountain Govardhana was lifted up and held for seven nights."

35. "Here is seen that Kṛṣṇa the noble lord, by whom the wicked asuras Ariṣṭa, Dhenuka and Keśin were playfully slain."

36. "This lad of great arms is Balarāma, his elder brother. He sportingly goes ahead delighting the minds and eyes of the womenfolk."

37. "It is he who is mentioned by wisemen who survey the topics in the Purāṇas as follows "Gopāla will redeem the entire Yādava family".

38. "He is that part of Viṣṇu which has incarnated on the Earth; of Viṣṇu who is identical with everyone; of Viṣṇu who is the source of origin of everything. Indeed he is the dispeller of burden of the Earth".

39. When Rāma and Kṛṣṇa were described thus, the breasts of Devakī instantaneously exuded milk due to affection.

40. On seeing his sons, Vasudeva felt as if he was witnessing a great festival. Due to delight he dispelled the old age that had descended on him.

41. The ladies of the royal harem and the ordinary ladies of the city made their eyes wider. They never ceased from looking at him.

The woman said :

42-50. O friends, see the face of Kṛṣṇa with the eyes resembling the lotus. It is embellished by drops of sweat due to his exertion in his battle with the elephant. It is like the full blown autumnal lotus with the snow drops clinging to it.

O eyes, may your birth be made fruitful (by looking at him).

O beautiful lady, may the chest of this boy he looked at. It has attacked even imperishable beings. (?) ; it is marked by Śrivatsa scar; it is the abode of universe and it is competent to destroy enemies. May his pair of arms too be seen. O immature lady, don't you see this Balarāma whose face is white as the lotus stalk ? He has come here with a blue garment. Balarāma is put on an equal footing with Muṣṭika who swaggers as well as with Cāṇūra, O friend; Just, see this, please. O friends see Kṛṣṇa approaches Cāṇūra for a mutual combat. Are there no elderly persons here who will do what is proper ? Where is Kṛṣṇa of a very tender body who is just approaching his youth ? Where is that great Asura whose body is as hard and tough as an adamant ? The two fresh youths stay on the stage with their graceful charms. But the asura-like wrestlers, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika are excessively terrible. It is highly improper on the part of judges and umpires to function at this wrestling bout because an unequal fight between a boy and a strong person has been arranged for (?) by these umpires.

Vyasa said :

51-52. Even as the womenfolk of the city were talking like this, lord Kṛṣṇa generated much delight in them. He entered the stage making the ground quake. Balarāma clapped his arms and bounced gracefully. The fact that the ground did not crumble down at every step was a great wonder.

53. Kṛṣṇa of unmeasured valour fought with Cāṇūra. Muṣṭika the asura who was an expert in wrestling, fought with Balarāma.

54-55. Kṛṣṇa fought with Cāṇūra. The duel was very terrible and awful without any weapon being used. Other recourses were Sannipātas (causing the opponent to fall down), Avadhūtas (Shaking up), Kṣepaṇas (Hurlings), Muṣṭis (Fisting) Kīlavajranipātana (hitting with the elbows and knees as though with a thunderbolt ?) and neat thrusts with the feet).

56-57. (Defective) In the course of that festival of assemblies they had to show their strength. The more Cāṇūra fought with Kṛṣṇa, the loss of vital breath he sustained was the more. He did not get any kinsman to encourage him. Kṛṣṇa, identical with the universe fought with him playfully.

58-63. On seeing the decreasing power of Cāṇūra and the increasing power of Kṛṣṇa, Kāṁsa was dejected and angry. To get some respite the infuriated Kāṁsa waved his hand and stopped instrumental music. When thus Mṛdaṅgas (drums) and other instruments were suspended, the instruments of Devas in the sky, were played instantaneously. "Be victorious, O Kṛṣṇa kill Cāṇūra, O Keśava. Devas who remained hidden to the view eulogised thus in their delight. After playing with Cāṇūra for some time, Kṛṣṇa lifted him up and whirled him in his attempt to kill him. After whirling the asura wrestler in the sky for a hundred times, the conqueror of foes dashed him on the ground (though he had died even in the atmosphere itself. When he was hit on the ground Cāṇūra's body broke into a hundred pieces.

64-68. He made the Earth marshy and slushy with the flow of blood.

At that time Balarāma of great strength fought with Muṣṭika in the same manner as Kṛṣṇa fought with the asura Cāṇūra. He too hit his head and chest with his fist and knee. He threw him on the ground, and killed him. Thereafter, with a flow of his left fist Kṛṣṇa made Tośalaka of great strength, the king of wrestlers, fall on the ground. When the wrestler Cāṇūra was killed, when Muṣṭika had been struck down and when Tośalaka was slain the other wrestlers ran away. Then Kṛṣṇa and Saṁkarṣaṇa jumped and bounced on the stage.

69. They dragged other cowherds of the same age to themselves in their delight. With his eyes turned red Kāṁsa spoke to his men who had gathered in large.

70. Let these two cowherds be forcibly removed from the assembled group. Let the sinful Nanda be seized and bound with fetters.

71. Let Vasudeva also be punished in the same manner as one not old. Let all these cowherds too who vaunt and swagger along with Kṛṣṇa, be punished suitably.

72-77. Let their cows and wealth be taken away ?

When Kāṁsa was commanding thus Kṛṣṇa laughed. With great speed he jumped on to the couch and seized Kāṁsa. When he caught hold of his hair his crown dropped down. Kṛṣṇa felled Kāṁsa on the ground and himself fell over him. Kāṁsa, son of Ugrasena, was deprived of his vital breath as Kṛṣṇa with

his enormous weight fell on him. Being the support of entire universe Kṛṣṇa had that enormous weight. Catching hold of the hair of the dead Karīsa, Kṛṣṇa of great strength dragged the body of Karīsa to the middle of the stage. It was itself very great and weighty. A weighty thing fell over it. Further it was dragged. Thus Karīsa's body was disfigured due to the speed activity of noble Kṛṣṇa. When Karīsa was thus killed, his brother came there furiously.

78-80. Sunāmā (i.e. the brother of Karīsa) was playfully thrown on the ground by Balarāma. On seeing the king of Mathurā contemptuously killed by Kṛṣṇa, there was a great hue and cry everywhere around the stage.

Immediately Kṛṣṇa of great arms accompanied by Balarāma touched the feet of Vasudeva and Devakī. Vasudeva and Devakī lifted him up and they themselves bowed to him and stood steady as they remembered his words at the time of his nativity.

Vasudeva said :

81. Be pleased, O lord of Devas, O most excellent one, O lord, O Keśava, favouring us you have lifted us up.

82. Since after being propitiated by me the lord has incarnated in my house for destroying the wicked ones, thereby our race is sanctified.

83. You remain within living beings. You are stationed within living beings, O soul of everyone, it is from you that the past and future function, invariably.

84. O Acyuta, identical with Devas, O incomprehensible and unimaginable one, you are worshipped in the course of a Yajñā. O lord of Yajñās, you are the Yajñā and the performer of Yajñā.

85. O son of Devakī, the fact that out of affection, my mind is full of vague notions in respect of you is great deception.

86. You are the maker of all living beings. You have neither beginning nor end. Where is the tongue pertaining to me, a mere human being, which says—"O son".

87. By what expedient, excepting Māyā, will that person be born of us, O lord of the Universe, that person from whom all this universe has evolved ?

88. How can that lord be borne by a female human being, that lord in whom the entire universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings has been established ? How can he be made to lie down in the womb or in the lap ?

89. O great lord, be pleased. Protect the universe. Since you are having the partial incarnation you are not my son, O soul of the great lord, O lord of the universe, why do you delude the mind of every one from Brahman to an ordinary tree.

90. My eyes had been deluded by Māyā. I had the feeling "Here is my son." Much afraid of Kāṁsa at that time, you were taken to the cowherds' colony. O lord of cows, you entered then my intellect, even as I was afraid and agitated due to the enemies.

91. You are Viṣṇu, O lord, you have attained what cannot be attained by Rudras, Maruts, Aśvins and Indra for rendering help to the worlds. Our great delusion had surrounded us hitherto.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

The Son of Sandipani restored

1-5. On seeing Devakī and Vasudeva as persons who had attained perfect knowledge by annihilating Karmans, Kṛṣṇa stretched his Vaiṣṇavi Māyā once again in order to fascinate the multitude of Yadus. He said "O mother, O father, for a long time Saṁkarṣaṇa and I were eager to see you but we could not because we were afraid of Kāṁsa. Now after a long time you are seen by us.

That portion of one's life which is spent without worshipping one's parents is indeed futile in the case of good sons ?

O father, if an embodied being performs the worship of preceptors, Devas, brahmins and parents, his life becomes fruitful. Hence, O father, all our defaults and transgressions should be excused. We had been overwhelmed by Kāṁsa's prowess and exploits. Hence, we were helpless and at the mercy of others.

Vyāsa said :

6. After saying this, both of them bowed down to the elderly persons of Yadus. After worshipping them duly they made them contented.

7. Then Kāṁsa's wives surrounded the dead body of Kāṁsa and lamented. His mothers too were fully overwhelmed by sorrow and misery.

8. They were upset in various ways. They were agitated due to repentance. Kṛṣṇa consoled them. His own eyes became turbid due to tears.

9. He then released Ugrasena from prison. He crowned Ugrasena whose son had been killed. He crowned him in his own kingdom.

10. After being crowned in the kingdom he, the lion among the descendants of Yadu clan, performed the obsequies of his son as well as of others who were killed there.

11-13. As he concluded the post-funeral rites and re-occupied the throne, Kṛṣṇa said—"O lord, unhesitatingly command us in regard to any task. As a result of the curse of Yayāti this family does not deserve a kingdom. Still now, when I am ready as your servant, you can command even Devas, why not kings ?" After saying this to Ugrasena, lord Kṛṣṇa who had assumed human form for a specific task said to Vāyu in the human speech.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said :

14-15. O Vāyu, go to Indra and tell him thus—"O Indra, enough of your pride and arrogance. Let your Assembly hall named Sudharmā be given to Ugrasena by you. It is Kṛṣṇa who says—This excellent jewel as befitting a king, this Assembly hall is named Sudharmā. It is proper for Yadus to sit in it".

Vyāsa said :

16. Thus urged, the wind god went to Indra and spoke everything to him. Indra gave the assembly hall Sudharmā to Vāyu.

17. All those leading Yadus, having Kṛṣṇa's arms for support enjoyed that divine assembly hall decorated with jewels and brought over there by Vāyu.

18-19. The two heroic lads, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa had already acquired perfect knowledge. They were perfectly wise. But these excellent scions of the family of Yadu were desirous of maintaining the utility of the contact of disciples and preceptors. Accordingly they went to Sandipani of the spiritual lineage of Kāśya and resident of the city of Avanti for learning the use of weapons.

20. They accepted his discipleship. They were duly engaged in serving the preceptor. To all the people they thus practically demonstrated their proper conduct.

21. Within sixtyfour days and nights they learned the science of Archery alongwith its secrets and digests. O brahmins, it was miraculous indeed.

22. Considering their super-human activity that could not at all have been imagined (in persons of their age) Sandipani thought that the moon and the sun had come to him.

23. The moment they were uttered, (the two brothers) learned the Mantras of all miraculous missiles. They said—“What monetary gift should be paid as the preceptor's fees ? That may be mentioned.”

24. Observing their ability to act beyond the pale of sense-organs the highly intelligent preceptor requested (the resuscitation) of his son who was dead in the holy centre of Prabhāsa on the shore of the briny sea.

25. Equipped with their arms they went to the briny ocean. They said to the sea—“May the son of our preceptor be restored”.

26-27. With palms joined in reverence and having the vessel of Arghya with him, the great ocean said—“The son of Sandipani has not been abducted by me. An asura named Pāñcajana, assumed the form of a conch and abducted the child. O slayer of Asuras, he is staying in my waters.”

28. On being told thus, Kṛṣṇa went inside the water, killed Pāñcajana and took the excellent conch originating from his bones.

29-32. The conch Pāñcajanya's sound reduced the strength of asuras, increased the fulgence of Devas and destroyed evil. Kṛṣṇa and the powerful Balarāma blew the conch Pāñcajanya and went to the city of Yama. There they

conquered Yama, son of Vivasvat and regained the boy who was in the tortures of hell, who now got back a body as before. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the most excellent among the strong ones, gave the boy to his father. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa returned to Mathurā protected by Ugrasena. They delighted men and women there.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

The Onslaught of Jarāsandha

Vyāsa said :

1-2. Karīsa of great strength had married the two daughters of Jarāsandha named Asti and Prāpti. O brahmins, Jarāsandha the powerful king of Magadha came there in great fury surrounded by a great army. It was to kill Kṛṣṇa together with the Yādavas that he came there, for Kṛṣṇa had killed the husband of his two daughters.

3. The lord of Magadha attacked the vicinity of Mathurā. He was accompanied by twentythree Akṣauhiṇis¹ of the army.

4. Surrounded by only a limited number of soldiers, the powerful Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa came out of their city and fought with the strong soldiers.

5. Thereafter, O excellent sages, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa of great strength thought of taking up their ancient weapons.

6-8. The discus, the śāringa bow, two quivers with inexhaustible supply of arrows and the iron club named Kaumodaki—all these came from the firmament to those heroes.

The ploughshare came into the hand of Balarāma from the sky. O brahmins, it resembled the Samvarta fire. So also the Musala (iron-club) called Sunanda came over to them.

In the battle, the heroic lads Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa defeated the king of Magadha together with his army.

1. An army consisting of 21,870 elephants, 21,870 chariots, 65,610 horses, 109,330 feet is called Akṣauhiṇi.

9. O excellent brahmins, although Jarāsandha of evil design was conquered, Kṛṣṇa did not consider him defeated because he returned alive.

10. O excellent brahmins, Jarāsandha came again accompanied by his huge army. He was conquered by Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. He fled from the battlefield.

11. Thus, the arrogant king of Magadha fought eighteen battles with the descendants of Yadu led by Kṛṣṇa.

12. Although Jarāsandha had more armies he was defeated by the heroes of Yadu clan who had only a small army. He was defeated in all battles and he fled on all occasions.

13. The fact that the army of Yādavas won all times indicates the greatness of discus-bearing Viṣṇu (i.e. Kṛṣṇa)

14. It is a mere sport on the part of the lord of universe to discharge many forms of weapons on the enemies because the lord had human attributes and activities.

15. In fact with his mere mental thought he can create and annihilate the universe. What detailed attempt need he make in destroying the enemy's sides ?

16. Still the lord follows the activities of human beings. Allying himself with the strong persons he fights with the weaker ones.

17-18. He uses the four strategic expedients such as peaceful overtures, gifts, threats or creating dissension in enemies ranks and the actual striking. In some places he resorts to fleeing. The sport of the lord of universe functions according to his will. He imitates the activities of embodied human beings.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Mucukunda's Prayer

Vyāsa said :

1. O brahmins, Śyāla called a brahmin of the cowherds colony (named) Gārgya by the (ignoble remark) Saṅḍha

(impotent) in the presence of Yādavas and all the Yādavas laughed at it.

2. Thereupon, the infuriated brahmin went to Southern territory and performed a penance. He was desirous of a son who would be a terror to the Yādavas.

3. Propitiating lord Śiva he ate powdered iron. The lord was pleased with him in the twelfth year and he granted him a boon.

4. The Yavaneśa (a Greek King) who had no son honoured him. As a result of sexual intercourse with his wife a son of fiery splendour was born to him.

5. He was named Kālayavana. The Greek king crowned the boy who had a chest as hard as the adamantine tip and went to the forest.

6. Proud and arrogant by virtue of his prowess, he asked about the powerful kings on the Earth. Nārada told him about the Yādavas.

7. He was surrounded by crores and thousands of crores of Mlecchas (alien tribes) who were richly equipped with elephants, horses and chariots. He made an elaborate attempt thus.

8. O sages, he was ceaselessly thinking of the Yādavas everyday. He became very furious with them. He marched against the city of Mathurā.

9-12. Kṛṣṇa thought thus :—"On observing the Yādava army destroyed by Kālayavana, the king of Magadha will strike at us. The powerful Kālayavana will destroy the exhausted army of the king of Magadha. Thus two types of calamity are likely to befall us. Hence I shall make a very invincible fort for my clan. Even ladies can fight from within it. What then about the leading Vṛṣnis ? May not the wicked enemies harm the Yādavas much when I am inebriate, erring, sleeping or out of the territory."

13. After thinking thus Kṛṣṇa begged of the great ocean a piece twelve Yojana. He created the city of Dvārakā there.

14. It had great parks and outer walls. It was beautified by hundreds of lakes. It had hundreds of thick ramparts. It resembled Indra's city Amarāvatī.

15. Lord Kṛṣṇa brought the people of Mathurā there. When Kālayavana was expected he alone went to Mathurā.

16. When the army (of Kālayavana) encamped outside Mathurā, he came out without any weapon and the Yavana saw him.

17-18. Knowing that he was Vāsudeva, the king too with his arms alone for weapons, followed the lord who is not attained even by the minds of great Yogins. Followed by him Kṛṣṇa entered a cave where king Mucukunda was lying asleep.

19. The Yavana also entered the cave. He saw a man lying on a bed. Thinking him to be Kṛṣṇa, the wicked Yavana kicked him with his foot.

20. The moment the Yavana was seen by him he was consumed by the fire of anger. O sages, he was instantaneously reduced to ashes.

21. That king had taken part in the battle between Devas and Asuras and defeated Asuras. He had to remain for many nights without sleep and so was distressed. He requested Suras for the boon of slumber.

22. He was also informed by Devas thus—"He who wakes you up when you are asleep will soon be reduced to ashes by the fire issuing from your body.

23. After reducing that sinner he looked at Kṛṣṇa and said—"Who are you?" Kṛṣṇa said : "I am born of the lunar race.

24-25. I am the son of Vasudeva, the scion of the family of Yadu".

On hearing it Mucukunda remembered the words of the elderly Gārgya. After recollecting everything he bowed down to Kṛṣṇa, the lord of all identical with everyone. He said—"You are the greatest iśvara. You are born of Viṣṇu's part.

26. Formerly, this was mentioned by Gārgya—Hari will take birth in the line of Yadu towards the end of Dvāpara Yuga in the twentyeighth cycle of four Yugas.

27-30. Therefore, there is no doubt at all. You are the one come to me. You are the one that render help to all men. I am unable to endure your great splendour. He uttered words unto him so bold and resonant as the rumbling sound of the rain-bearing cloud, to him who was petted and fondled by you.

However, in the great battle between Devas and Asuras the heroic Devas and Asuras were incompetent to endure your great resplendence. I too am unable to bear that resplendence. You are the greatest refuge to the creature that has fallen in the ocean of worldly existence. You are the sole dispeller of agony of those who resort to you. Be pleased. Remove my inauspiciousness.

31. You are everything viz—oceans, mountains, rivers, forests, Earth, sky, wind, water, fire, you are the highest being.

32-35. You are the one devoid of sound etc., the unageing one devoid of birth and destruction. All beings attain their series of births from you who pervade everything. The immortal beings, Pitrs (Manes) Yakṣas, Gandharvas, Rākṣasas, Siddhas, Apsarās—attain their births from you—men, animals, birds, reptiles, deer, trees, and the time-scale divided into past, present and future—everything mobile and immobile, all those things with or without forms, those which are gross and subtle—O creator of the universe, you alone are all those things; there is nothing without you.

36. O lord, no peace or happiness was attained by me anywhere; by me who wandered amidst the cycles of worldly existence and who had been attacked by the three forms of scorching agonies.

37. O lord, miseries alone were taken up by me as pleasures, like the mirages that are understood as water-reservoirs. They were conducive to my agony alone.

38-39. Kingdom, Earth, army, treasury, allies, sons, wives, attendants, and the objects of senses beginning with sound—all these, O unchanging one, were taken by me to be the cause of happiness. O lord of Devas, in effect they were sources of distress, of a scorching nature.

40. O lord, even Devas attaining the goal of the common world became desirous of help from me. Where is permanent happiness (available) ?

41. Without propitiating you, the basis and source of origin of all the worlds, by whom is permanent happiness attained?

42. People whose minds are deluded by your Māyā attain

birth, death, old age etc. of a sinful nature. They see the King of the dead in the middle.

43-45. Then those men are bound by means of hundreds of nooses in hells. They attain very terrible misery. This is your cosmic form. I am very much sensuous. I am deluded by your Māyā, O great lord, I wander amidst deep pits of 'my-ness'.

I have sought refuge in you. You who have no other side (?) a vast one), the primordial Iśa, than whom there is no other greater region. My mind is distressed due to exhaustion and agony of worldly existence. I am desirous of attaining the transformed (?) shelter, being disgusted with worldly affairs."

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Balarāma returns to the cowherds' colony

Vyāsa said :

1. Eulogised thus by that intelligent Mucukunda, the lord of all living beings, the lord who has no beginning or death spoke thus.

Sṛikṛṣṇa said :

2. O lord of men, go to divine worlds as desired by you. You will be strengthened by my grace and your prosperity and prowess will be unimpeded.

3. After enjoying the great divine pleasures, you will be born in a great family. By my favour you will be able to remember your previous births. Thereafter, you will attain salvation.

Vyāsa said :

4. Thus blessed by the lord the king bowed to Acyuta; the lord of the worlds came out of the cave. Then he saw short-statured men.

5. The king understood that the Kaliyuga had arrived. He went to the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa in order to perform penance (on the mountain) Gandhamādana.

6. Slaying the enemy by means of a stratagem, Kṛṣṇa captured his army shining with horses, elephants and chariots after arriving at Mathurā.

7. After bringing it to Dvāravatī he offered it to Ugrasena. (Thereby) the army of the Yadus had no fear of the onslaught of enemies.

8. O leading brahmins, having subdued all quarrels Baladeva became eager to see his kinsmen and so went to the cowherds' colony of Nanda.

9. As before, the conqueror of enemies spoke to the cowherds and cowherdlasses with affection and respect.

10. He was embraced by them. He embraced some of them. With some cowherds and cowherdesses he cracked jokes.

11. The cowherds spoke many pleasing words to Balarāma. Some cowherdesses spoke joyously in their love and others spoke with malice.

12. Other cowherdesses asked thus :- "Is Kṛṣṇa the lover of womenfolk of the city happy ? Is he agitated by stirring emotions of love.

13. Does not Kṛṣṇa whose affection is momentary, deride our activities and increase the good fortune and pride of the ladies of Mathurā.

14. Does Kṛṣṇa ever remember our following him and singing alongwith him ? Will he come here at least once to see his mother ?

15. Or, of what avail is this talk regarding him ? May other stories be mentioned, for without us his (life) is possible and without (him) our (life) is possible.

16. Father, mother, brother, husband and kinsmen—who is not abandoned by us for his sake. (But) he had been ungrateful.

17. Still, does Kṛṣṇa ever (mention) anything about his coming here ? Nectar-like words must be uttered by you.

18. He appears to be devoid of love towards us because his mind is attached to the ladies of the city. It seems it will be difficult to see him."

Vyāsa said :

19. He (Balarāma) was called (by the cowherdllasses) by the words Kṛṣṇa, Dāmodara etc. The cowherdllasses whose minds were attracted by Kṛṣṇa laughed in good tune.

20. The cowherdllasses were consoled by Rāma through gentle and sweet messages of Kṛṣṇa couched in loving emotions and devoid of arrogance. The notes were as sweet as honey.

21. As before Balarāma continued funny stories and jokes with the cowherds whose minds were attracted by Kṛṣṇa, the cowherds who were the residents of Vraja.

CHAPTER NINETY

Balarāma's sport with Ploughshare

Vyāsa said :

1-2. The noble lord Balarāma was thus roaming about in the forest alongwith the cowherds. He was Śesa the supporter of the Earth, who had assumed the false guise of a human being. He had accomplished great tasks. It was for fulfilling a great task that he had taken up this incarnation. Hence, for the purpose of his enjoyment Varuṇa spoke to Vāruṇi (wine).

Varuna said :

3. O wine, you have always been liked by (Balarāma) of great prowess, O auspicious one, go now for his joy and enjoyment of pleasures.

Vyāsa said :

4. Thus advised by him Vāruṇi (wine) stationed herself in the hollow of a Kadamba tree growing on the banks of Yamunā in Vṛndāvana.

5. Roaming about that spot Balarāma inhaled the intensive odour of wine. After smelling it he experienced the delight that he previously used to have in wine.

6. O sages, thereafter, Balarāma saw a current of liquor suddenly falling from Kadamba. He derived great joy therefrom.

7. He drank it joyously in the company of cowherds and cowherdesses while experts in songs and instrumental music sang elegantly.

8. Shining with the pearl-like drops of sweat due to excessive heat and fatigue he became agitated and said - "O Yamunā, come hither. I wish to take my bath".

9. The river disregarded those words of inebriated person. She did not approach him. The infuriated Balarāma (thereupon) seized his ploughshare.

10. Agitated due to inebriation he caught hold of her by the tip of his ploughshare - "O evil-minded one, won't you come, won't you come ? Then go elsewhere as you please".

11. Dragged by him suddenly the river left her usual path and flooded the forest where Balarāma was present.

12. She approached him in an embodied form. Due to fear her eyes were agitated. She said to him "O you having lionclub as your weapon, be pleased, leave me off".

13. He said :- "If you disregard me in spite of my heroism and strength I shall split you into a thousand bits with the blows of my ploughshare".

Vyāsa said :

14. When he said thus, he was propitiated by the river. When the ground there was flooded, Balarāma released Yamunā.

15-16. Splendour came to him in the forest when he had his bath. Lakṣmi took with her a blue lotus as his ornament, an ear-ring, a garland of never-fading lotus flowers sent by Varuṇa and two blue cloths having the lustre of the sea and gave these presents to him.

17. Having aborned himself with the blue lotus, embellishing himself with the beautiful ear-ring and clad in blue garments, the glorious one shone with splendour.

18. Thus embellished, Rāma sported there in the cowherds' colony. After two months he went to Dvārakā.

19. Balarāma married Revatī the daughter of king Raivata. Two sons, Niśaṭha and Ulumuka were born of her.

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Return of Pradyumna

Vydsa said :

1. Bhiṣmaka was the king of Kuṇḍina in the realm of Vidarbha. His son was Rukmin and his daughter was Rukmini.

2. Kṛṣṇa loved Rukmini and the lady of beautiful smiles loved him in return. Due to hatred, Rukmin did not give her to the discus-bearing lord.

3. Urged by Jarāsandha and Rukmin together, Bhiṣmaka of great exploit gave Rukmini to Śiśupāla.

4. Then for the purpose of marriage the kings led by Jarāsandha, and Śiśupāla went to Kuṇḍina the city of Bhiṣmaka.

5. Surrounded by Balarāma and other scions of the Yadu, Kṛṣṇa went to Kuṇḍina to witness the marriage of Śiśupāla, the king of Cedi.

6-12. On the eve of marriage day Kṛṣṇa abducted that virgin even as Rāma and other kinsmen were opposed to it. Then the glorious Pauṇḍraka, Dantavaktra, Vidūratha, Śiśupāla, Jarāsandha, Śalva and other kings became infuriated. Allying themselves with Balarāma and other leading scions of the family of Yadu they made earnest attempts to kill Kṛṣṇa but they were defeated. Taking the vow - "Without killing Kṛṣṇa in the battle I shall not re-enter Kuṇḍina", Rukmin rushed at Kṛṣṇa to kill him. After killing his army fully equipped with elephants, horses, foot-soldiers and chariots the discus-bearing lord playfully hurled him on to the ground.

After defeating Rukmin Kṛṣṇa married Rukmini duly in accordance with the injunctions regarding Rākṣasa type of marriage. The valorous Pradyumna, a part incarnation of cupid,

was born of her. Śambara kidnapped him but he killed Śambara.

The sages said :

13. How was that heroic one kidnapped by Śambara and how was Śambara killed by him ? O highly intelligent one, narrate this divine anecdote to me.

Vyāsa said :

14. On the sixth day after his birth, O brahmins, Kāla-śambara kidnapped Pradyumna from the lying-in-chamber thinking—"O this one will be my killer".

15. Taking the boy with him he hurled him into the briny sea, infested with crocodiles, the awful abode of sparks that abounded in eddies and whirlpools generated by billows.

16. As the boy fell down there a fish caught hold of him. Though burned by its gastric fire the boy did not die.

17. O brahmins, this fish alongwith other fishes was caught by fishermen and offered to Śambara the most excellent one among the Asuras.

18. His wife named Māyāvatī, the uncensured queen of his household, supervised over the work of cooks.

19. When the belly of the fish was ripped open she saw an excessively splendid boy who was the first shooting sprout of the tree of cupid that had been burned.

20. "Who is this ? How did he happen to come into the belly of the fish ?"

Nārada spoke to her :-

Nārada said :

21-22. This is the son of Kṛṣṇa abducted from the lying in-chamber by Śambara who is capable of creating and annihilating the worlds. He was cast off into the ocean, was swallowed by a fish and now he has come under your control. O lady of good eyebrows, look after this jewel of a man confidently.

Vyāsa said :¹

23-24. Informed thus by Nārada she looked after the boy.

Ever since the boyhood of the child she was fascinated by his excelling handsome features and overwhelmed by excess of love. O excellent brahmins, when he was embellished by extensive youthful features, that lady of graceful elephantine gait, became very much attached to him.

25. Māyāvati taught all the Māyās (illusory tricks) to the noble Pradyumna who was befitting her and in whom she had fixed her heart and the eyes. The lotus-eyed son of Kṛṣṇa told her who was attached to him.

Pradyumna said :

26-31. Setting aside the emotions of a mother why do you behave like this in an entirely different manner ?

Vyāsa said :

She told him - "You are not my son. Kālaśambara kidnapped you, the son of Kṛṣṇa. You were cast off into the ocean. You were obtained by me from the belly of a fish. Your mother is crying now but your beloved is extremely fond of you".

Vyāsa said :

Thus informed Pradyumna challenged Śambāra for a fight. With his mind turned turbulent due to fury the powerful one fought. After killing the entire army of that asura, Pradyumna, son of Kṛṣṇa passed over seven Māyās and employed the eighth one too. With that Māyā he killed Śambāra.

Then he returned to the city of his father accompanied by her.

32. On seeing him present in the harem accompanied by Māyāvati, Kṛṣṇa's wives had delightful ideas. The uncensured lady Rukmini said with her eyes fixed on him with affection.

Rukmini said :

33. This is the son of a fortunate lady. He is in the freshness of his youth. If my son Pradyumna were alive he would be of this age.

34. O my beloved child, your mother is fortunate whoever she be, she is embellished by you. Or, (considering

from the way) my affection turns and from your physical features, it is clear that you are Kṛṣṇa's son.

Vyāsa said :

35. In the meantime, Nārada came there along with Kṛṣṇa. Delighted he said to the gentle lady Rukmiṇī who was moving about in the harem :

Srīkṛṣṇa said :

36. O lady of fine eyebrows, this is your son who has come here after killing Śambara by whom he had been abducted from your lying-in-chamber when he was but an infant boy.

37. This Māyāvatī is the chaste wife of your son. She is not the wife of Śambara. May the reason thereof be heard.

38. O Rukmiṇī, when Cupid was killed, his wife eagerly waiting for his nativity, deluded Śambara by assuming an illusory form.

39. In the course of enjoyment of conjugal and other pleasures, this lady of charming eyes showed only the splendid illusory form to the asura.

40-42. Kāma has incarnated as your son. This is Rati his beloved wife. You need have no doubt about this. This is your splendid daughter-in-law.

Vyāsa said :

Then Rukmiṇī and Keśava were fully delighted. The entire city said - "Well done, well done" On seeing Rukmiṇī who was rejoiced by her long-lost son, every citizen of Dvāravatī was surprised.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Rukmin is slain

Vyāsa said :

1-2. Rukmiṇī gave birth to eight sons, viz. Cāruḍeṣṇa, Sudeṣṇa, Cāruḍeha, Suṣeṇa, Cārugupta, Bhadracāru, Cāruvinda and Cārū who was the most excellent among the strong ones.

She gave birth to a daughter Cārumatī also.

3-5. Kṛṣṇa had seven other splendid wives. They were: Kālindi, Mitravindā, Satyā the daughter of Nagnajit, the gentle lady Jāmbavatī who was always contented, Rohinī another virtuous daughter of Madra king with good conduct, Satyabhāmā the daughter of Satrājit and Lakṣmaṇā of sweet and beautiful smiles. The discus-bearing lord had sixteen thousand other wives.

6-7. Pradyumna of great vigour married the splendid daughter of Rukmin in a Svayamvara ceremony. She loved the son of Hari. Aniruddha of great strength and exploits was born of her. He was an ocean of prowess and a suppressor of enemies but he was held (treacherously in Mahābhārata) war.

8. Kṛṣṇa chose the granddaughter of Rukmin as wife unto his grandson. Although Rukmin vied and contended with Kṛṣṇa he gave her to his daughter's son (i. e. Aniruddha)

9. O brahmins, to attend her marriage Rāma and other descendants of Yadu went to Rukmin's city named Bhojakāṭa, along with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

10. After the marriage of noble son of Pradyumna was concluded, Kaliṅga king and others spoke these words to Rukmin.

Kaliṅga king and others said:

11. Balarāma is not perfectly conversant with the game of dice; his indulgence in it is however, very great. Hence, O extremely lustrous one, we shall conquer him in the game of dice alone.

Vyāsa said :

12. "So be it" said Rukmin who possessed great strength, to those kings. He played the game of dice with Rāma, in the assembly.

13. A stake of a thousand Niṣkas (gold coins) was won by Rukmin from Bala. On the second day another thousand was won by Rukmin.

14. Then Rukmin the most excellent one among those who were conversant with the game of dice, put up a stake of ten thousand gold coins againsts Baladeva who was desirous of victory.

15. Then, O brahmins, exhibiting all his teeth, the foolish overlord of Kalinga laughed at Bala. The haughty Rukmin spoke then:

Rukmin said :

16. O members of the assembly, this Balarāma devoid of learning has been defeated by me in the game of dice. He is not conversant with either the manner of fighting or the lorc of the game.

Vyāsa said :

17. On seeing the king of Kalinga with the teeth in his mouth fully exhibited, and Rukmin indulging in harsh words, Balarāma became infuriated.

18. With his mind full of fury Balarāma put up the stake at a crore of gold coins. Rukmin too accepted it. He threw the dice for that purpose.

19. Baladeva won the stake. He said to him loudly "This is won by me".

"The victory is mine" loudly proclaimed Rukmin to Bala in false words.

20. "It is true that this stake was announced by you. But it had not been accepted or approved of by me. That being the case if (you say) you have won how (can't I say that) I have won ?

21. Then loud resonant words rose up in the sky aggravating the fury of noble Baladeva.

22. The speech in the firmament said : "The stake is won by Baladeva. What is uttered by Rukmin is false. Certain things are accepted through actions even without mentioning words."

Vyāsa said :

23. Then Bala of great strength got up with his eyes turned red due to fury. With the dice board itself he hit and killed Rukmin.

24. With great force he held the king of Kalinga who was throbbing and trembling. In his fury he broke his teeth with which he had openly laughed at him.

25. The infuriated Bala seized a great column of gold and killed those kings who belonged to his side.

26. When Bala was angry thus, O brahmans, the entire assembly of kings became eager to flee crying out "Alas, Alas".

27. On hearing that Rukmin was killed by Bala, Kṛṣṇa did not utter a single word for fear of offending Rukmini or Bala.

28. Then, O excellent brahmans, the descendants of Yadu, accompanied by Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā taking Aniruddha with them after his marriage rites were concluded.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Naraka is killed

Vyāsa said :

1-2. O sages, seated on the back of the inebriated Airāvata, Indra the lord of the three worlds came to meet Lord Kṛṣṇa at Dvāravatī. After entering the city he approached the lord and mentioned to him the vicious activities of the asura Naraka.

3. O lord, all miseries have been subdued by you, the lord of Devas, though stationed in the form of a human being.

4-5. For affording protection to those people who perform penance, the following asuras have been killed by you—Ariṣṭa, Dhenuka, Keśin, Pralamba and others. Those who harassed the universe were destroyed by you, namely, Karīsa, Kuvalayāpiḍa, the child-slayer Pūtanā and many others.

6. When the three worlds have been saved by your excellent intellect as well as brawny baton-like arms, the heaven-dwellers partook of oblations in the sacrifice and became gratified.

7. O lord, it behoves you to pursue efforts and counter-measures after listening to the reason for which I have come now.

8. O suppressor of enemies, this son of Bhūmi named Naraka

who is the king of Prāgjyotiṣa harasses and destroys all living beings.

9. After killing Devas, Siddhas, kings, and others, that Asura imprisoned their daughters in his own palace.

10. He has taken away the umbrella of Pracetas, that exudes water. He has removed the Maṇiparvata, peak of the Mandara.

11. That Asura has taken away the illustrious ear-rings of my mother Aditi, the ear-rings that exude nectar. He now desires to take possession of my elephant Airāvata.

12. O lord, I have told you about his evil activities. What steps should be taken by way of remedy may be pondered over by yourself.

Vyāsa said :

13. On hearing this, lord Kṛṣṇa, son of Devakī, smiled and caught hold of the hand of Indra. He then got up from the excellent seat.

14. He then rode on Garuḍa who traversed through the sky. He kept Satyabhāmā also on its back and went to the city of Prāgjyotiṣa.

15. Even as the residents of Dvārakā watched him, the delighted Indra mounted his elephant Airāvata and went to heaven.

16. For a hundred Yojanas all round the city of Prāgjyotiṣa, the entire place was covered with terrible nooses in order to ward off the army of enemies.

17. Lord Kṛṣṇa hurled his discus Sudarśana and cut off those nooses. Then the asura Mura got up. Keśava killed him.

18. By the fire from the sharp edges of his discus Hari burned seven thousand sons of Mura as though they were mere moths.

19. O brahmins, after killing Mura, Hayagriva and Pañcajana the intelligent lord hastened to Prāgjyotiṣa.

20. There Kṛṣṇa fought with Naraka who had a great army. In that battle Lord Kṛṣṇa killed thousands of asuras.

21. By hurling his discus the discus-bearing lord, the powerful destroyer of asuras, split Naraka into two, Naraka, son of the Earth, who was hurling weapons and missiles on him.

22. When Naraka was killed, the Earth approached the lord of the universe taking with her the earrings of Aditi. She spoke these words :—

The Earth said :

23. O lord, when I was lifted up by you in the form of a Boar, this son had been born of me as a result of my contact with you.

24. He had been given to me by you and now has been struck down by you. Take back these two ear-rings and protect his children.

25. It is for reducing my own burden that O lord of gentle and pleasant face, you have come to this world a part of yours.

26. You are the creator, re-creator, annihilator, eternal source of origin and one whose form is identical with that of the universe. O Acyuta, how am I to eulogise you ?.

27. You are the one all-pervading and the pervaded; deed, the doer and the thing done. You are the Ātman, the inner soul of all living beings. O Acyuta, how can I eulogise you?

28. You are the Supreme Ātman, the innermost soul, the soul of living beings, the eternal lord. These are not your praises. They are the statements of facts. How shall anyone go about (this act of eulogy) ?

29. O lord, the soul of all-living beings, be pleased. May what is done by Naraka be excused for making him free from defects. My son has already been struck down.

Vyasa said :

30. "So be it", the lord said to the Earth. O excellent sages, the conceiver and creator of the living beings took up jewels from the residence of Naraka.

31. The lord of unequalled exploits saw sixteen thousand one hundred virgins in the harem, O excellent brahmins.

32-35. He saw six thousand terrible elephants with four tusks and two million and one hundred thousand Kamboja horses. Immediately the lord despatched those girls, elephants and horses to Dvārakā through the servants of Naraka. The umbrellas of Varuṇa and the jewel mountain were put on the

back of Garuḍa the lord of birds. Accompanied by Satyabhāmā, Kṛṣṇa mounted Garuḍa and went to Heaven to restore ear-rings to Aditi.

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The prayer by Indra

Vyāsa said :

1. Playfully carrying the umbrella of Varuṇa, the jewel mountain and bearing lord Kṛṣṇa on his back accompanied by his wife, Garuḍa went ahead.
2. Lord Kṛṣṇa reached the gateway of heaven and blew the conch. Then Devas approached the lord along with the vessels full of materials of worship.
3. After being worshipped by Devas, Kṛṣṇa entered the abode of the mother of Devas that had the shape of the peak of white mountain. After entering it he saw Aditi.
4. Accompanied by Indra he bowed to her. The lord gave her the excellent earrings and intimated to her the death of Naraka.
5. Then Aditi the mother of Devas was pleased. Unruffled, she directed her mind to the lord who is the creator of the worlds and eulogised him.

Aditi said :

6. Obeisance to you, O lotus-eyed one, O lord causing fearlessness to devotees, O lord, the eternal Ātman, O Ātman of living beings, O Ātman of everything, O creator of living beings.
- 7-10. You are of the nature of vital airs, soul and mind, intellect and sense-organs. You are beyond three attributes. O pure one, you are devoid of mutually clashing opposites. O lord stationed in the heart of all, O lord devoid of all conceptions such as those of whiteness, and length. You are untouched by birth, You are devoid of dreamy state. You are all these—dusk, night, day, Earth, firmament, wind, water, fire,

mind, intellect and subtle elements. You are Acyuta, the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction; you are the lord of makers and doers. With your forms named Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, you are the lord of all. This universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings is pervaded by your Māyā.

11. O lord, if one takes the non-Ātman to be the Ātman, this misconception is your Māyā. It is from this that the ideas of 'I', 'Mine' etc. emerge.

12-19. O lord, this is the activity of your Māyā amid the ocean of worldly existence.

Those men who are devoted to their own Dharmas and by whom you have been propitiated, surmount all this Māyā and proceed to self-liberation.

Brahmā and Devas, human beings and animals are enveloped by the darkness of delusion. They are involved in the great whirlpool of your Māyā.

O lord, these men bound by your Māyā desire to obtain all desires when rebirths of the Ātman cease, after propitiating you.

You were propitiated by me with a longing for sons and for the extermination of the hosts of foes. It was not for liberation. Indeed, it is the activity of Māyā.

It is like the longing for loin-cloth and similar things from the wish-yielding Kalpa tree. This kind of guilt happens in the case of those who perform meritorious deeds deriving worldly fruits. It originates from their own defects.

Hence, be pleased, O unchanging lord, who cause illusory delusion into the entire universe. Destroy our ignorance, O lord of all living beings having perfect knowledge and good intention.

Obeisance to you, to the discus-armed one, obeisance to you who have the conch in your hand. Obeisance to the deity holding the ironclub. O Viṣṇu, obeisance to you, having lotus in your hand.

I see your form rendered splendid by gross signs and symbols. I do not know the greatest principle. O Supreme lord be pleased.

Vyāsa said :

20-23. Thus eulogised by Aditi the lord laughed and spoke to Aditi.

Śrīkrṣṇa said :

O gentle lady, you are our mother. Be pleased. Be one that bestows boons.

Aditi said :

Let it be as you wish. O tiger among men, you will be unconquerable by Devas, Asuras and human beings.

Vyāsa said :

Immediately thereafter, Satyabhāmā accompanied by Sacī bowed to Aditi and said again and again—'Be pleased'.

Aditi said :

24. O lady of fine eye-brows, due to my favour you will never have old age or deformity. O lady of blameless limbs, you will enjoy all worldly pleasures.

Vyāsa said :

25. Permitted by Aditi, the king of Devas duly worshipped the lord with adequate reverence.

26. Then, O excellent ones, Kṛṣṇa accompanied by Satyabhāmā visited the divine gardens and parks such as Nandana.

27-28. There Keśava, the lord of the Universe, the destroyer of Keśin saw the Pārijāta tree which put forth bunches of excessively fragrant flowers, which was divine, which caused cool comfort and delight, which was beautified by tender sprouts, which had the lustre similar to that of gold and which was produced when the milk ocean was churned for getting nectar.

O excellent brahmins, on seeing the Pārijāta tree, Satyabhāmā spoke to the lord.

Satyabhāmā said :

29-32. O Kṛṣṇa, why is not this tree taken to Dvārakā ?

If these words of yours are true—"Satyā is my most beloved one", let this tree be taken to my house for beautifying my garden. O Kṛṣṇa, these pleasing words are often mentioned by you to me—"O Satyā, neither Jāmbavatī nor Rukminī is so much desired by me as you are". If, O lord, those are not mere complimentary flattering words, if they are really meant, let this Pārijāta be an ornament to my house.

I shall appear very splendid amongst my co-wives if I wear the bunch of its flowers on my braid of hair. Hence I desire for it.

Vyāsa said :

33. The lord who was requested thus laughingly placed the Pārijāta tree on Garuḍa. Then the guards of the park said.

The guards of the park said :

34. O lord, Śaci is the crowned queen of Devas. It does not behove you to take away the Pārijāta tree specially adopted by her.

35. When the milk ocean was being churned for obtaining nectar, this tree had been adopted by Devas for embellishing Śaci. If you take this, you will not go safe and secure.

36. You seek for this Pārijāta out of foolishness. Who will go out safe and secure if he takes this with him? O Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Devas will indeed be furious over this.

37. The immortal ones will follow Indra with the thunder-bolt raised up in his hand. Hence, O Acyuta, enough of your attempts to quarrel with Devas. Scholars do not praise that action which is very bitter in its result.

Vyāsa said :

38-44. When this was mentioned by him, the infuriated Satyabhāmā said :—

Satyabhāmā said :

Who is Śaci and who is Indra the lord of Devas, in regard to this Pārijāta tree? This Pārijāta tree is common to the worlds. It originated formerly (as common to all). Why should Indra

alone take it? Just like the wine, moon or Śri, O guards of the park, this tree born of the ocean is common to all.

If Śaci clings to this, on account of her pride in the mighty arms of her husband, go quickly to her and mention these words—Satyabhāmā says in words couched in her pride over her husband, “If you are the beloved of your husband, if you are fond of him, prevent my husband from removing this tree. I know your husband Indra. I know the lord of Devas. Still I, a human being, shall remove this Pārijāta.”

Vyāsa said :

45. The guards of the park who were addressed thus, went to Śaci and told her what they were told. Śaci then encouraged her husband the over-lord of Devas.

46. Then, O brahmins, Indra who was surrounded by the armies of Devas began to fight over the Pārijāta tree.

47. Then Indra stood ready with the thunderbolt in his hand. Devas also stood in readiness holding their weapons such as iron clubs, sword and tridents.

48-50. On seeing Indra seated on his lordly elephant, surrounded by Devas and approaching him for a battle, the lord blew on his conch. He filled the quarters with sounds. He discharged thousands and ten thousands of arrows. On seeing the quarters and the firmament covered with hundreds of arrows, Devas discharged many missiles and weapons.

51. Then lord of the worlds playfully split each of the missiles and weapons discharged by Devas, into a thousand bits.

52. Garuḍa snatched the noose of the king of waters (i.e. Varuna), split it into bits like the body of a young serpent and moved about.

53. The lord, the son of Devakī, struck down on to the ground the staff discharged by Yama. It was broken when he hurled his iron club at it.

54. The lord Kṛṣṇa smashed the palanquin of the god of wealth into minute bits like gingelly seeds. The sun and the moon lost their prowess as it was destroyed by a single glance of the lord.

55. The fire god was split into hundreds by means of arrows. The Vasus were made to flee in all directions. The tips of the tridents of Rudras were split by the discus and the Rudras themselves were struck down on to the ground.

56. The Sādhyas, Viśvedevas, Maruts and Gandharvas were sent up into the sky like the cotton bits from a Śālmali tree by the Śāringa-bearing lord through his arrows.

57. Garuḍa killed and ate Devas and Upadevas by means of his beak, wings and claws.

58. Then Indra, the lord of Devas, and lord Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Madhu showered each other with a thousand arrows like two clouds by heavy downpours.

59. In the utter confusion obtaining there, Garuḍa fought with Airāvata and lord Kṛṣṇa with Devas accompanied by Indra.

60. When weapons and missiles were split and scattered, Indra hastily seized the thunderbolt and Kṛṣṇa took up his discus Sudarśana.

61. On seeing the king of Devas and Śrī Kṛṣṇa holding up their thunderbolt and discus respectively the whole of the universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings raised a hue and cry.

62. Lord Kṛṣṇa caught hold of thunderbolt hurled by Indra. Without releasing his discus he told him 'stay, stay'.

63. As the king of Devas lost his thunderbolt, as his vehicle was wounded by Garuḍa, he became inclined to run away then. Satyabhāmā spoke to him.

Satyabhāmā said :

64. O lord of three worlds, it is not proper for the husband of Sacī to run away. Sacī will honour you with a big garland of Pārijāta flowers.

65. Of what nature is your divine realm? You are unable to see Sacī approaching you lovingly as before shining with the Pārijāta garlands.

66. O Indra, enough of your endeavour. It does not behove you to be ashamed. Let this Pārijāta tree be taken away. Let Devas be rid of pain.

67. On account of her excessive pride and arrogance Śaci did not view me with reverence as I went to her house. Nor did she honour me.

68. Being a woman, my mind is very light. I was devoted to the praise of my husband. Therefore, O Indra I picked up a quarrel with you.

69. Hence, enough of this Pārijāta which is another man's property. Why should it be taken away? Which woman does not become proud due to beauty and fame.

Vyāsa said :

70. O brahmins, when addressed thus the king of Devas returned and said to her :

O my angry friend, stop from expatiating on a sorrowful fact.

71-73. I do not experience any shame on being conquered by that lord of universal form who is the cause of creation, sustenance and annihilation of the universe.

He is without a beginning or a middle or an end. The worlds are resting in him. They originate from him. He is the cause of origin, protection and annihilation. O gentle lady, if I am routed by him how can I feel ashamed of it?

Who can conquer him? His form is the entire world. It is subtle and minute. It is known only to those who have understood the Vedas. He is unborn, and unmade. He is the permanent lord. He is the primordial lord who can remove universe if he pleases. Who can conquer him?

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Lord Kṛṣṇa marries sixteen thousand and one hundred virgins

Vyāsa said :

1. O excellent brahmins, eulogised thus by the king of Devas, lord Kṛṣṇa laughed and spoke in an emotionally majestic manner.

The lord said :

2. You are Indra, the king of Devas. O lord of the universe, we are mortals. The crime committed by me should be excused by you.

3. May this Pārijāta tree be taken to its proper site. O Indra, it was at the instance of Satyā that it was taken by me.

4. Take back this thunderbolt which had been hurled at me by you. O Indra, it is your own weapon that pierces enemies.

Indra said :

5. O Lord, why do you try to delude me by saying "I am a mortal". We know you; we are conversant with the infinite happiness.

6. As you are, so you are, O lord of the universe. O lord, you are firmly fixed in your work. O slayer of Asuras, you remove thorns of the universe.

7. O Kṛṣṇa, may this Pārijāta tree be taken to Dvāravatī. Except with you this will not remain anywhere else in the mortal world.

Vyāsa said :

8. After saying "So be it" to the lord of Devas Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to the Earth, eulogised by the liberated Siddhas, Gandharvas and sages.

9. Taking the excellent tree with him, Kṛṣṇa hastened. He then reached the aerial space over Dvārakā and blew the conch.

10. O brahmins, getting down from Garuḍa in the company of Satyabhāmā he delighted the residents of Dvārakā.

11. He fixed the great tree Pārijāta in his garden. People who approached it were able to remember their previous birth.

12-18. The ground three Yojanas all round it was rendered fragrant by the sweet scent of its flowers. Coming and looking at it, the Yādavas saw divine and superhuman scents on that tree.

Kṛṣṇa took possession of elephants, horses, and other wealth brought by the servants from the collection of Naraka.

Kṛṣṇa, on an auspicious day married damsels brought from Narakā's residence.

O excellent brahmins, with a separate body for each of these, Kṛṣṇa married them in accordance with piety. There were sixteen thousand and one hundred women or even more. Lord Kṛṣṇa took up as many forms. But those virgins considered him as their sole lord individually, thinking, "Kṛṣṇa married me alone."

During the nights, O brahmins, Kṛṣṇa the creator of the universe, Kṛṣṇa of universal forms, stayed in the abodes of all of them.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Vydsa said :

1. Pradyumna and other sons of Kṛṣṇa born of Rukmiṇī, have already been mentioned. O brahmins, Satyabhāmā gave birth to Bhānu and other sons.

2. Prapakṣa and others were the brilliant sons of Rohiṇī and Kṛṣṇa. Sāmba and others of mighty arms were born to Jāmbavatī.

3. Bhadravinda and other powerful sons were born to Nāgnajiti. The sons the chief of whom was Saṅgrāmajit were born as sons of Saibyā.

4. Mādrī's sons were Vṛka and others. Lakṣmaṇā had sons the chief of whom was Gotravān. Śruta and others were the sons of Kālindī.

5. The discus-bearing lord had sons in other wives too. On the whole, he had eighty-eight thousand and one hundred sons.

6. Among them Pradyumna was the eldest. He was the son of Rukmiṇī. Aniruddha was the son of Pradumna and Vajra was born to him.

7. O excellent brahmins, Aniruddha of great strength who had been held as a prisoner of war, married Uṣā, the Daughter of Bāṇa and the grand-daughter of Bali.

8. In the course of events, Kṛṣṇa and Śaṅkara fought with each other during which the thousand arms of Bāṇa were cut off by the discus-bearing lord.

The sages said :

9-10. O holy brahmin, how did the fight between Śaṅkara and Kṛṣṇa take place for the possession of Uṣā ? How did Hari destroy the arms of Bāṇa ? O highly blessed one, it behoves you to mention all this to us. Our curiosity to hear this splendid story is great.

Vyāsa said :

11-12. O brahmins, on seeing Pārvatī sporting about with Sambhu, Uṣā the daughter of Bāṇa too desired it very much. Gaurī conversant with the workings of everyone's mind spoke to that beautiful damsels—“Enough of your yearning too much. You will also sport about with your husband”.

Vyāsa said :

13. Thus consoled by Pārvatī, she thought within herself—“When ? Who will be my husband ?” Pārvatī then said to her again.

Pārvatī said :

14. “O princess, that person will be your husband, the person who will molest you in your dream on the twelfth day in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha”.

Vyāsa said :

15. On that day, in the manner mentioned by the goddess a man molested her in the course of her dream. She too loved him. When she woke up she did not see the man. She became very eager.

Uṣā said :

16-18. “Where have you gone ?” said Uṣā without bashfulness. O brahmins, she said to her friend. The minister of Bāṇa was Kumbhāṇḍa. Citralekhā, his daughter was the friend of Uṣā. She asked her “Who is being mentioned by you ? In her

bashfulness she at first denied everything. Her friend thereupon created confidence in her and heard everything through her own words. After mentioning everything when everything was known by her Uṣā said :—"Immediately do something by way of employers to attain him as mentioned by the goddess."

Vyāsa said :

19-22. Citralekhā then drew the pictures of Devas, asuras, Gandharvas, and human beings, on a cloth and showed them to Uṣā. She turned her face from Gandharvas, Suras and Asuras. She began to look at human beings especially at Andhakas and Vṛṣnis. On seeing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma the lady of fine eyebrows became bashful. O brahmins, on seeing Pradyumna she turned her bashful glance away from him. When her real lover, the son of Pradyumna was seen, she said—"It is he, It is he. He is my husband." Citralekhā then consoled Uṣā and went to Dvāravatī traversing the path by her Yogic power.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

Uṣā and Aniruddha were brought back

Vyāsa said :

1-2. Bāṇa bowed down in front of the three-eyed lord and said—O lord, without any battle (to fight) I am disgusted with my thousand arms. Will there be any battle at all, making my arms fruitful ? Without a battle they are conducive to be burdensome. Of what avail are they to me ?

Śaṅkara said :

3. O Bāṇa, when there is an unprecedented breakage in your flagstaff you will have a war that will delight the flesh-eating asuras.

Vyāsa said :

4. Joyously he bowed down to Śambhu and returned to his mansion. On seeing breakage in his flagstaff he was very much delighted.

5-6. In the meantime, by virtue of her yogic power, Citralekhā the excellent friend (of Uṣā) brought Aniruddha to the harem of virgins. The guards came to know that he was indulging in sexual intercourse with Uṣā. They went to their king and intimated everything to him.

7. Aniruddha the destroyer of heroic enemies seized a great iron beam and killed the army of servants sent against him by that noble king.

8-10. When they were killed, Bāṇa himself came there seated in his chariot. He endeavoured to slay him. Fighting to his ability (Bāṇa) was defeated by the heroic (Aniruddha). Thereupon Bāṇa fought with him by means of his Māyā. Discharging a serpent missile by means of mantras he bound the scion of the family of Yadu. At Dvāravatī the members of the family of Yadu began to cry aloud—"Where has Aniruddha gone?" Nārada told them that he had been imprisoned by Bāṇa.

11-12. The Yādavas had already heard that Aniruddha was carried off by a woman who was an expert in Yogic lore, to Śonitapura¹ the capital city of the asura monarch Bāṇa. Hence, they believed in what Nārada said. Accordingly lord Kṛṣṇa mounted Garuḍa who came to him immediately on being remembered and went to Bāṇa's city accompanied by Balarāma and Pradyumna.

13. At the entrance to the city he had a fight with the very powerful Pramathas. After destroying them, he went near Bāṇa's city.

14. Then the great Jvara (Fever) pertaining to Maheśvara who had three feet and three heads, fought severely with the Śāringa-bow-bearing lord for the sake of protecting Bāṇa.

15-18. Due to contact with Kṛṣṇa's body Balarāma too experienced the heat originating from a touch of its Bhasman. Hence, he kept his eyes closed together with him. He began to fight with the Śāringa-bearing lord. But (the Jvara of Maheśvara)

6. *Sonitapura* : This capital city of Bāṇa was protected by Śiva, Kārttikeya, Bhadrakāli, Agni and other divinities. In the battle between Śrikṛṣṇa and Bāṇa, the former defeated all the sentries and entered the city through the northern gate. Within the fort Bāṇa was defeated. Śrikṛṣṇa, then released Aniruddha and Uṣā from their prison.

was dispelled from the body of Kṛṣṇa by the Jvara pertaining to Viṣṇu. On seeing him (i. e. Maheśvara Jvara) agitated due to the painful blow of Nārāyaṇa's arms, lord Pitāmaha said "kindly excuse him." Thereupon saying— "O I have already forgiven", lord Kṛṣṇa dissolved the Vaiṣṇava Jvara within himself.

19. Lord Kṛṣṇa said thus to Maheśvara Jvara—"Those who remember our fight between us shall be free from fever. After saying this lord Kṛṣṇa went away.

20. Then the lord defeated and destroyed the five fires. Viṣṇu playfully smashed the army of Asuras.

21. Then the son of Bali, Śaṅkara and Kārttikeya assisted by the entire army of asuras fought with Kṛṣṇa.

22. The fight between Kṛṣṇa and Śaṅkara was very terrible. The worlds were agitated when they were harassed by weapons and missiles.

23. The battle raged furiously. Then Devas thought :— "Certainly the dissolution of the universe has arrived".

24. Kṛṣṇa made Śaṅkara burst open Jṛmbhaṇa missile. Thereby the Pramathas and Daityas perished all round.

25. Śaṅkara who was attacked by Jṛmbhā (Yawning) sat within his chariot. He could not fight with Kṛṣṇa of unimpaired activities.

26. Guha's vehicle was destroyed by Garuḍa. He himself was affected by Pradyumna's missile. His trident was blown off by a hissing angry sound of Kṛṣṇa. So Guha fled away from the field.

27-28. When Śaṅkara burst open, (?) when the army of the asuras perished, when the army of the Pramathas was destroyed by the lord with the bow named Śāringa and when Guha was defeated, Bāṇa came there to fight with the soldiers of Kṛṣṇa's son. He was seated in a great chariot where the horses were managed by Nandiśa.

29. Balarāma of great prowess hit the army of Bāṇa by means of many arrows. Pradyumna did not go astray from virtue. He abided by the rules of war as laid down in the śāstras.

30. Bāṇa saw his army crushed and suppressed by Bala by means of his iron club after being dragged by the tip of his

ploughshare, as well as by the arrows of the discus-bearing lord.

31-32. Then there was a brief encounter of Kṛṣṇa with Bāṇa. They hurled blazing arrows at each other piercing through their armour. Kṛṣṇa cut off those arrows discharged by Bāṇa by means of his own arrows. Bāṇa hit and pierced Kṛṣṇa and the discus-bearing lord pierced Bāṇa.

33. Then, O brahmīns, Bāṇa and Kṛṣṇa were eager to conquer each other. They hurled missiles and iron clubs at each other.

34-35. When all the weapons were being cut off, when the miraculous missiles became ineffective, Kṛṣṇa decided to kill Bāṇa with a massive use of force. Thereupon, lord Kṛṣṇa whose splendour was like that of a hundred suns and who was the enemy of Asuras took up Sudarśana, his discus.

36. Even as Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Madhu, was going to hurl discus for the destruction of Bāṇa, the naked goddess Koṭarī, the demoniac lore, appeared before him.

37. On seeing her in front Kṛṣṇa closed his eyes and discharged Sudarśana against Bāṇa in order to cut off the thousand arms of his enemy.

38-40. Hurled by Acyuta, the discus gradually cut off the arms of Bāṇa. When the arms were cut off the discus immediately returned to the hands of the lord. Because of the hurling of many weapons and missiles by the Asura, Kṛṣṇa decided to hurl the discus at Bāṇa for slaying him. When this was known by the enemy of Tripuras, the husband of Umā, he rushed at Kṛṣṇa. On seeing the blood gushing out from the body of Bāṇa because his arms had been cut off, Rudra spoke with gentle words of overtures.

Rudra said :

41. O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, O lord of the universe, I know that you are Puruṣottama the great lord, the great Ātman the greatest being without beginning or without end.

42. Your sport inasmuch as you take up physical forms among Devas, animals and human beings, is characterised by the slaying of Daityas.

43. Be pleased, O lord, fearlessness (freedom from fear) has been offered to Bāṇa by me. The words uttered by me should not be falsified by you.

44. He has grown old in serving me and having my support. O unchanging one, it is not your fault. (?) Boons have been granted to this Daitya by me. Hence, I request for your forbearance.

Vyāsa said :

45. Thus requested, Kṛṣṇa became delighted as evidenced by his bright face. His anger towards the Asura disappeared. He spoke to the Trident-bearing lord of Umā.

The lord said :

46. O Śaṅkara, may Bāṇa live (since) he has been granted boons by you. The discus has been withdrawn by me out of deference for your words.

47. The freedom from fear granted by you is the freedom from fear granted by me. O Śaṅkara, it behoves you to see yourself not different from me.

48-49. It is those men who had been deluded by ignorance that see all these differences. What I am, so you are. (We are identical with) this universe including Devas, Asuras and human beings.

Vyāsa said :

50. After saying this Kṛṣṇa went to that place where the son of Pradyumna had been imprisoned. When dried up by the winds of Garuḍa the serpents that fettered him perished.

He made Aniruddha sit on Garuḍa alongwith his wife. Thus Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa and Pradyumna came to Dvārakā.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The burning of Kāstī

The sages said :

1-2. Kṛṣṇa who assumed human form performed great deeds. Playfully he defeated Indra, Śaṅkara and Devas. May his other activities too notwithstanding the divine intercession, be mentioned. We are very eager to hear.

Vyāsa said :

3. O excellent sages, even as I narrate, let this be listened to with great attention how Vārāṇasī was burned by Kṛṣṇa during his incarnation as a human being.

4. (Defective) Paundraka, king of Vārāṇasī was told by the people deluded by ignorance—"Vāsudeva has taken incarnation on the Earth. You are that incarnation."

5. Accordingly, he thought that he was the incarnation of Vāsudeva on the Earth. He who lost all faculty of reasoning adopted the symbols of Viṣṇu. O excellent brahmins, he sent a messenger to Kṛṣṇa.

6-7. "Leave off the discus and other symbols that pertain to me. O foolish one, eschew everything pertaining to Vāsudeva. For the sake of your sustenance bow unto me".

When he was addressed thus, Kṛṣṇa said to the messenger.

The lord said :

8-12. Go and tell Paundraka thus : "I shall leave my symbol, the discus on you (I shall hurl it against you) O messenger, may these words be mentioned as mine.

"The good intention behind your words has been understood. May what should be done be carried out. I shall come to your city taking the symbols with me. I shall discharge discus certainly towards you. Since you have commanded me to come I shall carry it out tomorrow without delay. O king, seeking refuge in you, I will do that whereby there will not be further fear from you."

Vyāsa said :

13. When the messenger who had been instructed thus,

had gone away, Kṛṣṇa rode on Garuḍa who came to him on being remembered, and hastened to that city.

14. On hearing about the endeavour of Kṛṣṇa and that of his (Paundraka's), the lord of Kāśī came as his supporting ally, with all his armies surrounding him.

15. With a great army (of his own) and that of the king of Kāśī, Paundraka Vāsudeva marched against Kṛṣṇa.

16-18. From a distance Kṛṣṇa saw him seated in an elegant chariot. He carried discus, conch and iron club in his hands and he held a lotus with another hand. He wore a garland and held the bow Śāringa. The emblem of Garuḍa adorned his banner. Kṛṣṇa saw the scar Śrivatsa marked on his chest. He wore a crown on his head and earrings too. He was clad in yellow robes. On seeing him, lord Kṛṣṇa laughed heartily.

19. O brahmins, he fought with his army that was very strong in elephants and horses and that contained swords, daggers, maces, tridents, javelins and bows.

20. Instantaneously he slew the army by means of arrows discharged from his bow and blazing like fires, and by means of hits and blows with the iron clubs and discus.

21. After destroying the army of the king of Kāśī also, Kṛṣṇa spoke to Paundraka who was deluded and who bore his own characteristic marks.

The lord said :

22. O Paundraka, through the messenger you had told me "Leave the symbols." I shall now accomplish it.

23. This discus is left off; this iron club is discharged against you. This Garuḍa has been directed. Let him mount your banner.

24. After saying this, he discharged his discus by which Paundraka was torn asunder. He was then threshed with his iron club. Garuḍa of Paundraka was smashed by his own Garuḍa.

25. When there was a great hue and cry the overlord of Kāśī stood ready for avenging the slaughter of his friend. He fought with Vāsudeva. If Kṛṣṇa cut off his head with the arrows discharged from his bow, he hurled it into the city of Kāśī, causing wonderment amongst the people.

27. After killing Paundraka and the king of Kāśī alongwith his followers Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā and sported like an immortal being staying in heaven.

28. On seeing the head of the king of Kāśī fallen in his city the wonder-struck people said—"What is this? By whom is this heinous crime committed?

29. On understanding that he was killed by Vāsudeva, his son propitiated Śaṅkara assisted by his priest.

30. Śaṅkara was propitiated by him at the great holy centre 'Avimukta'. The lord then said to the Prince, "Choose your boon".

31. He chose thus—"O lord, O Maheśvara, by your favour, may a Kṛtyā (female deity of destruction) rise up for destroying Kṛṣṇa who slew my father."

Vyāsa said :

32. When this was uttered "It will be so", a great Kṛtyā rose up from the chamber of sacrificial fire at a spot beyond Dakṣināgni.

33. It had an awful face blazing terrible with flames of fire. The tresses were dishevelled and blazing. Angrily shouting 'Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa' it went to Dvāravatī.

34. On seeing the terrible Kṛtyā with hideous eyes, the people of Dvārakā sought refuge in Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is worthy of being the refuge to the worlds.

The people said :

35. After propitiating the bull-emblemed deity this great Kṛtyā has been created by the son of the king of Kāśī for killing you, the discus-bearing lord. Kill this terrible Kṛtyā having a confused mess of matted hair blazing like flame of fire.

Vyāsa said :

36-41. Sudarśana, the discus of Viṣṇu was playfully hurled down amongst the dice as he had been engaged in the game. It became very terrible, spitting flames of fire. Clusters of fiery flames appeared like matted hair. It pursued Kṛtyā quickly. When hit and smashed by the discus Kṛtyā rushed along quickly. The discus too followed her. Kṛtyā hurriedly entered Vārāṇasī. O excellent sages, its prowess was restrained by the discus of

Viṣṇu. Then the vast army of Kāśī and the army of Pramathas (attendants of Śiva) marched against discus. They were equipped with various weapons and missiles. They were discharging missiles and weapons.

After burning that army with its own prowess, the discus went to Vārānasi. It burnt citizens, their servants, horses and elephants.

42-43. It burnt the entire city with all its chambers and forts. Flames of fire surrounded the outer walls and arched gateways of all abodes. It was an unbearable sight even to Devas. Still the fury of discus did not abate. It was as indifferent as though very little had been accomplished. Shining and blazing as before, the discus went back to the hand of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Glory of Balarāma

The sages said :

1. O sage, we wish to hear again about the exploits of the intelligent Balarāma. It behoves you to recount his heroism unto us.

2. His exploits, such as dragging Yamunā have already been heard by us here. Hence, O blessed one, kindly recount anything else which Bala performed.

Vyāsa said :

3. O sages, listen to the activities carried out by Rāma the infinite one, the unmeasurable one, the incarnation of Śeṣa, the holder of the Earth.

4. Sāmba the heroic son of Jāmbavatī forcefully abducted Duryodhana's daughter whose Svayamvara was awaited.

5. Then the infuriated Karṇa, Duryodhana and others including Bhīṣma and Drona of great prowess bound him after conquering him.

6. On hearing about it, O sages, the Yādavas became

furious with Duryodhana and made efforts to kill the Kauravas by way of retaliation.

7. Bala stopped them and spoke to them although his words were indistinct through inebriation :—

“I alone will go unto the Kauravas. At my instance they will let him off”.

8. Then Balarāma went to Hastināpura. He camped in the middle of a park at the outskirts of the city. He did not enter it.

9. On coming to know that Balarāma had arrived, Duryodhana and others brought unto him by way of presents, greetings, along with Arghya and water for drinking.

10. After duly accepting those things he said to the Kauravas—“It is Ugrasena’s order—Release Sāmba quickly”.

Vyasa said :

11. O excellent brahmins, on hearing his words, Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa, Duryodhana and others became angry.

12. Bāhlika and all other kings too, were angry on seeing Balarāma who had the threshing rod for his weapon and realizing that the race of Yadu did not deserve a kingdom, they said :—

The Kauravas said :

13. O Balarāma, what is it that you say ? Which Yādava will pass an order on those who are born of Kuru’s family ?

14. If even Ugrasena can pass orders on Kauravas, enough of the white umbrellas and ornaments befitting kings.

15. Hence, go back, O Balarāma. Neither at your bidding will we release Sāmba whose activities are unjust.

16. Formerly, Kukuras and Andhakas used to bow unto us, for we are worthy of that honour. Now-a-days that usual obeisance is not made. What is this commanding attitude of a servant towards a master ?

17-18. (Defective) You have become haughty because you have been invited for feasts and offered seats on the basis of equality. It is not your fault that good polity pleases only when it is not expected (hopefully). He who has been mentioned by you, O Bala, is worthy of being worshipped by us and treated

with love. But that has not been acquired by your family from ours.

Vyāsa said :

19. After saying this the Kauravas remained adamant. They did not release Kṛṣṇa's son. After making this unanimous decision they entered Hastināpura.

20. Maddened by the anger originating from the insult, Balarāma lifted up his rugged ploughshare and rolled it.

21. Then the ground was pierced as the noble Balarāma kicked it with his heel. He clapped his hands filling the quarters with the sound with his eyes turned copper-coloured and knitting the eyebrows in the face he said :

Balarāma said :

22. Alas, the insignificant wicked haughty Kauravas wish to rule over us. It is brought about by adverse time.

23-24. The behest of Ugrasena cannot be transgressed. It is virtually awaited by Indra along with Devas. Still these people do not care for Ugrasena's command.

Ugrasena always occupies a seat in the divine assembly hall of Indra. But fie upon the satisfaction these people derive from the ordinary throne of a king that had been enjoyed by hundreds of men and then left over like the leavings of food.

25. The womenfolk of the servants of Ugrasena wear bunches of flower, of Pārijāta tree, still he is not a king for these people.

26. Let Ugrasena, the lord of kings stay by. I shall go to that city after making the Earth devoid of Kauravas.

27-29. I shall kill all these viz. Karṇa, Duryodhana, Droṇa, Bhiṣma, Bāhlika, Duḥśāsana, Bhūriśravas, Somadatta, Śala, Bhima, Arjuna, Yudhiṣṭhira, the twin-borns Nakula and Sahadeva, and others along with their horses, elephants and chariots. I will take the heroic Sāmba accompanied by his wife to Dvārakā and inform Ugrasena and other kinsmen.

30-33. O I shall hurl Hastināpura immediately into Gaṅgā along with the Kauravas. I have been urged by the king of Devas to reduce the burden of the Earth.

Vyāsa said :

After saying this, Balarāma, whose emblem was a palm tree and whose weapon was ploughshare, placed it with its face downwards on the top of the city outer wall and pulled. Suddenly, the city of Hastināpura rolled. On seeing it the Kauravas were agitated in their hearts. They cried out :—

The Kaurvas said :

34-35. O Rāma, of great arms, let (everything) be forgiven by you. May the fury be restrained. Be pleased (O lord) with the threshing rod for your weapon. Sāmba is released along with his wife. O Bala, your strength is realized. Let the guilt of those who have not understood your prowess be forgiven.

Vyāsa said :

36-39. O leading sages, the Kauravas came out of their city immediately and released Sāmba along with his wife.

When Bhiṣma, Drona, Kṛpa and others bowed to him and spoke pleasing words, Bala the most excellent among the strong ones, said—"I have forgiven".

O brahmins, even today that city appears as though it had been tossed about. Such is the power of Rāma. He was fully endowed with strength and vigour.

Then the Kauravas duly honoured Sāmba along with Balarāma. They bade farewell to him after offering him the appropriate dowry and sending his bride along with him.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

The Monkey Dvivida is slain

Vyāsa said :

1-4. O sages, listen ye all. O brahmins, may the other activities of Bala the powerful be heard.

There was a monkey of great prowess named Dvivida. He was a friend of Naraka the leader of Asuras, one who was

opposed to Devas. That powerful monkey nursed continuous animosity towards Devas.

Dvivida said :

Kṛṣṇa killed Naraka who was proud of his strength. Hence I shall take revenge on all Devas.

Vyāsa said :

5-10. He destroyed Yajñas and annihilated men. Deluded by ignorance he damned and demolished sacrificial rites. He violated bounds of decency. He destroyed embodied beings. The fickle fellow burnt territories, cities and villages. At places he hurled mountains and powdered villages. He uprooted mountains and hurled them into oceans. Standing in the middle of the ocean he made it agitated. Thereby, O brahmins, the ocean was excessively stirred up and it overflowed the shores, flooding the villages and cities nearby. He used to assume different forms as he pleased and crushed down plants and trees as he wandered here and there. The monkey reduced everything to powder. This entire universe was thus ruined and ravaged by that wicked monkey.

11-14. O brahmins, self-study of the Vedas and repetition of the Vaṣṭakāra Mantras ceased. Everyone was extremely miserable.

Once Balarāma, the highly blessed Revatī and other excellent ladies were seated in the Raivata garden and engaged in drinking wine. Elegant ladies were singing in the midst of highly elegant and charming assembly. The chief and the most excellent among the descendants of Yadu sported like Kubera on the Mandara mountain.

At that time the monkey came there, seized the plough-share and the threshing rod of Balarāma and began to emulate him standing in front of him. The monkey stood in front of the womenfolk also and chattered and laughed.

15-20. He struck and hit the bowls and jugs filled with beverages. Thereupon Bala, with great fury surging up in his soul, rebuked him. In spite of that the monkey disregarded him and made tinkling chattering noise. Thereat, Bala got up

in anger and seized his iron club. The excellent monkey seized a terrible rocky boulder, and hurled it (against Bala). The most excellent Yādava split it into a thousand bits by his iron club. The rocky boulder fell on the Earth. The monkey dodged the iron club and fell down. On getting up in great anger and gathering up his strength he struck him on his chest. Then the monkey was hit on his head with his fist by Bala. Thereupon Dvivida vomited blood and fell down. His life became extinct. As his body fell down the peak of the mountain crumbled.

21-23. O sages, the peak split into a hundred pieces as though it had been struck down by the thunder-bolt of Indra. Then Devas discharged showers of flowers over Rāma. They approached him and praised him "Well done. A great task has been accomplished. O heroic one, the universe had been harassed by this wicked monkey who used to render help unto asuras. Fortunately, he has been destroyed."

Vyāsa said :

Thus the activities of Balarāma, the incarnation of Śeṣa, the supporter of the Earth, cannot be measured and stipulated. There were many.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ONE

Srikṛṣṇa returns to his abode

Vyāsa said :

1-4. Thus Kṛṣṇa performed the task of annihilating asuras with Balarāma to assist him. Similarly, for the sake of universe, he destroyed the wicked kings as well. Accompanied by Arjuna, the lord disbursed the Earth by slaying Akṣauhiṇis of soldiers. After reducing the burden of the Earth, after killing the kings, Kṛṣṇa, exterminated his own family under the pretext of the curse of brahmins. Thereupon, lord Kṛṣṇa left off Dvārakā and his human form which had been his own part. He entered his own abode of Viṣṇu.

The sages said :

5. How did Kṛṣṇa exterminate his family under the pretext of the curse of brahmins ? How did he give up his human form ?

Vyāsa said :

6-7. The great sages Viśvāmitra, Kaṇva and Nārada were seen by some young men of the Yādava family in the great holy centre Piṇḍāraka.

Elated due to their blooming youth, and urged by the inevitability of the future events they embellished and dressed Sāmba, son of Sāmbavatī in the guise of a woman, and said to the sages after approaching and making obeisance to them.

The young men said :

8-13. O saintly lords, this woman is desirous of a son. What will she give birth to ?

Vyāsa said :

O sages of good holy rites, the brahmins were endowed with divine wisdom. Hence, though an attempt was made by the young men to deceive them they could not be deceived. Those brahmins cursed them to their doom. The infuriated sages replied—"She will give birth to an iron club whereby the entire family of Yādavas will perish.

Thus warned by those brahmins the young men mentioned everything precisely to Ugrasena.

An iron club came out of the belly of Sāmba. Ugrasena powdered that iron club and scattered the powder into ocean. It grew into an Airaka reed. O brahmins, when the iron club was powdered, there remained a piece which could not be reduced to powder by the Yādavas. It had the shape of a miniature iron club.

14-17. It was also cast off into the ocean. A fish swallowed it. When it was killed by the fishermen the iron piece came out of its belly which a hunter immediately caught hold of. Though Kṛṣṇa understood the truth, and though he was all-powerful, he did not wish to alter the course of events as brought about by the fate.

A certain messenger, sent by Devas visited Kṛṣṇa and said : “O lord I have been sent as a messenger by Vasus, Aśvins, Maruts, Ādityas, Rudras, Sādhyas and other Devas. O lord, Indra submits to you. O lord may it be listened to.

Devas said :

18-21. The lord has incarnated for reducing the burden of the Earth. More than a hundred years have gone by. You have been propitiated by Devas since Daityas of evil conduct have been killed. The burden of the Earth has been brought down. Let Devas with you as their leader go back to heaven. O lord of the universe, you have spent more than a hundred years on this Earth. If it pleases you, kindly repair to heaven. Our lord is intimated thus by Devas—If you still desire to be here we, your followers and servants, too, will have to be here alone for the requisite period of time.

The lord said :

22. O messenger, I know fully well what you say. But the destruction of Yādavas is only just started by me.

23. If they remain unexterminated, they will constitute a great burden unto the Earth. Hence I shall hurriedly bring that down within seven nights.

24. In the same manner as it had been taken from the ocean I shall replace Dvārakā in the ocean, exterminate Yādavas and then return to heaven.

25. I shall cast off my human body too, assisted by Saṅkarṣaṇa. It should be considered by the leader of Devas that I have come there.

26-27. The burden of Yādavas on the Earth is greater than the burden of Jarāsandha and others who have been killed. Hence, after bringing down this very great burden of the Earth, I shall go over there in order to protect the world of immortal beings. Please tell them thus.

Vyasa said :

28. Thus informed by Vāsudeva O sages, the divine messenger bowed to him and went to heaven near the king of Devas.

29. Day and night the lord witnessed evil omens in heaven, on Earth and in the sky as well, indicating the destruction of Dvārakā.

30. On seeing them he said to Yādavas—"See the extremely terrible evil omens. In order to subdue these, we shall go to Prabhāsa. Do not delay".

31-32. Uddhava the great devotee of the lord bowed down to Kṛṣṇa and said :

"O lord, mention to me. What has to be done by me now ? O lord, command me now. I think the lord will annihilate this entire family. O Acyuta, I see evil signs for the destruction of this family.

The lord said :

33-34. Equipped with the divine facility of movement originating from my favour, go to the holy hermitage of Badarikāśrama, on the mountain Gandhamādana. It is the most sacred spot on Earth as it is the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. Keeping your mind in me, you will attain Siddhi there, due to my favour.

35. After finishing this family I shall go to Heaven. The sea will engulf Dvārakā in its flood when it has been abandoned by me.

Vyāsa said :

36. Thus advised and urged by Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava bowed to him and went to the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

37. Then Yādavas, O brahmins, got into fast moving chariots and went to Prabhāsa alongwith Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and others.

38. After reaching Prabhāsa, the Kukuras and Andhakas were sanctified and delighted. As it was approved of by Vāsudeva, they indulged in drinking bouts.

39. As Yādavas went on drinking a mutual struggle ensued amongst them giving rise to a conflagration of quarrel that led to their destruction.

40. Urged by the divine fate, they struck at one another by means of weapons. When they had exhausted their weapons they took up Erakā reed nearby.

41. When the Erakā was grasped by them, it appeared as though it had turned adamantine. With this they hit one another with terrible blows.

42-43. O brahmins, Pradyumna, Sāmba, Kṛtavarmā, Sātyaki, Aniruddha, Pr̥thu, Vipr̥thu, Cārudeṣṇa, Subāhu, Akrūra and others hit and struck one another with the adamantine pieces of Erakā reeds.

44. Kṛṣṇa restrained them. They thought that he was one who had come to assist them. They bit and struck one another.

45. The infuriated Kṛṣṇa seized a fistful of Erakā from them. Thus the iron club became the fistful of iron for their destruction.

46. As an Assailant he killed all Yādavas. Suddenly they too approached him and hit one another. Others also did likewise.

47. Then O excellent brahmins, even as Dāruka went on watching, observing, Jaitra, the chariot of the discus-bearing lord was dragged by the horses through the middle of the ocean.

48. The discus Śāringa, quivers, conch and the sword circumambulated him and went away along the solar path.

49. O excellent brahmins, within a moment Yādavas were destroyed except the mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa and Dāruka.

50. While taking their rounds both of them saw Balarāma seated at the root of a tree. A great serpent was coming out of his mouth.

51. After wriggling out of his mouth that serpent of huge dimension went towards the ocean. It was worshipped by Siddhas as well as Nāgas.

52. Taking Arghya with him the ocean came face to face with Balarāma. Worshipped by the excellent Nāgas he entered the water. On seeing the passing away of Bala, lord Kṛṣṇa said to Dāruka.

The lord said :

53-58. Mention all this to Vasudeva and Ugrasena viz.—the passing away of Balarāma, the destruction of Yādavas.

I shall remain in yogic posture and cast off this physical body. The residents of Dvārakā and Āhuka should be informed

that the ocean will flood this city. Hence all of you should stand ready with well equipped chariots and wait for Arjuna's arrival. When the Pāñdava prince comes you must not stay in Dvārakā. You must go along with him wherever Arjuna, that descendant of Kuru, may go. After going there tell Arjuna, son of Kuntī these words of mine. "These are my people. They should be protected by you in accordance with your ability".

Thus you shall accompany Arjuna taking the people of Dvārakā. Vajra shall become the king of Yadus.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWO

Lord Kṛṣṇa ascends Heaven

Vyāsa said :

1. Thus directed, Dāruka bowed to and circumambulated Kṛṣṇa and went away as instructed.
2. After going to Dvārakā he did as he was bid. He brought Arjuna there and made Vajra the king of Yadus.
3. Lord Kṛṣṇa reinstated the greatest Brahman of the nature of Vāsudeva into the Ātman and held it in all living beings.
4. O excellent ones, honouring the words of brahmins and Durvāsas, the lord remained in the yogic posture keeping one of his feet over the other knee.
5. The hunter Jarā came there, holding a great arrow fitted with the last remnant bit of the iron club.
6. O excellent brahmins, on seeing the foot of the lord having the shape of a deer the hunter stopped. With the same remnant of the iron club he hit the lord.
- 7-8. On going up (to the victim) the hunter saw a man with four arms. He bowed to him again and again and said, "Be pleased. This has been committed by me out of ignorance suspecting you to be a deer. I may be excused. It does not behove you to burn me as I am already burned by my own sin.

Vyāsa said :

9-13. Then the lord said to him—"You need not have even the least bit of fear. O hunter, go to heaven, the resort of happiness, by the virtue of my grace".

Vyāsa said :

Immediately after he had uttered these words, an aerial chariot arrived there by virtue of his grace. The hunter got into it and went to heaven. When he had gone the lord cast off that mortal body and united his Ātman with the supreme Ātman, the Brahman, the unchanging, unimaginable, pure, unborn, unaging, undying, immeasurable soul of all identical with Vāsudeva. Then he attained heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

The episode of Kṛṣṇa concluded

Vyāsa said :

1. Arjuna found out the cast off physical bodies of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and performed the requisite consecratory rites. He did the same for others too.

2. The eight crowned queens of Kṛṣṇa, Rukmini and others, took the dead body of Kṛṣṇa and entered fire.

3. Revatī the excellent lady, embraced the body of Balarāma and entered the blazing fire which cooled and delighted her by the mere touch of her body.

4. On hearing about this, Ugrasena, Anakadundubhi, Devakī and Rohinī entered fire.

5. Arjuna performed their funeral rites in accordance with the injunctions. Taking all the people and Vajra with him he left Dvārakā.

6. Thousands of wives of Kṛṣṇa went out of Dvāravati. Looking after Vajra and the people, the son of Kuntī went ahead slowly.

7. O brahmins, the assembly chamber Sudharmā, that had been brought to the mortal world by Kṛṣṇa went back to heaven. So also the Pārijāta tree.

8. It was on the day on which Kṛṣṇa left the Earth and went to heaven that the Kali age, with time for its body set in.

9. The great ocean flooded Dvārakā. The sea did not engulf the house of the most excellent one among the descendants of Yadu. This was the only thing it did not envelop in its waters.

10. Since Kṛṣṇa the lord, is permanently present there, O brahmins, the great ocean does not even today, go beyond the limit (of this house).

11. It is an abode of great merit. It destroys all sins. It is a place where Viṣṇu sports about. On seeing it one is liberated from sins.

12. O excellent sages, in the land of Pañcanada (watered by five rivers), equipped with much of wealth and foodgrains, Arjuna made arrangements for the residence of all the people.

13-14. The ladies whose husbands had been killed in the battle-field were being led by Arjuna who had the bow in his hand. On seeing them led by Arjuna, robbers felt greedy. The Ābhīras (cowherds) who were very haughty, who committed sinful deeds and whose minds were afflicted by covetousness gathered together and consulted one another.

The Ābhīras said :

15-17. Here is Arjuna armed with his bow. Alone he is leading the women-folk whose husbands had been killed. He is taking them beyond us. Let his strength be reduced and ridiculed. By killing Bhiṣma, Droṇa, Jayadratha, Karṇa, and others he has become arrogant. He is not aware of the strength of the rural folk. He treats others with contempt regarding them inferior to him in strength, especially the people of villages.

Vyāsa said :

18. Thereafter Dasyus who hurled lumps of clay and who struck with their staffs rushed at those womenfolk whose husbands had been killed. They attacked them in their thousands. Turning back, the son of Kuntī spoke to the Ābhīras laughingly :

Arjuna said :

19-24. "Return, O unrighteous ones, if you are not desirous of dying".

Vyasa said :

They disregarded his words and seized the wealth and the womenfolk from the son of Kuntī, the womenfolk who had been the wives of Kṛṣṇa.

Then Arjuna began to string up his bow Gāndīva that never became infirm in battle. But that powerful hero could not string it up.

With great difficulty he tied up the string but it became loose again. Although he racked his brain the son of Pāṇḍu could not remember the mantras with which they had to be discharged.

Arjuna discharged the remaining arrows against these. But, though they were discharged from the Gāndīva bow they did not inflict any injury. The everlasting arrows received from the god of fire became exhausted. Thus when he fought with the cowherds Arjuna was defeated and exhausted.

25-26. Arjuna thought—"It was really Kṛṣṇa's strength whereby the various kings were conquered by me through volleys of arrows".

Even as the son of Pāṇḍu was watching with wide open eyes, those excellent ladies were abducted by Ābhīras. Others went away as they desired.

27. When the arrows were exhausted Arjuna struck them with the tip of his bow. O brahmins, at the blow the Dasyus laughed derisively.

28. Even as Arjuna was watching, O excellent sages, those Mlecchas seized the excellent women of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas and carried them to their places all round.

29. Arjuna became dejected saying—"Alas; Alas, I have been abandoned by that lord." He lamented.

Arjuna said :

30. That bow, those miraculous missiles, that chariot and those horses—all these are destroyed at one stroke like the charitable gift to one who is not learned in the Vedas.

31. O, fate indeed is very powerful. Without that Ātman, I am devoid of all efficiency. I have been led to ignoble defeat.

32. These are the same arms as before; this is the same fist of mine. This is the same spot. I am the same Arjuna but without merit everything has gone worthless.

33. My superior powers and those of Bhīma were certainly effected by Lord Kṛṣṇa. Without him, I have been conquered by the cowherds. How can it happen otherwise ?

Vyāsa said :

34. Saying thus, Arjuna went to Indraprastha. There he crowned as king, the Yādava scion Vajra.

35. Arjuna saw there the highly blessed sage Vyāsa with his abode in the forest. He approached him humbly and saluted the sage.

36-41. As Arjuna bowed down to his feet, the sage closely looked at him. He spoke "Why are you so exceedingly pale and colourless ? Did you follow a column of dust kicked up and raised by goats ? Was the murder of a brahmin committed by you ? Are you miserable because your hopes of victory have been shattered ? Surely you don't have brilliant lustre (in your face) now. Were your offsprings and others rebuked while they were begging ? Have you taken any lustful interest in any woman who cannot be carnally approached ? You are lacking lustre thereby. Are you in the habit of eating sweets alone without giving a portion to brahmans ? Or were the riches of any miser removed by you ? I hope, O Arjuna, you have not been affected by the glare of the sun or the gust of wind ? Has the evil eye struck you ? How can you be devoid of splendour otherwise ? Are you defiled in the water from the nail or have you been sprinkled by the water from a jar ? Why do you very much lack in lustre ? Or have you been defeated by base men in battle."

Vyāsa said :

42. Arjuna who was thus addressed took a deep breath and said. "O holy sir, may it be heard". O brahmans, he mentioned about his mortification precisely.

Arjuna said :

43. He who had been our strength, our splendour, our prowess, our exploit, our glory, our lustre—lord Kṛṣṇa—has left us.

44-45. Without him, O sage, we are like stumps and pegs. He had been one who used to speak smilingly to us. He, the best of men, had been the cause of strength of our missiles, of our arrows and of my bow Gāndīva.

46. It was due to his supervision that glory, victory and increase of wealth never forsook us. But to our misfortune, the lord himself has forsaken us now.

47. It was through the power of Kṛṣṇa that Bhīṣma, Drona, Karṇa, Duryodhana and others were destroyed. But that Kṛṣṇa has left off the Earth.

48. To me the Earth appears like a lady who has lost her blooming youth, whose splendour is destroyed and whose lustre has vanished. O dear one, I am not the only one to suffer from the bereavement of the discus-bearing lord.

49. Due to the power and magnificence of Kṛṣṇa I was able to kill Bhīṣma and others. I was like fire and they were like moths. But today, without lord Kṛṣṇa, I have been defeated by cowherds.

50. My bow Gāndīva is well known in the three worlds due to his magnificence. But without him, it has been slighted by the cowherds by means of mere sticks.

51. O great sage, thousands of helpless ladies have been carried off, in spite of my endeavour, by the Dasyus who had batons for their weapons.

52. All the womenfolk of Kṛṣṇa, while being brought over here by me, have been carried away by the cowherds who carried sticks as their weapons.

53. It is not surprising that I am devoid of splendour. The fact that I am alive is miraculous. I have been marked by the mud in the form of insults at the hands of base men. I have been ashamed, O grand-father.

Vyasa said :

54. On hearing the words of the noble-minded Arjuna, who

was dejected and miserable, O excellent brahmins, I spoke thus :

55. Enough of your being ashamed, O Arjuna, it does not behove you to bewail. Understand that the working of time in all living beings is like this.

56. O Arjuna, Kāla is conducive to the nativity of living beings as well as to their non-existence. Knowing that Kāla is at the root of everything, be steady-minded.

57-58. Rivers, oceans, mountains, Earth, Devas, human beings, animals, trees and reptiles are created by Kāla and later they attain dissolution through Kāla. Knowing that all this is of the nature of Kāla you shall attain mental peace.

59. O Arjuna, the greatness of Kṛṣṇa is just as you say. He had taken up incarnation on Earth for reducing its burden.

60. Formerly, the Earth that had been afflicted by burden had gone to Devas. It was for that purpose that Viṣṇu who could assume any form that he desired had taken up incarnation.

61. That task has been achieved, the kings have been killed. The family of Vṛṣnis and Andhakas has been duly finished.

62. O Arjuna, there was nothing else to be done by him on the face of the Earth. So the contented lord went away as he wished.

63. This lord of Devas performs creation at the beginning and sustains during its maintenance. He is competent to annihilate as well, as has been done now.

64. Hence, O Arjuna, you must not feel aggrieved due to this discomfiture. At the moment of creative activity men will have exploits.

65. It is exemplified by the fact that Bhīṣma, Drona and other beings were killed by you alone. O Arjuna, is not this attack a deficiency in their case, as brought about by Kāla ?

66. Just as their mortification was brought about by the magnificence of Viṣṇu and through you, so also is your mortification at the hands of Dasyus. It is caused by the magnificence of Viṣṇu.

67. That lord, the lord of the universe, permeates other bodies and performs the task of dissolving all living beings in the end.

68. During the origin of this creative process the lord was your ally, O son of Kuntī. At the close of created beings those who are viewed with sympathy by the lord had been your adversaries.

69. Who could have believed at the beginning that you could kill Kauravas including Bhīṣma? Who could have believed your discomfiture at the hands of cowherds?

70-71. Arjuna, this is only a peculiar type of activity of Kṛṣṇa in respect of all living beings. The fact that Kauravas and others were defeated by you in the battle and that the women under your protection were carried away by Dasyus—this is only the lord's sport.

I shall tell you an anecdote, O Arjuna, in the manner it had occurred.

72. O Arjuna, formerly the brahmin Aṣṭāvakra was interested in staying under water for many years even as he was worshipping the eternal lord.

73. When Asuras had been defeated, there was a great festival on the top of Meru. The celestial damsels saw him on their way to the festival.

74. O Arjuna, Rambhā, Tilottamā and hundreds and thousands of other ladies eulogised and praised that great soul.

75. They praised the sage who wore weighty matted hair and who was standing immersed in water upto his neck. With humility they bent down their heads. They were eager in repeating the hymns.

76. They eulogised him so much that he became pleased with them. O most excellent among the descendants of Kuru, they eulogised that most excellent brahmin.

Aṣṭāvakra said :

77. O highly blessed ladies, I am delighted. Whatever is wished for by you, may be requested for from me. I shall grant it even if it is very difficult to grant.

Vyāsa said :

78-82. Rambhā, Tilottamā and other celestial damsels said :

The Apsaras said :

If you are pleased, O brahmins, grant what is not achieved by us ?

Others said—“O brahmin, if you are pleased we wish to obtain Kṛṣṇa as our husband”.

Vyāsa said :

Saying, “It will be so”, the sage got up from water. As he got up they saw that he was deformed with crookedness in eight ways

O scion of the family of Kuru, on seeing the deformed sage the celestial damsels laughed. Some concealed their laughter. But some laughed openly. The infuriated sage cursed them.

Aśṭāvakra said :

83-85. Considering me ugly and deformed you have laughed derisively at me. Hence I curse you.

Due to my favour, you will obtain Kṛṣṇa as your husband. But afflicted by my curse, you will fall into the hands of Dasyus.

Vyāsa said :

86. On hearing these words, the sage was propitiated by them. He said, “You will go once again to the world of the lord of Devas.”

87. Hence, O Arjuna, even the least bit of sorrow need not be felt by you. Everything has already been ordained by the lord of all.

88. Your strength, splendour, prowess and greatness have been condensed by the lord desirous of annihilating you all.

89. Death is inevitable to one who is born; fall is a sequal to rise. Close contact leads to separation in the end; hoarding leads to destruction.

90-92. After knowing all these things the learned men neither feel sorry nor elated. There are others like them who derive lessons from such events.

Hence, O excellent among men, know this. Eschew the entire kingdom. Alongwith your brothers, go to the forest for performing penance.

Hence go. Intimate to Dharmarāja (Yudhiṣṭhīra) these words of mine. O heroic one, day after tomorrow attain the ultimate goal along with your brothers.

Vyāsa said :

93-95. Thus advised, Arjuna approached his elder brother and informed him and the other brothers including the twins Nakula and Sahadeva what he had seen and experienced. On hearing the words of Vyāsa uttered by Arjuna, the sons of Pāṇḍu crowned Parīkṣit in the kingdom and went to the forest.

Thus, O excellent sages, the activities of Vāsudeva, born in the family of Yadu, have been mentioned by me in detail.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR

The glorification of different Manifestations of the lord

The sages said :

1. O excellent sage, the rare manifestation and the diverse activities of lord Kṛṣṇa as well as Balarāma in the world have been mentioned by you.

2. Listening to the story of the lord we are not contented. We wish to hear about the other manifestations of the lord of the universe.

3. There was a manifestation of Viṣṇu of unmeasured splendour, mentioned by good men in the Purāṇas. It has been heard by us as Varāha (Boar).

4. We do not know his full conduct nor the details of the process whereby the incarnation took place. We do not know the extent of the existence of Guṇas and Karmans in him. We do not know the extent of his will in the causation thereof.

5. Of what nature was this Varāha ? What was his form ? What is the deity ? What are his conduct and prowess ? What was performed by him then ?

6. The story of the great boar is conducive to the happiness of brahmins assembled at the sacrifice of those whose mind is always set on holy rites. It is pleasing to all the worlds.

7-9. O brahmin, we wish to know how Nārāyaṇa assumed the form of the Boar. How Viṣṇu, the suppressor of foes, lifted up the Earth that was within the ocean, by means of his curved fangs. It is our inclination to hear about the activities of the slayer of foes, in detail. We wish to hear about the manifestations of Viṣṇu alongwith his activities in due order. It behoves you to recount the nature of the lord, O holy brahmin.

Vyāsa said :

10. The burden of questions cited by you is indeed immense. I shall recount in accordance with my capacity. May the glory of Viṣṇu be heard about.

11. Fortunately your mind is inclined to listen to the prowess of Viṣṇu. O excellent brahmins, I shall recount to you the manifestations of Viṣṇu.

12-20. It is him that the brahmins conversant with the Vedic lore call with a thousand mouths, a thousand-eyed, thousand-footed, thousand-headed, the unchanging lord with thousand hands, thousand-tongued, brilliant lord with a thousand crowns. He is the bestower of a thousand, the devourer of a thousand, the unchanging one with a thousand arms. The various parts of the Yajña are mentioned as identical with him viz. Havana, Savana, Hotṛ, Havya, Holy vessels, altar, initiation, sacrificial twig, ladle, soma juice, winnowing basket, throbbing rod, prokṣaṇī vessel, Dakṣinā-yana, Adhvaryu brahmin who sings sāman, Sādhyā, Sadana, Sadas, Yūpa, Cakra, Dhruva, Darvi, Carus, Ulūkhalaś, Prāgvāniśa, the altar and whatever is beyond that. He is identical with the mobile and immobile beings whether short or huge in size. He is one with the rites of atonement, Arghya, Sthāṇḍila, Kuśa grass, fire that conveys the mantras and Yajñas, the share and he who conveys the share. They call him as one who partakes of his share at the outset, as the imbiber of Soma, as one who has put offering in flame, as one who has lifted up the weapon. The brahmins conversant with the Vēdas call him the eternal lord of Yajña, thousands of

manifestations of the lord of Devas, of Viṣṇu marked with the scar Śrivatsa had taken place before; they will occur in future too—so says Brahmā.

21-22. O highly blessed ones, it is about this holy and divine story that you have asked. It is based on the incarnations of Viṣṇu. It is an auspicious story that dispels sins. O highly blessed ones, listen to this with your full concentration. May your wider soul be engrossed in the lord. O sinless ones, I shall recount in due order what you ask me.

23. I shall mention the greatness of Vāsudeva, the conduct of life of the highly intelligent one, for the welfare of Devas and mortal beings as well as the origin of the worlds.

24. The supreme Ātman manifests himself on many occasions. I shall recount the manifestations that are divine, sacred and endowed with good qualities.

25. The lord of Devas, the lord of universe, who sleeps for the period of a thousand sets of four Yugas, manifests himself against some (specific) task after the thousand sets of four Yugas are completed.

26-32. The ancient lord whose splendour was as brilliant as that of the well kindled fire created all these :- Brahmā, Kapila, the three-eyed Śiva, Devas, seven sages, Nāgas, Apsaras, Sanatkumāra of great magnificence and the noble Manu who was the lord and creator of subjects. When all the mobile and immobile beings had perished, when Devas, Asuras, human beings had perished, when Nāgas and Rākṣasas had perished, the lord remained in the middle of the ocean. (At that time) two Rākṣasas—Madhu and Kaiṭabha who were very powerful desired to win him. After boundless boons had been granted to them they were killed by the lord.

Formerly, as the lotus-umbilicused lord was sleeping in the waters of the ocean, Devas and sages were born in that lotus. This manifestation of the lord of the universe is the one which pertains to the lotus. In the course of this manifestation the Purāṇa is mentioned with the same concentration as the celestial Vedas. The manifestation of the great soul is mentioned in the Vedas. In this course this manifestation, Viṣṇu the most excellent of Devas assumed the form of a Boar.

Extra seven verses

[The Yajñavārāha (the Boar of the sacrificial form) appeared thus. The Vedas constituted his face. Sacrificial posts were his legs. Sacrifice was his tooth, sacrificial fire was his face, the fiery flame was his tongue, the Darbha grass constituted his hair; Brahmā was his head; he performed great penance (?) Day and night constituted his eyes; He was of a divine form; the ancillaries of the Vedas constituted his ear-ornaments; the clarified butter was his nose; the sacrificial ladle was his snout. The great Sāman songs were his loud snorting sounds. He was glorious and full of truthfulness and piety. He was duly greeted for his exploits in due order; the expiatory rites were his terrible nails (colours). He had the form of a sacrificial animal from knee to face. The intestines were the ancillaries, (?) the Homa was his symbol, the seeds and the medicinal plants constituted his great fruits, recitations were his inner soul; the Mantras were his loins; the Soma juice was his blood; the altar was his shoulder. Havis (offering) was his scent offering; Havyas and Kavyas constituted his velocity; Prāgvarmśa was his physical body. He was lustrous, purified by different initiations. Dakṣinā was his heart. He was a Yogin in the form of a great sacrifice. The eight Upakarman rites constituted his golden ornaments round the neck; the Pravargya was his circular ornament. The different metres constituted his gait and paths; the secret doctrine of the Upaniṣads constituted his seat. He had his own shadow as his wife and assistant; he stood up like a mountain with a jewelled peak.]

33-36. The Earth extending upto oceans and consisting of mountains, tree-groves and forests got immersed in the vast sheet of water. The lord dived into the vast sheet of water and lifted the Earth by means of his curved fang, with a desire for the welfare of the worlds. The lord, the primordial cause of the world, the lord with a thousand heads reinstated the Earth once again. Thus the goddess Earth immersed into the waters of the ocean was lifted up formerly by Yajña-varāha, the one who sought the welfare of living beings.

Thus the incarnation of Varāha has been mentioned O brahmins. Thereafter (is the manifestation of) Narasimha

(Man-lion). In this incarnation, Hiranyakaśipu was killed by the lord who became a lion.

37-38. Formerly, O brahmins, in the Kṛtayuga, this enemy of Devas was the leader of asuras. He was proud of his strength. He performed great penance for ten thousand years. For a thousand years he was engaged in Japas and observance of fasts. For five hundred years he adopted the holy rite of silence.

39. Brahmā was delighted by his penance and observance of restraints by his mental control and subjugation of sense-organs and at his celibacy.

40-44. O brahmins, the self-born lord Brahmā came there on a shining aerial chariot with the lustre of the sun and fitted with a swan. He was accompanied and surrounded by all these Ādityas, Vasus, Maruts, Daivatas, Rudras, Viśvasahāyas, Yakṣas Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Diśas (guardians of quarters), Pradiśas (guardians of the intermediary directions), deities of rivers, oceans, stars, Muhūrtas (the presiding deity of time units of 48 minutes), planets traversing firmament, celestial sages, persons grown old in performing penances, the learned Siddhas, the holiest saintly kings, Gandharvas, Apsaras and Devas. The glorious Brahmā, the preceptor of mobile and immobile beings, the most excellent one among the knowers of Brahman spoke to the asura.

Brahmā said :

45. O you of good holy rites, I am pleased with your penance. Welfare unto you. Choose a boon. Obtain your cherished desires.

Hiranyakasipu said :

46-50. O grand-father of the worlds, none of these should curse me by imprecations—Devas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, infuriated sages and those who are endowed with penance. This the first boon I choose. I should not be killed by any of these things—weapons, missiles, mountains, trees whether dry or wet. I should not be killed above or below. He who is able to kill me at one blow of his hand along with my servants, armies and vehicles shall cause my death. I shall be all these : sun, moon, wind, fire, water, atmosphere, firmament, everything.

I must be anger, love, Varuṇa, Indra, Yama, Kubera, the presiding deity of riches as well as the over-lord of Yakṣas and Kimpuruṣas.

Brahma said :

51. O dear one, all these divine and wonderful boons have been granted to you by me. O dear one, you will attain all these desires.

Vyāsa said :

52. After saying this, lord Brahmā immediately went to his abode frequented by the brahminical sage.

53. On hearing about the granting of boon, Devas, Nāgas, Gandharvas and sages approached him.

Devas said :

54. O lord, with this boon, that Asura will harass us. Hence, O lord, be pleased, let the manner of his destruction be also thought of.

55. O lord, you are the self-born lord, you are the cause of all living beings, you are the creator of Havyas and Kavyas. You are the unmanifest being. You are certainly Prakṛti.

Vyāsa said :

56. Then, on hearing these words conducive to the welfare of all, lord Brahmā spoke to Devas.

Brahmā said :

57. O Devas, the fruit of penance must of course be obtained by him. But as the benefits of penance are exhausted lord Viṣṇu will slay him.

Vyāsa said :

58. On hearing these words of the lotus-born Brahmā Devas felt joyous. They returned to their divine abodes.

59. Immediately after he had obtained the boon, the asura Hiranyakasipu became haughty and he harassed his subjects.

60. He overpowered and insulted the highly blessed sages of holy rites, interested in truthfulness and piety and of subdued sense-organs.

61. That great Asura defeated Devas stationed in heaven. He kept the three worlds under his control and lived in heaven.

62. Whenever that asura became haughty due to his obtaining the boon he roamed over the Earth. He made asuras worthy of shares in the Yajñas and Devas, unworthy of shares in the same.

63-64. The Ādityas, Vasus, Sādhyas, Viśvedevas and Maruts sought refuge in Viṣṇu of great strength, worthy of being sought as refuge. They sought refuge in the eternal lord of Brahman identical with the Yajñas unto Devas and Brahman the lord of the past, present and future bowed to by all the worlds. They sought refuge in the omnipresent lord Nārāyaṇa worthy of being sought refuge.

Devas said :

65. O lord of Devas, save us today from the fear of Hiranyakasipu. Indeed you are our greatest lord. You are our greatest preceptor.

66. O most excellent one among Devas, you are indeed the supreme creator of all of us, Brahmā and others. O lord, with the eyes resembling the petals of a full blown lotus devoid of impurities, O lord, the destroyer of the enemy hosts, be our refuge for the destruction of the race of Diti.

Vāsudeva said :

67. O immortal ones, cast off your fear. I grant you all, fearlessness. O Devas, you will regain heaven as before without delay.

68. I shall kill this asura along with his attendants. I shall kill this leading Dānava haughty on account of his acquiring the boon that he cannot be killed by the leading immortal ones.

Vydsa said :

69. After saying this to the chiefs of Devas and bidding

them farewell, the lord of great strength came to the abode of Hiranyakaśipu.

70-74. The lord had half of his body human and half of the body leonine. Adopting the man-lion form, the lord clapped one hand with the other. He resembled the cloud; he had the voice and the brilliant prowess of the thick rain-bearing cloud; he was as impetuous as the cloud. On seeing the asura of great strength, guarded by the haughty asuras, the lord whose exploits were like those of a proud tiger hit and killed him with a single hand.

This manifestation of the Man-lion has been recounted. The next great manifestation is that of Vāmana. In the course of this manifestation, formerly, the powerful Viṣṇu adopted the form of a Dwarf destructive of Daityas. In the Yajña of the powerful Bali these great Asuras who could not be agitated by others were agitated by the three paces of Viṣṇu.

75-93. The following types of Asuras and Dānavas and those of the following names assailed Hṛṣikeśa who had taken the steps. They were Vipracitti, Śiva, Saṅku, Ayaḥsaṅku, Ayaḥśiras, Aśvaśiras, Hayagrīva, Vegavān, Ketumān, Ugra, the great Asura Ugravyagra, Puṣkara, Puṣkala, Aśvapati, Prahlāda, Kumbha, Saṁhrāda, Gamanapriya, Anuhrāda, Harihaya, Vārāha, Saṁhāra, Anuja, Śarabha, Śalabha, Kupatha, Krodhana, Kratha, Bṛhatkīrti, Mahājihva, Saṅkukarṇa, Mahāsvana, Diptajihva, Arkanayana, Mṛgapāda, Mṛgapriya, Vāyu. Garīṣṭha, Namuci, Śambara, Vikṣara the great, Candrahantā, Krodhahantā, Krodhavardhana, Kālaka, Kālakopa, Vṛtra, Krodha, Virocana, Garīṣṭha, Varīṣṭha, Pralamba, Naraka, Indratapana, Vātāpi, Ketumān proud of his strength, Asilomā, Pulomā, Vāṣkala, Pramada, Mada, Svamiśra, Kālavadana, Karāla Keśi, Ekākṣa, Candramas, Rāhu, Saṁhrāda, Saṁvara and Svana were the Daityas. Some of them had Śataghnis (hundred smashers) and discus in their hands; some carried iron clubs in their hands; some carried Aśvayantra weapons (mechanical devices driven by horses). Some had Bhindipāla variety of iron club as their weapons; some had tridents and mortars in their hands. Others were holding axes. Some had nooses, Mudgara iron clubs or Parigha iron clubs in their hands. The Dānavas used great rocky

boulders as their weapons. They were armed with javelins. They were awful Dānavas with diverse kinds of weapons. They were very powerful and came from different lands. There were Dānavas with faces resembling those of tortoises, cocks, rabbits, owls, donkeys, camels, boars, cats, peacocks, crocodiles, rams, cows, goats, sheep, bulls, mountain lizards, porcupines, jackals, mice, frogs, wolves, sharks, Krauñca birds, Garuḍa, mules and peacocks. All of them were terrible and awful. Some were clad in the hides of big elephants. Some were clad in deer skins. Some covered their bodies with the barks of trees. Some had blue robes. Some had turbans or crowns. Some had rings. Some wore coronets, some had long loose tresses. They were resplendent with their necks resembling the conch. They wore various types of dress and garments. They had applied diverse kinds of unguents. They wore various kinds of garlands. They seized and wielded their respective blasting weapons and gathered round Hṛṣikeśa.

94-96. With the soles of his feet and the palms of his hands he crushed Daityas. He assumed a great and terrible form and roamed over the Earth. As he grew in size and roamed over the Earth, the moon and the sun at first stood on a level with his chest. When he flew up in the sky they stood against his umbilicus. When he of unmeasured prowess further grew in size they stood on a level with his knees.

97-98. After killing the leading Asuras and seizing the entire Earth from them, Viṣṇu the most excellent among the strong ones granted the Earth unto Vāmana. Indra the manifestation of the great Ātmā named Vāmana has been recounted to you. This glory of Viṣṇu is being recounted in detail by the brahmins who are conversant with the Vedas.

99. A further manifestation of Viṣṇu the great Ātman, in the nature of a living being, is well known as Dattātreya. He was equipped with great forbearance.

100-102. When the Vedas perished, when the holy rites and sacrifices became defunct, when the rigidity of discipline of the four castes became loose and when piety weakened, it was he who restored all these. When truthfulness got lost and when falsehood prevailed, when the subjects became shattered and scattered and when virtuousness became disarrayed, Vedas were

restored by him along with the Yajñas and holy rites. The four castes were made by that great Ātman, free from admixture.

103. Boon was granted by the intelligent Dattātreya to Kārttavīrya the intelligent king of Haihayas.

104. O king, this pair of arms of thine which was placed at my service shall certainly become a thousand arms.

105. O lord of the Earth, you will protect the entire Earth. Engaged in battle you become so dazzling that you will not be stared at by the enemy.

106. This glorious and auspicious manifestation of Viṣṇu has been recounted to you. There is another manifestation of the great Ātman namely Jāmadagnya Paraśurāma.

107. In the course of this manifestation the lord Paraśurāma killed king Sahasrārjuna in battle. Previously he had been invincible to the enemies in battle by the prowess of his thousand arms.

108-109. King Sahasrārjuna was seated in the chariot. Paraśurāma struck him to ground. Sahasrārjuna was crying like the rumbling cloud. Paraśurāma assailed him. The scion of the family of Bhṛgu cut off his thousand arms by his resplendent axe. He slew him together with his kinsmen.

110. The Earth where crores of Kṣatriyas remained scattered about, the Earth that is adorned by the mountains Meru and Mandara was rid of Kṣatriyas twentyone times by the lord.

111. After making the Earth devoid of Kṣatriyas, Paraśurāma of great fame performed a horse sacrifice in order to dispel his sins.

112-116. In the course of this sacrifice, the scion of the family of Bhṛgu gave the Earth as gift unto Kaśyapa the son of Marīci. In this sacrifice precious articles were offered as gifts. Paraśurāma, the most excellent among those who fought gave elephants, horses, chariots, gold, and cows as gifts in that horse-sacrifice. For the welfare of the worlds, lord Jāmadagnya, the scion of the family of Bhṛgu, of great fame and great penance stays even today on the most excellent mountain Mahendra like a Deva. He is the manifestation

of the great Ātman of Viṣṇu, the perpetual lord of Devas, the unchanging lord. He is well known as Jāmadagnya, son of Jamadagni.

117-120. In the twentyfourth cycle of four Yugas, the lord of large eyes resembling the blue lotus was born as the son of Daśaratha. Viśvāmitra preceded him in the course of this manifestation. The lord of great arms divided himself into four. The lord resembled the sun in resplendence. He became well known in the world as Rāma, son of king Daśaratha. The lord of great renown was born for augmenting piety, propitiating the people and curbing the wicked. They say that the lord of men engaged in the welfare of all living beings stayed in the forest for fourteen years. He was conversant with all holy rites and virtuous deeds.

121-122. Followed by Lakṣmaṇa, Rāma engaged in the welfare of all living beings, performed penance in the forest for fourteen years. Lakṣmī took the form of Sītā and followed her husband (to the forest) and remained at his side.

123-127. Living in Janasthāna,¹ the leader among men performed the task of Devas. Seeking the whereabouts of Sītā, the lord of great fame killed Rāvaṇa, the ruthless descendant of Pulastyā, who had injured him. The lord killed Rāvaṇa the leader of Rākṣasas. The king of Rākṣasas was indestructible to Devas, Asuras, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Nāgas. He was in collaboration with crores of Rākṣasas. He was comparable to a mass of blue collyrium. He was invincible. He was incapable of being held. He was haughty and had exploits similar to that of a tiger. Devas dared not look at him. He was arrogant due to the boons that had been granted to him (by lord Śiva). Lord Rāma killed him along with his ministers and armies in the battle.

128. Rāma the lord of the living beings killed Rāvaṇa who had a huge body, who was very powerful and who resembled a mass of clouds.

129. For the sake of Sugrīva, Bāli the powerful lord of monkeys was killed in battle and Sugrīva was crowned in his place.

1. *Janasthāna* : A part of Daṇḍaka forest which lies in the basin of Godāvari. Rāma had lived in this forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa for a long time during the period of his exile.

130. The great Asura, the haughty son of Madhu, the Dānava named Lavaṇa, the heroic demon, proud of his boons was killed in the forest (named) Madhuvana.

131-132. Mārica and Subāhu who were the most excellent ones among strong persons, who caused impediments in the Yajñas of the sages of purified souls, were killed by that great Ātman, an expert in battle in the course of the fight. Other Rākṣasas too were killed by him.

133. The tiger among men killed Virādha and Kabandha, the Rākṣasas of terrible exploits who had been formerly two Gandharvas deluded by imprecation.

134. In the battle Rāma killed his enemies by means of arrows, that had the lustre of fire, sun-rays and lightning streaks, that had the tail ends fitted with feathers of various kinds made of molten gold and the strength of which was like that of the thunderbolt of Mahendra.

135. Weapons were given to him by Viśvāmitra the intelligent sage for slaying the enemies who could not be assailed even by Devas.

136. Formerly, when a certain sacrifice was performed by Janaka the great Ātman, the great bow belonging to Maheśvara was broken by him even as he playfully and sportingly touched it.

137. After performing these tasks Rāma the most excellent among the virtuous performed ten horse-sacrifices where flesh was offered to the deities.

138. While Rāma was ruling over the kingdom people were not malicious or jealous. They did not speak inauspicious words. Winds blew without agitation. No wealth was stolen or taken by force.

139. No widow lamented. There were no calamities. Everything was auspicious when Rāma was ruling over the earth.

140. No living being had any fear from water, fire, wind or blows (of any sort). Old men never performed the funeral rites of boys (i.e. boys never died before old men).

141. The Kṣatriyas were devoted to the Brahmins. The Vaiśyas were devoted to the Kṣatriyas. The Śūdras served the three castes without any pride or egotism.

142. Women did not stray from their husbands; the husband did not stray from his wife. The entire universe was restrained and subdued. The earth was rid of robbers.

143-151. Rāma alone sustained the people. Rāma alone was the saviour. People lived for thousand years. They had thousand sons. When Rāma ruled over the earth all living beings were devoid of ailments; there was unity among the deities, sages and human beings everywhere on the Earth. The people who are conversant with ancient legends sing the following popular folk song thus—

People had a close and real bond of love with Rāma. The intelligent lord had greatness. He was a young man with red eyes and resplendent face. He spoke with limitation and restraint. His arms extended upto his knees. He had a gentle face. He had great arms and leonine shoulders. He ruled over the earth for ten thousand years. There were the following sounds continuously in his kingdom—the sound of the chanting of Ṛks, Sāman and Yajus Mantras; the twanging sound of the bow. This sound never ceased viz. "Let this be given, let this be eaten." Rāma the son of Daśaratha richly possessed Sattva attributes and other qualities. He shone with his own brilliance, more brilliantly than the moon and the sun. He performed hundreds of holy sacrifices at the conclusion of which excellent gifts were offered to the Brahmins. He of great strength left Ayodhyā and went to Heaven. It was in this manner that the lord of great arms, the scion of the family of Ikṣvāku killed Rāvaṇa along with his attendants and went over to Heaven.

152. There was another manifestation of the great Ātman Kṛṣṇa for the welfare of worlds. It was well known in the Mathurā Kalpa (period of activity at Mathurā).

153-154. In the course of this manifestation, the powerful lord in human form killed Daityas, Śālva, Śiśupāla, Karṇa Dvivida, Ariṣṭa, Vṛṣabha and Keśi, ogress Pūtanā, the elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika.

155. Thousands of arms of Bāṇa of miraculous activities were cut off. Naraka was killed in the war. So also Yavana of great strength.

156. All the jewels of the kings were taken away by him

due to his brilliance. The kings of the Earth whose conduct was wicked and sinful were killed.

157. The following manifestation of the great Ātman is conducive to the welfare of the world. It is the manifestation of Kalki named Viṣṇuyaśas also. It will occur in the village of Śambhala.

158-159. These and many other manifestations of the lord have taken place for the welfare of the worlds. In these manifestations, the lord of great renown was praised by Devas. These manifestations are sung about in the Purāṇas by the expounders of Brahman. Even Devas are deluded in enumerating these manifestations.

160. The Purāṇa is on a par with the Vedas and Śruti (?) The enumeration of manifestation is but indicatory, not exhaustive.

161-163. The manifestations of the lord, the preceptor of the worlds, worthy of being glorified have been thus glorified. By the glorification of manifestations of the lord, the Pitṛs are pleased. He who listens to the (manifestations) of Viṣṇu of unmeasured prowess, with palms joined in reverence (attains happiness). By listening to the yogic Māyās of the lord of Yoga man is liberated from all sins. Due to the favour of the lord he obtains flourishing income, great prosperity and extensive pleasures quickly.

Thus, O excellent sages, the holy manifestations of Viṣṇu of unmeasured splendour have been glorified by me. They dispel all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE

Review of the path of the world of Yama

The sages said :

1. O sage, we are not satiated by hearing about holy meritorious rites. Greatly sung by you they are like nectar. Our enthusiasm is further increased.

2. O sage, you know everything, origin and dissolution of living beings and the goal reached through actions. Hence, we ask you, O great sage.

3. It is heard that the path of the world of Yama is extremely impassable. It causes pain and misery. It is always a terror to living beings.

4. How do men go to the abode of Yama through that path ? O foremost among eloquent persons, tell us the magnitude and extent of the path.

5. O omniscient sage, we earnestly ask you to tell us entirely. O sage, how do men avert the miseries of hell ?

6. By what means do they prevent the hellish tortures ? By charitable gifts, holy rites and observances ?

What is the distance between the human world and the world of Yama ?

7. How do people attain the heavenly goal ? By what deeds do they go to hell ? How many are the abodes in heaven ? How many are the hellish abodes ?

8. How do men of good deeds go ? How do men of evil deeds go ? What is the form and what is the magnitude ? What is the caste of the two ? Even as an individual soul is being led to Yama's abode what is its form, shape and extent ?

Vyāsa said :

9. O leading sages, listen, even as I recount. O sages of good holy rites, the cycle of worldly existence is unageing. It has no permanent existence.

10. I shall decisively mention the path of Yama entirely. I shall recount everything in detail beginning from the time of departure. I shall recount it in a manner that no one else will be able to recount.

11. O excellent ones, I shall mention the form and nature of the path about which you have asked me and also the distance between the world of Yama and the mortal world.

12. That distance is 86000 Yojanas. That pathway is very hot like the red hot copper plate.

13. That pathway should of necessity be traversed by all living beings called individual souls. Meritorious men go to the meritorious sections and the sinful go to the sinful.

14-17. There are twentytwo hells in the realm of Yama. Men of evil deeds are cooked there in separate places. The chief among those hells are Raurava, Raudra, Śūkara, Tāla, Kumbhipāka, Saṁdariṣa, Śunabhojana, Śālmala, Vimohana, Kitāda, Kṛinibhakṣa, Lālābhakṣa, Bhrama, Agnijvāla, Asipatravana. There are rivers of putrescent and purulent matter. There are rivers of blood. There is the terrible Vaitaraṇī river of foetid matter.

18-20. On that great path there is no place where the person of great fatigue can rest. There is neither the shade of trees nor lakes nor tanks. There is neither a watering shed nor a well. There is no assembly or raised platform. There is no abode or hermitage. There are neither rivers nor mountains. That great path has of necessity to be traversed by all.

21-24. When the time arrives everyone has to leave off his friends, kinsmen, riches etc. and go along that great path. All living beings whether they are oviparous or viviparous, sweat-born or of vegetable kingdom that breaks open the ground and grows, whether they are mobile or immobile, will go along that path. Devas, Asuras and human beings are under the control of Yama and they follow him. All beings termed Jivas whether a man or a woman or an eunuch have to traverse that path. All the people whether old, middle-aged or young have to traverse that path and the death may take place in the forenoon or afternoon, at midday or in the middle of the night, in the morning or at dusk.

25-28. Death may take place during childhood or in the womb. One may die at home as a householder or when one is on a journey away from home. A person may die in the forest or in water or on dry land; they may die in their abode or in a holy centre. That great journey has to be undertaken by the people who sit on the ground or on a chair or on a couch, whether asleep or awake. The creature enjoys the stipulated span of life here and at its close his vital airs cease to function even if he does not like it.

The embodied soul comes across some cause such as water, fire, poison, weapon, starvation, or sickness and thereby it is deprived of its vital airs.

29-33. The soul casts off the gross physical body made of the five elements and takes up another body from its own actions befitting the tortures undergone in hell.

For the sake of experiencing happiness and misery he derives a firm solid body. He who commits sins, reaps the adverse fruits. He who performs good deeds enjoys happiness and delight even in the abode of Yama.

The heat in the body becomes disturbed and displaced. When urged by the severe gust of wind it blazes even without fuel. It pierces the vulnerable vital spots. The organic wind *Udāna* begins to function, blowing upwards. It prevents the water and foodstuffs taken in from having a downward motion.

34. Those who make charitable gifts of water and cooked rice do not undergo any torture there along with their wives, sons and kins.

35. He who makes a charitable gift of cooked rice with the mind sanctified by faith derives satisfaction there even without (the presence of) cooked rice then.

36. The theist who has faith in God or holy scriptures, utters no falsehood and by whom severance of affection has not been effected, attains a happy death.

37. These men face a happy death :—those who are devoted to the worship of Devas and brahmins, those who are not jealous, those who have spotless character, those who are liberal in gifts and those who possess the attribute of modesty.

38. He who does not eschew virtue either due to lust or due to fury or out of hatred; he who carries out what is mentioned by elders and he who is gentle meets with a comfortable death.

39. Those who offer water to the thirsty, give food to the hungry, meet with timely death with ease and happiness.

40-45. Those who make gifts of riches conquer chillness; those who make gifts of sandal paste conquer scorching heat; those who dispel agonies and distresses of others conquer pain; those who impart perfect knowledge conquer delusion; those who make a gift of lights conquer darkness.

All these have death under delusion—the perjuror, he who tells lies, he who kills others and he who censures the Vedas.

The attendants of Yama are terrible. They have putrid odour. They have massive iron clubs in their hands. These persons are wicked in their designs. When they appear in front of him the dead man begins to tremble. He cries incessantly calling out his mother, father and brothers, O brahmins. That word Yama is indistinct. It appears as a single syllable. Due to fright, his eye rolls. There are convulsive movements in the body; he coughs and heaves a sigh. Thereafter he casts off that body afflicted by pain.

46. He attains another body having the same shape as the previous one. It is for experiencing the tortures caused by his bad Karman. This body does not originate from the parents.

47. Pain is derived by them in accordance with their magnitude, age, condition and manner of sitting.

Then the emissary of Yama binds him with terrible nooses.

48-50. When the creature's death is imminent he is distressed due to the pain. The elements have abandoned his body. The vital air comes upto his neck. The soul is ejected out of the body. He laments excessively. Having come out of the body consisting of six sheathlike vestures he becomes gaseous in form. Then he is abandoned by the parents, brothers, uncles, wives, sons, friends and preceptors.

51. Watched by those people in distress, with their eyes full of tears he casts off his body, attains a gaseous form and goes ahead.

52-54. All such dead men are taken along the great path by the attendants of Yama. They are bound with nooses and dragged along and struck with iron clubs. They are led along the great path which is full of darkness. It is very terrible and endless. It yields both happiness and misery. To the persons of sinful activities it is impassable and unbearable. It is very difficult to traverse. It is always injurious to the sinful persons.

55. On seeing the living creature with the span of life extinct, the terrible emissaries of Yama come there desirous of taking him away.

56-57. These emissaries come there seated on various animals and birds at the departure of the dying man. The animals are bears, tigers, donkeys, camels, monkeys, scorpions,

wolves, owls, serpents, cats, vultures, kites, Jackals, bees and herons.

58. The emissaries of Yama are excessively terrible and competent to frighten all living beings. They assume different forms and their faces resemble those of bears, buffaloes, vampires.

59. Some have long faces; some are hideous-faced; some have crooked nooses; some have three eyes. They have massive jaw bones, cheeks and faces. Some have hanging lips.

60. The limbs of some are smeared with blood and flesh. Their teeth come out of their mouths resembling spouts of shooting plants. They are very hideous in their shape. Their curved fangs are very fierce.

61. Their mouths resemble the nether worlds with blazing terrible tongues. The eyes are awful in their shape and size. They are shining, roving and tawny-coloured.

62. The eyes of some resemble fire or the eyes of the cat or owl. Some eyes are protruded like the eyes of the beetle. Some resemble the glowworm. Their hair are dishevelled and stand erect.

63. They are bedecked in garlands and skulls. Their limbs drip with blood (?). Their ornaments resemble terrible serpents tied up round their heads.

64. There are black serpents round their necks. They are very terrible due to their kissing sounds. Their tresses are coarse and stiff. They are terrible and they resemble fiery flames.

65. Their faces are covered with reddish brown moustaches and brown or tawny-coloured hairs. Their staff-like arms are very terrible. They hang down on either side and they resemble iron clubs.

66. Some of them have only two arms; others have four arms, still others have ten, sixteen or twenty arms.

67. There are still others with innumerable hands. Some of them have thousand arms. Terrible weapons of various forms shine in their hands.

68. These emissaries of great strength threaten the cying men with different brilliant weapons such as javelin, iron club, discus etc. or nooses, fetters and batons.

69. When the span of life of the men comes to an end these extremely terrible emissaries come to take away the creatures. All of them carry out the orders of Yama.

70. The creature assumes a physical body befitting tortures in the hell and originating from its own actions. It is this body of the creature that is taken away towards the abode of Yama.

71. With the nooses, adamantine setters and iron chains, the creature is bound by the infuriated servants of Yama. He is beaten and taken over to the abode of Yama.

72-75. The dying man falters, cries and shouts frequently "Alas, my father, O my mother, O my son." He is defiled by his own evil actions. He is hit by sharp pointed javelins, keen-edged iron clubs and iron hammers. He is tortured with the blows of swords and javelins and terrible adamantine batons. He is threatened and rebuked with thundering shouts by the emissaries equipped with thunderbolts and javelins. One by one the creatures are led by the awful and infuriated servants who beat them on all sides. The creature is in agony. He faints and mutters in despair. It is dragged and taken along the path.

76-78. The man of sinful activities goes to Yama's abode along the terrible pathway full of Kuśa grass, thorns, ant-hills, pikes, pebbles and gravel. It is infested with blazing fires fiercer than hundreds of thunderbolts (soaked in) acid. He is scorched by the blazing sun. He is burnt by its rays. He is pulled and dragged by the emissaries of Yama terribly shouting like vixens. He is bitten and dragged by hundreds of those vixens.

79. That great path has to be traversed by these sinful persons frightened in some places, terrified in some places and faltering here and there. They are shouting and lamenting due to misery.

80. The living beings have to traverse the path even as they are rebuked and burnt in their bodies. They are agitated due to terror. They run about in great dejection and agitation.

81. Men who are devoid of charitable gifts are scorched and burnt by the heated sand. They have to go along the path strewn with thorns.

82. Those who are guilty of slaying living beings have to traverse the path with their bodies emitting putrescent odour of

fat and blood with faeces and urine smeared all over as though they were unguents. They will have their skin burnt or cracked everywhere.

83. The destroyers of living beings must of necessity go along the path shouting and lamenting, cooing and chirping out of tune. They shall be in agony due to their pain.

84. Those who are guilty of slaying living beings must of necessity go along the path even as they are being pierced and smashed by javelins, iron clubs, swords, maces and arrows or by the sharp pointed tridents.

85-89. Sinners must traverse the path even as they are eaten by dogs, tigers, wolves and herons.

Flesh-eaters must traverse the path even as they are cut and severed by a jumbled mass of bubble or sawn and torn by saws and scissors.

Those who habitually eat meat must traverse the path even as they are gored by the tips of horns of buffaloes and oxen and scraped by boars.

Those who are sinful by imbibing wine shall traverse the path even as they are being eaten and stung by the swarms of bees and flies with their needle-pointed antenae.

Those men who treacherously kill their trusting master, friend or woman must traverse the path in agony and distress even as they are split and pierced through by means of weapons. Those men who kill animals and strike guiltless persons traverse the path pertaining to Yama even as they are being swallowed by the Rāksasas.

90-99. Those who take away the robes and covering cloths of other men's wives run about naked to the abode of Yama, when they turn into ghosts. They are chased by the servants of Yama.

Those wicked-minded and sinful persons who commit sinful deeds and take away cloths, foodgrain, gold, houses or fields have to traverse the path leading to Yama's abode even as they are beaten and shattered by stones, rods and batons. They shall shed profuse blood.

Those men who profess not to be afraid of hell and snatch away the wealth and property of brahmans and those base men who revile at and strike brahmans are tacked on to dry twigs. Their ears, eyes, and noses are cut off; they are smeared with

putrid blood. they are struck at by the terrible and hideous servants of Yama as well as vultures and jackals of Yama: those sinners go to the abode of Yama shouting and lamenting.

Thus the path is extremely inviolable. It has the lustre of fire: It is terrible, impassable and inaccessible. It has been pointed out (as the path to be traversed by) men. It has the lustre and colour of heated copper. It emits sparks and flames of fire. It is strewn with thorns and yellow Amaranth twigs that are hideous and that strike and bit much. It is fully covered by javelins and thunderbolts. It blazes with severe thorns. It is mixed with sand burning like coal. It is impassable on account of fires and worms. It is terrible with clusters of flames. It is all the more scorched by the rays of the sun. The embodied soul is led along this path, being dragged by the ruthless servants of Yama.

100-102. Whenever a creature shouts in misery or falls anywhere he is hit with weapons by the servants of Yama. Thus the most covetous among the sinners, and he who has no right policy is beaten by the servants of Yama who cannot be checked or resisted. Helplessly the creature is led along the path. Everyone has to traverse that impassable path.

103-104. The dying man is led along the very impassable path contemptuously by the emissaries of Yama. O brahmins, the creature is then ushered into the terrible city of copper and iron. He is taken there by the servants of Yama. That city is very extensive in magnitude. It extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas.

105. It is mentioned as a square splendid city with four main gates. The outwalls are made of gold. They are ten thousand Yojanas in height.

106-108. That city is beautified by sapphires, lapis lazuli, the great blue stone and rubies. Agitated by terrible Devas, Dānavas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and serpents that city is extremely awful.

The eastern gate of that city is splendid. It is beautified by hundreds of banners and festoons. It is adorned with diamonds, sapphires, lapis lazuli and pearls. It is full of Gandharvas and Apsarās singing and dancing.

109. The entry through this door is exclusively for Devas, sages, Yogins, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yaksas and Vidyādhara.

110. The excellent northern gate is adorned with bells and chowries. Umbrellas and chowries are placed there. It is studded with different sorts of jewels.

111. It is resonant with the sweet notes of flutes and lutes as well as charming and auspicious songs. The Sāman fills the air with sages in crowds everywhere.

112-118. Those who are conversant with virtue, those who are devoted to truthfulness and those who observe holy rites enter through this door. The following types of people too enter through this door : those who give water to the thirsty in the summer, those who offer warm fire during the winter; those who shampoo and rub gently (the feet of) tired persons ; those who are engaged in pleasing words; those who are devoted to charitable gifts, those who are the heroic ones, those who are devoted to their mothers and fathers ; those who serve the brahmins and those who worship guests continuously.

The western gate of the city is embellished with jewels. The steps are studded with wonderful jewels. The gate is beautified by bestoons in the shape of iron clubs. It is resonant with the sounds of drums, Bherī and Mṛdaṅga, conches and Kāhala pipes. It is full of auspicious chanting sounds raised by the delighted Siddhas.

It is through this gate that the delighted man, the devotees of Śiva, enter the city. The following also gain entry through this gate. Those who take holy dip in all sacred waters ; those who serve the five sacred fires ; those who die in the course of campaign ; those who die on the Kālañjara mountain; those who lose their lives in fires; those by whom the eternality has been achieved, those who are killed in the interest of their masters, friends and the general public or in the encounter with the thieves of cattle. O sages, all these people, the heroic men, enter the city through the western gate.

119-122. The southern gate of that city is very terrible. Its frightening cries of "Hā Hā" fill up the air. It is enveloped in darkness. It is infested with animals with dark-pointed horns. The place is strewn with thorns and is impassable. Scorpions, serpents & Vajrakiṭas (adamantine worms?) prick and pierce,

(everyone). There are wolves, tigers, hares, lions, foxes, dogs, cats and vultures all having flame-filled mouths. It is through this gate that all men of sinful activities gain entry.

123-128. The following types of sinners enter through the southern gate : Those who kill brahmins, cows, boys, old men, sick men, persons who seek refuge, persons who have trusted, women, friends and persons who have no weapons ; those foolish persons who indulge in sexual intercourse with the forbidden women; those who steal other men's riches; those who misappropriate money deposited or kept in trust; those who poison others or commit arson ; those who rob others of their lands, houses, beds, clothes and ornaments; those who ruthlessly wound others in their vulnerable points ; those who are habituated to utter lies ; those who work havoc in villages, cities and in different places of the country ; those who commit perjury; those who sell their daughters ; those who invariably consume forbidden food, those who outrage the modesty of their daughters and daughter-in-laws; those who speak harsh words to their parents; all others who have been mentioned as people committing great sins—All these people enter through the southern door.

CONTENTS

PART III

CHAPTERS

106. Tortures in Hell	547
107. The Goal of the Virtuous	559
108. The Cycle of Worldly Existence	566
109. Gift of food the best of all charitable acts	573
110. On the performance of Śrāddha and the associated legend	575
111. The details of the Śrāddha ritual	584
112. The details of Sapindikaraṇa Rite	588
113. Conduct of the Good	597
114. Assignment of duties to different castes and stages of life	612
115. Characteristics of mixed castes	617
116. Review of Virtue	622
117. „ „ „	627
118. Dialogue between Maheśvara and the sages	632
119. Goal of the devotees of Viṣṇu	637
120. The benefits of singing devotional songs of Viṣṇu while keeping awake at night	641
121. Manifestation of Māyā	654
122. Foretelling future	662
123. „ „ „	669
124. Description of Annihilation	677
125. The Natural Re-absorption	681

Contents

126.	The Ultimate Re-absorption	685
127.	Practice of Yoga	691
128.	Review of Sāṃkhya and Yoga	695
129.	„ „ „	701
130.	„ „ „	709
131.	Review of injunctions regarding Yogic practice	714
132.	Review of the principles of Sāṃkhya	719
133.	The perishable and the Imperishable	729
134.	A dialogue between Vasiṣṭha & Janaka	733
135.	„ „ „	737
136.	„ „ „	745
137.	„ „ „	749
138.	In praise of the Purāṇa	754

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIX*

Tortures in Hell

The sages said :

1. O ascetic, how do the sinners go to that city by the southern path? We wish to hear. Recount it in detail.

Vyāsa said :

2-3. I shall recount that extremely terrible and awful doorway which is infested with many beasts of prey. It is resonant with the sounds of hundreds of vixens. It abounds in shrieking and howling sounds. It is impassable. It makes the hairs stand on their ends. It is surrounded by goblins, ghosts, evil spirits and other Rākṣasas.

4. On seeing such a terrible doorway, those who have committed sins faint and lose consciousness suddenly. They begin to babble and prattle due to fear.

5. Then the servants of Yama bind them with chains and nooses and drag them ruthlessly. They beat them with sticks and threaten them again and again.

6. After regaining consciousness they go towards the southern door faltering at every step. They are smeared with blood.

*The chapter opens with the account of tortures inflicted on sinners or punishment for their sins. Quite a terrible picture is drawn by the narrator to create horror with a view to check the growth of crime. The descriptions of hells and the torments suffered by the sinners are motivated by this purpose. The Purāṇas refer to a number of hells by their names which differ from Purāṇa to Purāṇa. The Brahma Purāṇa mentions as many as forty-two hells while generally most of the Purāṇas mention twenty-eight hells in all.

See Devī Bhāgavata, Skanda and Viṣṇu Purāṇa Part 2, ch.6. The Purāṇas refer to twenty-eight hells. They are : (1) Tāmisra, (2) Andhatāmisra, (3) Raurava, (4) Mahāraurava, (5) Kumbhipāka, (6) Kālasūtra, (7) Asipatra, (8) Śūkaramukha, (9) Andhakūpa, (10) Kṛmibhojana, (11) Taptamūrti, (12) Śālmali, (13) Vajrakanṭakaśāli, (14) Vaitaraṇi (15) Pūyodaka, (16) Prānarodha, (17) Viśasanam, (18) Lālābhakṣa, (19) Śārameyāśana, (20) Avīci, (21) Ayahpāna, (22) Kṣārakārdama, (23) Rakṣobhakṣaṇa, (24) Śūlaprota, (25) Daṇḍaśūka, (26) Vaṭarodha, (27) Paryāvartanaka, & (28) Sūcimukha. ~

7-9. The miserable ones move ahead along the path where there are sharp thorns. It is full of gravel. There are pebbles with keen edges resembling those of razors. In some places the path is full of mud. There are unfathomable moats too. In some places there are tooth-like edges with sharp points like those of iron needles. In some places big trees have fallen down from the mountain ridges and blocked the path. In some places there are burning coals.

10-16. In some places there are dangerous ditches and pits. In some places there are slippery lumps of clay; in some places there are red hot sand particles; there are sharp pointed pikes in some places. The cross-roads are covered with iron plates which are red-hot. In some places there are forest fires. Some places are covered with hot rocks. Some places are covered with snow. In some places there are sands so loose that the pedestrians slip down therein upto the neck. In some places there is defiled water. Other places are filled with the fire of burning husk.

The pedestrians are tortured by the following, viz. lions, wolves, tigers, terrible biting insects, big leeches, huge pythons, awful flies and bees, massive poisonous snakes, wicked elephants that are intoxicated by their strength and kill, great bulls with sharp-pointed horns digging up the path, infuriated buffaloes with huge horns, that are mad and that devour persons, hideous and terrible Dākinī witches, Rākṣasas and very terrible ailments. Harassed by these pedestrians, the dead go ahead along that path.

17-21. They are struck by fierce gusts of wind mixed with huge columns of dust and striking by a great shower of pebbles. They find no place of shelter. As they go along, they are torn and shattered by the fall of thunderbolt. Everywhere they are cut and split by huge showers of arrows.

They are burned by thunderbolts and terrific meteors falling in multitudes as well as burning coal. A great shower of dust particles covers them up and they cry in agony. They are frightened by the repeated terrible sounds of clouds. They are pounded and smashed by showers of arrows. They are sprinkled and sprayed with solutions of acid as they go ahead.

22. When the extremely rough, coarse and chill wind blows against them they shrink, shrivel and become frozen.

23-24. Thus those men are led along the path without repast and rest. They do not get water to drink. The path is impassable. Thus the embodied souls, the deluded perpetrators of sinful crimes are forcibly led along that path by the terrible emissaries of Yama whose behests they carry out.

25-32. They are lonely and without friends or kinsmen. They are subject to other's will and helpless. They bewail their lot and lament continuously.

Those forbidden persons (?) turned into ghosts find their throat, lips and palates parched up. They are emaciated and terribly afraid. They are burnt by the fire of hunger. Some are bound with fetters with their legs raised up. Even as they are parched up thus, they are dragged and pulled by the emissaries of Yama of manifest strength.

These men with their faces down and others are also dragged by the servants of Yama. They are extremely miserable. Deprived of food and drink they beg for it saying "Give, please give" in a voice choked with tears.

On seeing various foodstuffs and beverages in plenty, these wretched persons afflicted by hunger and thirst request for the same with palms joined in reverence. They see cooked rice mixed with curds, milk and ghee; they observe various articles with sweet odour, they notice various kinds of fragrant and cool beverages. On seeing these, they begin to request for the same. Thereupon, the servants of Yama rebuke them with harsh words. Those terrible fellows with the tips of their eyes red with anger threaten the pedestrians and say :—

Yama's servants said :

33-38. You have not performed sacrifices at the proper time. You have not offered gifts to the brahmins. Moreover, when something was offered to brahmins you had actively prevented it. The time for the reaping of the fruits of that sin has arrived, O base men, your assets were not burnt by fire nor did they perish in water. They had not been seized by kings or robbers. Where are they now? Why were they not handed over to brahmins? These mountain-like heaps of cooked rice that are

seen here have been kept ready for those good men by whom charitable gifts of Sāttvika type have been made. There are various good stuffs and beverages—those that should be chewed and masticated, those that should be swallowed, those that should be licked and those that should be squeezed of their juice. You will not get these since nothing has been given by you before. Cooked rice is always brought and kept here for the sake of those persons by whom gifts are given in charity, Homas are performed, sacrificial ceremonies are celebrated and brahmans are worshipped. O hellish beings, how can others' fruits of piety be given away by us to you?

Vyāsa said :

39. On hearing the words of Yama's servants they lose their taste therein. They are afflicted by hunger and thirst (all the more). Thereafter they are tortured by the servants of Yama with terrible weapons.

40-41. The ruthless emissaries of Yama attack them from the rear with iron clubs, iron-rods, javelins, tomaras, pattiśas, bhindipālas and parighas. They are bit and pierced by arrows, axes and maces. The sinners are attacked from the front by lions, tigers etc. and are eaten up by them.

42. They do not get the opportunity of either getting in or coming out. They are in a highly wretched state. Those sinners are overwhelmed by their own actions. They lament piteously.

43. After restraining and afflicting them much the sinners are taken by the servants of Yama to that place where Yama himself is present.

44-45. Lord Yama is a virtuous soul. He causes piety. He restrains evil. The deceased persons who reach the city of the dead through the very difficult path are brought in front of Yama after duly informing him. Then those evil doers see that terrible person.

46-56. The eyes of the sinners are obstructed by sins. They had a wrong notion and idea of the soul before. Such sinners see Yama face to face. His face appears terrible due to the curved fangs. His eyebrows are coorked as he sees furiously. His hairs are lifted up. He has great moustache. His lower lip throbs. He has eighteen arms. He is infuriated. He resembles the blue

mass of collyrium. All types of weapons shine in his hands. He is equipped with a dreadful rod. He rides on a great buffalo. His eyes resemble the blazing fire. He wears red garlands and garments. He is as lofty as the great cloud. His voice is as loud as the rumbling sound of the cloud at the time of dissolution. He appears to drink the great ocean, swallow the three worlds and vomit fire. Near him the sinners see Death whose lustre is like that of black fire. They see the Annihilator too who is terrible and who resembles the fire at the time of dissolution. Then there is the fierce Mahāmāri (great smallpox) and the terrible Kālarātri (Nightmare). There are also different ailments terrible and of different forms. They hold javelins, tridents, goads, nooses, discuses and swords. They are terrible with thunderbolt and rod of chastisement. They hold daggers, quivers and bow. The emissaries of Yama are innumerable. They are ruthless and they resemble collyrium in lustre. They have great prowess. They have all types of weapons lifted up in their hands. Yama is surrounded by these excessively terrible attendants. The worst sinners see Yama and the terrible Citragupta. Yama rebukes those sinners severely. Lord Citragupta enlightens them by words of virtue.

Citragupta said :

57-58. O perpetrators of evil deeds, O misappropriators of other men's wealth, O outragers of other men's wives, O sinners, arrogant due to beauty or prowess! What is done by you must be endured and experienced by yourselves. Then why were evil deeds committed by you all only to ruin your own souls?

59. Now, when you are being afflicted by your own actions, why do you repent and bewail? Experience your own miseries. It is not the fault of anyone else.

60-61. O ye rulers of Earth who have come near me ! You are of evil intentions, arrogant due to your strength you have come here for your own terrible deeds. O kings, of evil conduct, you are the causes of destruction of your subjects. Why was sinful action committed by you for your kingdom lasting for a short time?

62. Due to your greed for the kingdom, due to delusion

the subjects were unjustly and forcibly punished by you. O kings, now experience the result thereof.

63. Where is your kingdom? Where is your wife, for whose sake sins have been committed by you? Leaving all that you are now stationed here in isolation !

64. We do not see all that strength of yours whereby the subjects have been destroyed. You are being hit and pierced by the emissaries of Yama now. Now see, what have you gained?

Vyāsa said :

65-70. Thus they are rebuked by Yama too by means of various words. Repenting over their sinful deeds, the kings stay there silently. After telling them the activities of the kings Dharmarāja himself spoke thus in order to rectify their sins.

Yama said :

O Caṇḍa, O Mahācaṇḍa, take away these kings. Purify them of their sins gradually in the fires of hell.

Vyāsa said :

Then the emissaries of Yama rise up quickly, catch hold of those kings by their feet and whirl them with force. They throw them up and seize them again. In accordance with the magnitude of their sins they strike them against the rocky slab in the manner of the thunderbolt hitting a great tree. Shattered thus the embodied one discharges blood through the blood vessels. Then he becomes senseless and motionless too.

71. Touched by the wind he slowly regains life. Then they throw the man into the ocean of hellish life.

72. O leading brahmins, the emissaries intimate to Yama about the people engaged in sinful activities who are now extremely miserable.

Yama's emissaries said :

73. O lord, at your behest, this man who is averse to virtue, who is much deluded and who is interested in sinful activities has been brought by us.

74. This man is greedy. He is of evil conduct. He commits

sins of various types, big and small. He is impure and he is engaged in violence.

75. This man has had sexual intercourse with forbidden women. He is a wicked man. He is a person who stole away other men's wealth. He has sold his daughter. He is a perjuror. He is ungrateful. He has deceived friends.

76. Virtue and piety has always been censured by this proud follow. A sinful deed has been committed by this wicked man in the mortal world.

77. Now, O lord of Devas, mention the modes of restraining or blessing this fellow. Our lord must be competent to lay down action against him. We will be only hindering if we do anything ourselves.

Vyāsa said :

78-83. After intimating this to the lord of Devas and placing the sinner in front of him, the servants go to fetch other men from among hundreds and lakhs and crores of hellish beings.

When the crime committed has been accepted, Yama gives instructions to his deadful servants to punish the sinners in accordance with the injunctions of Vasiṣṭha and other law givers in regard to their restraints and punishment.

The infuriated servants of Yama destroy sins. The sinners are hit and pierced with goads, iron clubs, batons, hatchets, javelins, tomaras, swords and tridents also.

The sinners, thousands, hundred, hundred thousands and crores of them, are afflicted by the servants of Yama through the faults and sins acquired by their actions. Now listen to the nature and forms of hells. They are terrible.

84-89. Listen to the names and extent of these hells as well as to the cause whereby men fall into them.

The hell, well known as Mahāvīci, is flooded with blood. It is strewn over with adamantine thorns. It extends to ten thousand Yojanas. The man who kills cows is immersed into that bloody river. He is split and torn against the adamantine thorns. This terrible ordeal lasts for hundred thousand years.

The terrible hell Kumbhipāka extends to ten million Yojanas. It contains blazing sand full of copper jars and burning

coal. It is here that the slayer of a brahmin, one who illegally takes possession of lands and one who misappropriates amounts kept in trust—are hurled and burnt until the dissolution of all living beings.

The hell Raurava is strewn with adamantine darts and shafts that blaze. It is sixty thousand Yojanas in length and extent. In that hell, men are pierced and torn by these blazing darts and shafts.

90-97. Those who commit perjury are crushed and pounded in that hell like cane stumps in the machine.

The hell named Mañjūṣā is known as one which consists of a blazing iron box. Men brought as prisoners are placed in it and burnt.

The hell named Apratiṣṭha is full of pus, urine and ordure. One who harasses a brahmin falls into it topsy turvy.

Lākṣāprajvalita is a terrible lubricous and slippery hell. O excellent brahmins, those who are addicted to wine are put into it and burnt. The hell Mahāprabha is a lofty one with blazing tridents. Those who create split between husbands and wives are pierced with tridents in that hell. There is the hell Mahāghora. There is an iron block there resembling a rocky slab. It is named Jayanti. The sinner who habitually approaches other men's wives is struck with this iron block.

The hell named Śālmala contains blazing sturdy thorny shrubs. The woman who lives with many men has to embrace these thorny shrubs. She becomes wiserable thereby.

The tongues of those who lie always, wounding the sensitive feelings of others are plucked by the servants of Yama, who are entrusted with this task. The eyes of those who view other men's wives with lustful glances are pierced with darts by the servants of Yama.

98-105 Those who outrage the modesty of their own mothers, sisters, daughters, and daughters-in-law, and those who kill women, children and old men undergo tortures in hell for the duration of the reign of fourteen Indras.

The hell named Mahāaurava is very terrible. Clusters of fiery flames spread everywhere. This hell extends to fourteen thousand Yojanas.

The deluded man who commits arson on cities, fields, houses and villages is burnt in that hell for the period of a Kalpa.

The hell that is well known as Tāmisra extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas. It is very terrible. Swords and iron clubs named Paṭṭisas and Mudgaras always fall therein. Men who steal are put therein and beaten by the servants of Yama. They are tortured with tridents, javelins, maces and swords for the period of three hundred Kalpas.

The hell named Mahātāmisra is twice as large as Tāmisra. It is full of leeches and serpents. It is devoid of light and it yields great misery. Men guilty of matricide and fratricide and those who kill friends who have trusted them remain in this hell as long as the Earth lasts. They are pared and pierced.

The hell named Asipatravana yields much misery.

106-113. It extends to ten thousand Yojanas. It is infested with blazing swords. With these swords falling in hundreds, the person who is guilty of treachery to friends is cut, struck and pierced until the dissolution of all living beings.

There is a hell named Karambhavālukā. It is in the shape of a well and it extends to ten thousand Yojanas. It is covered with blazing sands and coals and thorns. The person by whom people are continuously burnt with terrible means under false pretext is burnt or pierced for a hundred and ten thousand three hundred years in this hell.

The hell named Kākola is flooded with putrescent fluid infested with germs. Those wicked persons who partake of sweet food alone (without sharing it with others) are hurled into that hell.

The hell named Kuḍmala is filled with faeces, urine and blood. Men, who do not perform the five Yajñas and other holy rites are cast into that hell.

The hell Mahābhīma (exceedingly terrible) is full of foul smell and is contaminated by flesh and blood. Base men who are interested in eating forbidden food fall into that hell.

The hell Mahāvāta (the great cavernous pit) is infested with worms and germs. It is filled with corpses too. The man who sells his daughter falls into it with face downwards.

There is an exceedingly terrible hell named Tilapāka where

persons who are engaged in afflicting others are crushed and powdered like sesamum seeds.

114-119. There is a hell named Tailapāka where boiling oil floods the ground. He who kills friends or those who seek refuge in him, is cooked there.

There is a hell named Vajrakapota. It contains an adamantine chain. Those who sell milk are ruthlessly tortured there.

There is a hell called Nirucchvāsa. It is blindingly dark and devoid of wind. He who prevents a charitable gift from being given to a brahmin is rendered motionless and hurled into it.

The hell named Āṅgāropacaya is dazzling with burning coal. He who promises a gift to a brahmin but does not give it to him is burnt there.

The hell named Mahāpāyi extends to a hundred thousand Yojanas. Those who always utter lies are hurled into it with faces downwards.

The hell named Mahājvāla is very terrible and is very bright due to flames. A man who is intellectually inclined towards sins is burnt there for a long time.

120-125. There is a hell named Krakaca. Men who indulge in sexual intercourse with forbidden women are tortured there with saws and hatchets the edges of which are keen and adamantine.

There is a hell named Guḍapāka. It is full of boiling eddies of treacle and molasses. A man responsible for mixture in castes is thrown into it. He is burnt therein.

The hell Kṣuradhāra is full of keen-edged razors. Men who illegally seize the lands of brahmins are cut off and pared there for the duration of a Kalpa.

The hell called Ambarīṣa is kindled with the fire of dissolution. He who steals gold is burnt there for a period of a hundred crores of Kalpas.

The hell known by the name Vajrakūṭhāra is agitated by thunderbolts. Sinners who cut off the umbrellas (upper branches and leaves) of trees are tortured there.

The hell called Paritāpa is rendered blazing by the fire of dissolution. A sinner who administers poison or steals honey and wine is cooked there.

126-131. The hell Kālasūtra is made of adamantine wires. Those who cut off and plunder the vegetable products of others wander there. They are cut, pierced and tortured therein.

The hell named Kaşmala is full of phlegm and nasal mucus. The man who takes interest in wine and flesh is cast into that hell and kept there for the period of a Kalpa.

The hell Ugragandha is full of saliva, urine and faeces. Those who do not offer balls of rice unto the Pitṛs are thrown into it.

The hell named Durdhara is infested with leeches and scorpions. A man who swallows bribes stays there for ten thousand years.

There is the hell named Vajramahāpiḍa. It is made of adamant. Those who take away other people's wealth, food-grains or gold are thrown into this hell, burnt and tortured by the servants of Yama.

132-136. Those thieves are cut off into bits by razors by the emissaries of Yama.

Those deluded persons who kill living beings and eat them like crows and vultures are compelled to eat their own flesh by the servants of Yama. Those who take away the seat, bed and garments belonging to others and those who commit perjury are crushed like sugarcane.

The hell Āyasa is remembered as constituted by iron. It blazes. Those who are engaged in imprisoning persons are thrown into it and are burnt.

There is a hell named Attratiṣṭha. It contains putrescent urine and faeces. Those who censure Smṛtis and the Vedas fall into it with faces downwards.

There is a hell named Pārilumpa. It is infested with vultures, dogs and wolves. Those who kill children and old people are scorched in this terrible hell.

137. There is a hell named Karāla. It is terrible and infested with dead bodies and ghosts. He who inflicts pain on a brahmin is eaten by Rāksasas in this hell.

138. The hell Vilepana is terrible with boiling melted lac. O excellent brahmins, those who imbibe wine and liquor are immersed therein and burnt.

139. There is a hell named Mahāpreta. It contains a blazing trident of great height. Those who create split between husbands and wives are pierced with that trident.

140. There is a hell Mahāghora where there is an iron block like a rocky slab. It blazes. A sinner who hovers round other men's wives is dragged with that iron block.

141. There is a hell named Sālmali where there is a blazing sturdy thorny bush. A man engaged in the attack of vulnerable points in others is compelled to embrace this thorny bush. He becomes miserable thereby.

142. The tongues of those who take false pledges and speak words that wound the sensitive spots in others are plucked by the servants of Yama, who are the members of the assembly.

143. Those who carnally approach the daughters-in-law are hurled over the heaps of burning coal and burnt by the servants of Yama.

144-147. Those deluded persons who spoil the holy rites, or take away the abode and gold belonging to others, are split and crushed by the emissaries of Yama by means of javelins and iron clubs.

The evil-minded persons who steal even fruits and leaves of other men are burnt by the infuriated emissaries of Yama through grass fires. A blazing trident is fixed into the heart of that evil-minded man who is enamoured of other men's wives and properties. The emissaries of Yama torture such men thus.

Those who are averse to virtue mentally, verbally and physically undergo excessively terrible tortures in the world of Yama.

Thus there are hundreds, thousands, millions and crores of hells. Men who commit sins go to them.

148-152. By committing even the smallest act of inauspicious nature here a man undergoes tortures in the terrible hells in the world of Yama. Deluded men do not pay heed to the excellent speech made by Dharma. As a retort that say thus—"Who has seen this with his own eyes?"

Those who assiduously perform sinful deeds every day and night do not perform virtuous deeds even erringly. They are deluded. Those who enjoy the fruits here itself and are averse to the other world are base men. They fall into terrible hells.

A life in hell is very terrible. A residence in heaven yields happiness. It is by doing virtuous or vicious deeds that heaven or hell is attained by men.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN

The Goal of the Virtuous

The sages said :

1-2. Alas ! the great and terrible misery in the path of Yama has been recounted by you. O excellent one, the terrible hells and the entrances to the abode of Yama have also been recounted.

O brahman, is there any means whereby men can traverse the terrible path of Yama comfortably and go to Yama's abode ? Please tell us.

Vyāsa said :

3-4. I shall recount to you how righteous men traverse that path along with their wives and sons. Men of righteousness, who are engaged in non-violence, who are interested in serving the preceptors and elders, and who worship Devas and brahmins traverse that path from the mortal world.

5. Served by heavenly damsels they go the city of Dharmarāja travelling by different divine aerial chariots rendered splendid by diamonds and gold.

6. Those who devoutly give the brahmins gifts of various forms go comfortably along that great path.

7-8. Those who offer with great devotion to the brahmins well consecrated cooked rice, particularly to the brahmins well versed in the Vedas, go to the city of Dharmarāja by means of well adorned aerial chariots. They are assiduously served by excellent young women.

9. Those who speak truth, those who are devoid of impurities inwardly and outwardly, go to the abode of Yama by serial chariots. They resemble the immortal beings in lustre.

10-11. Those persons who are conversant with what is virtue and who make over sacred gifts of cows to good men who are poor and whose activities are befitting the poor go to the glorious city of Dharmarāja by means of aerial chariots having divine lustre and colour, and embellished with jewels. The gifts must be made to them with the idea that they are representatives of Viṣṇu. Such devotees are seized by groups of celestials.

12-13. Those who give away a pair of sandals, an umbrella, bed, seat, garments and ornaments, go to the divine city of Dharmarāja embellished and equipped with horses, chariots, elephants and golden or silver umbrellas.

14-15. Those who with devotion and pure mind, give the worthy brahmins water, sweetened with treacle as well as cooked rice, go to the abode of Yama, on golden vehicles of various kinds. In accordance with their desire they are again and again served by excellent women.

16-17. Those who give the brahmins well consecrated milk, ghee, curds, jaggery and honey assiduously and with purity, go to the abode of Yama by means of golden aerial chariots drawn by ruddy geese. They will be attended upon by Gandharvas with their instrumental music.

18. Those who give fruits and fragrant flowers go to the city of Dharma sitting on aerial chariots drawn by swans.

19-20. Those who are endowed with faith and give to the brahmins, well-versed in the Vedas, gingelly seeds, tiladhenu or ghṛtadhenu go by spotless vehicles resembling the lunar disc. Gandharvas sing songs in their praise in the city of Yama.

21-22. Those who build tanks, wells, lakes, ponds, big oblong tanks, lotus ponds and cold water reservoirs (for the general public) go by means of vehicles that have the lustre of golden moon and that are resonant with divine bells. They have great lustre and they are fanned with handmade palmleaf fans.

23-26. Those people who have temples and shrines of wonderful features dazzling with jewels, charming and splendid go to the beautiful city of Dharmarāja full of various people by means of aerial chariots that have the speed of the wind. They are accompanied by the guardians of quarters.

Those who give water that constitutes the main sustenance of all living beings go to the city of Yama comfortably without the (inconvenience of) thirstiness by means of aerial chariots of great velocity.

Those who give charitable gifts of wooden sandals, vehicles, stools and seats to brahmins go along the path very comfortably.

27. Keeping their feet on excellent golden pedestals embellished with jewels they travel in aerial chariots beautified by the presence of heavenly nymphs.

28-29. Those men who grow wonderful parks with flowers and fruits thereby helping men go (along that great path) (after duly resting) in beautiful and cool shades of trees. They are well bedecked and attended upon by excellent women to the accompaniment of songs and instrumental music.

30. Those who make gifts of gold, silver, corals or pearls, travel in aerial chariots shining like furnished gold.

31-35. The donors of land gifts become brilliant. All their desires are fulfilled. They travel by means of extremely resonant aerial chariots shining like the rising sun.

Those who give an embellished virgin as gift, as worthy of being given to a brahmin, go to the abode of Yama in aerial chariots and surrounded by celestial virgins.

O excellent brahmins, those who are endowed with great devotion and give to the brahmins sweet scents, agallochum, camphor, flowers and incense go to the abode of Dharma by means of wonderful vehicles. They are well adorned. They emit sweet odour. They are well dressed and they are lustrous.

Those who make gifts of lamps go along the path by means of vehicles. They brighten the ten quarters. They are brilliant with vehicles resembling the sun. They shine like fires.

36. Those who make gifts of houses and residences go to the abode of Dharmarāja (making use of) rest houses embellished in gold and resembling the rising sun.

37. Those who make gifts of water pots, different types of vessels such as Kuṇḍikā, Karaka etc. go (along the path) by means of lordly elephants. They are honoured by celestial damsels too.

38. Those who give to brahmins oil for applying over the feet or on the head, those who give water for bath and drink unto the brahmins, go to the abode of Yama by riding on horses.

39. Those who accord rest to brahmins who are travel-worn and emaciated go comfortably along the path in a vehicle drawn by ruddy geese.

40. He who greets and honours a brahmin offering him welcome and befitting seat goes along that path comfortably. He becomes excessively delighted.

41. He who salutes Hari saying "obeisance, O lord, favourably disposed to the brahmins" and he who salutes a cow saying "O dispeller of sins", goes along that path comfortably.

42. Those who take meals after the guests have taken and those who are devoid of arrogance and untruthfulness, go along that path by means of vehicles drawn by Sārasas (waterfowls).

43. Those who take only a morsel of food (each day) and are devoid of obstinacy and arrogance go to the abode of Yama comfortably by means of aerial chariots drawn by swans.

44. Those who have conquered the sense-organs and sustain themselves on a single morsel of food once in four days, go to the city of Dharma in vehicles drawn by peacock.

45. Those who regularly do virtuous deeds and take food once in three days go to that region by means of vehicles and divine chariots fitted with elephants.

46. He who takes cooked rice once in six days, has conquered the sense-organs, and always maintains cleanliness, goes like the consort of Sacī seated on an elephant.

47. (He goes to) the beautiful city of Dharmarāja embellished with jewels, resonant with different notes and voices as well as the shouts of victory.

48. Those who observe fasts for a fortnight go to the city of Dharmarāja in vehicles drawn by tigers and attended by Devas and Asuras.

49. Those who have conquered their sense-organs and observe fasts for a month go to the abode of Yama in vehicles as resplendent as the sun.

50. He who is steadfast in the observances of religious vows and undertakes the long journey of death with concentration

goes to the abode of Yama in vehicles as lustrous as the sun. He is attended upon by Gandharvas.

51. He who sanctifies the body with the inner soul devoted to Viṣṇu goes to heaven in a chariot as resplendent as fire.

52. He who is devoted to Nārāyaṇa and enters fire goes to the abode of Yama in an aerial chariot resplendent like fire.

53. He who remembers Viṣṇu and casts off his vital airs without resorting to destructive weapons goes to the city of Dharma by means of a vehicle that has the resplendence of the sun.

54. He who enters water and casts off his vital airs, goes comfortably in a vehicle resembling the lunar disc.

55. The devotee of Viṣṇu who gives up his body to the vultures, goes to the abode of Yama in a splendid chariot made of gold.

56. He who meets death in a battle ensuing upon his attempt to resist the abduction of a woman or capture of cows goes along shining like the sun and attended upon by celestial girls.

57. Those devotees of Viṣṇu who have conquered their sense-organs and undertake pilgrimages to holy centres go along that terrible path by comfortable vehicles.

58. The excellent brahmins who worship, performing sacrifices wherein monetary gifts are generously distributed go comfortably by means of aerial chariots resembling molten gold.

59. Those who refrain from inflicting pain on others and those who sustain their servants, go comfortably in aerial chariots shining like gold.

60-61. Those who forgive all living beings, those who ensure freedom from fear to all living beings, those who are devoid of anger and delusion, those who have restrained their sense-organs and those who have no pride, go to the city of Yama by means of an aerial chariot as resplendent as the full moon. They have great lustre and are served by Devas and Gandharvas.

62. Those who worship Viṣṇu, Brahmā, the three-eyed lord Śiva and the sun with the same emotional fervour go there immediately with a pure mind.

63. Those who are devoted to truth, cleanliness and mercy and do not eat flesh go to the city of Dharmarāja comfortably.

64. There is nothing sweeter than meat among the food-stuffs, edibles etc. Hence no one shall eat meat, for happiness does not come from sweet things.

65. Formerly, Brahmā, the most excellent one among the knowers of the Vedas, said thus :—He who makes a gift of a thousand cows and he who abstains from eating meat—these two are on a par with each other.

66. O brahmins, the benefit resulting from the avoidance of meat-eating is the same as that of the pilgrimage to all holy centres and of the performance of all Yajñas.

67. Thus the virtuous ones engaged in charitable gifts and religious vows go comfortably in vehicles to the world of Yama, the lord who is the son of the sun.

68. On seeing those virtuous persons lord Yama will honour them by offering them greetings of welcome, seats and pleasing water for washing feet and materials of worship.

69-71. “O great souls, you are blessed. You have done what is conducive to the welfare of your souls; meritorious deeds have been done by you for the achievement of divine happiness. Get into this aerial chariot and go to heaven that is unparalleled and equipped with all desirable things. Rejoice with the divine ladies there. Enjoy all great pleasures there. At the end when merit gets exhausted and there still remain some evil deeds to be recompensed experience the result thereof here”.

72. Men who have magnificence of meritorious deeds find Dharmarāja very gentle, as though he is their father himself.

73. Hence virtue should be resorted to always. It yields the benefit of salvation. From virtue result wealth, love and liberation.

74. Virtue is our mother, father, and brother. Virtue is our lord and friend. Virtue is our master, friend, saviour, creator and nourisher.

75. From virtue one gets wealth; from wealth one realizes one's desire and gets all sensual enjoyments. Virtue gives prosperity, and the greatest goal of heavenly pleasures results from virtue.

76. O brahmins, if one resorts to it, virtue saves one from great dangers. One shall undoubtedly attain divinity and brahminhood by means of virtue.

77. O excellent brahmins, when the previously accumulated demerit of men dwindle, their mind turns to virtue.

78. If, after thousands of births in the other species one attains the rare birth as a human being, but still one does not practice virtue, he is a deceived persons indeed.

79. The following should be known as persons devoid of virtue—Despicable persons, ugly ones, impoverished men, sick men, foolish ones and those who serve others.

80. Virtue has been practised previously by the following persons :—those who live long, the heroic ones, scholars, those who have wealth, those who are free from ailments and those who are beautiful and handsome.

81. O brahmins, those who are engaged in righteous activities attain the highest state. Those who resort to sin and evil are born as animals and low creatures.

82. Yama is not competent to harm those men who are devoted to lord Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Naraka. He does not see them even in dreams.

83. Those who always bow to the lord who has neither birth nor death and who slays Daityas and Dānavas, do not see Yama.

84. Those who have sought refuge in Viṣṇu in their thoughts, words and deeds get the benefit of salvation. Yama is not able to harm them.

85. O brahmins, those people who continuously bow to Nārāyaṇa, the lord of worlds, do not go anywhere else other than the abode of Viṣṇu.

86. By bowing to Viṣṇu, (the devotees) do not see those emissaries, Yama, that city or that path. They never see hells.

87. Although those who are deluded may commit sins, still if they are devoted to Hari, the destroyer of sins, they do not go to hell.

88. Those who remember the lord even roguishly, go to the world of Viṣṇu, free from ailments, after casting off this mortal body.

89. He who is excessively angry with Hari but sometimes does mention or recite his name shall obtain liberation after his defects perish just as the king of Cedi (Śiśupāla) did.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT

The cycle of worldly existence

Lomaharṣana said :

1. After hearing about the path of Yama and the tortures in the hells the excellent sages asked Vyāsa again to clear their doubts.

The sages said :

2-3. Who is the ally of a man? (Can it be) his father, mother, son, preceptor, kinsmen and relatives or friends? People leave off their houses and the bodies like a log of wood or a lump of clay. They go to the other world. Who follows them?

Vyāsa said :

4-6. O brahmins, man is born alone and alone he dies. Alone he surmounts difficulties and alone he faces adversities with no one to assist him.

Father, mother, brother, son, preceptor, kinsmen, relatives and friends—all appear to cry for a short while. Then they leave off the dead body like a log of wood or a lump of clay. They turn their faces away.

7. The body is left off by them. But Dharma alone follows him. Hence Dharma is the ally. It should always be resorted to by men.

8. A creature equipped with Dharma will attain the greatest heavenly goal. Similarly, one defiled by sins attains hell.

9. Hence, the wise one should not be delighted by riches acquired through sins. Dharma alone has been described as the sole ally of men.

10. Even a well-read man commits unworthy acts on being deluded by covetousness for wealth of others. He may commit sins due to greed, delusion, sympathy or fear.

11. Virtue, wealth and sensual pleasure are the three objectives that a living man strives after. These three should be acquired after avoiding sins.

The sages said :

12. The virtuous words of Your Holiness have been listened to. They are greatly conducive to our welfare. Now we are inclined to know about this assemblage (of parts) called body.

13. The dead body of men becomes subtle. It passes into an unmanifest state. It reaches a state where it cannot be seen. How does Dharma follow it ?

Vyāsa said :

14. The earth, wind, ether, water, fire, mind, intellect, soul—all these collectively see Dharma always.

15. They are the witnesses unto all living beings by day or by night. Along with these, Dharma follows the individual soul.

16. O excellent brahmins, the skin, bone, flesh, semen and blood all these leave off the body bereft of living soul.

17. Then the individual soul equipped with Dharma attains happiness, both in this world and in the other world. What else shall I tell you ?

The sages said :

18. How Dharma follows (the soul) has been indicated by Your Holiness. We wish to know how semen begins to function.

Vyāsa said :

19-21. The divine beings who are stationed in the body, (the elements) earth, wind, ether, water, fire, and mind, partake of the cooked rice (the food intake). O brahmins, when they are satiated, when the five elements with the mind as the sixth are contented, the great energy, the semen, is generated. It is the pure Ātman.

Thereafter, O brahmins, by the union of woman and man the foetus develops. Thus everything has been recounted to you.

What else do you wish to hear ?

The sages said :

22. O revered one, you have told how an embryo is formed. Please let us know how a person comes into being.

Vyāsa said :

23. When the soul is enveloped by the elements he comes into being. When the elements separate he dies.

24. When he is enveloped by the elements, he comes to life again. Then the presiding deities of the elements watch his good and evil deeds. What else do you desire to hear ?

The sages said :

25. Bereft of skin, bones, flesh and devoid of the elements too where does the being station himself and experience joys and sorrows ?

Vyāsa said :

26. The being enveloped by his Kārmic Samskāras enters the womb of the mother when he is born in course of time.

27. (After death) the being undergoes suffering and torture at the hands of the attendants of Yama. He enters the cycle of births and deaths, attended by misery and distress.

28. O Brāhmaṇas, the jīva enjoys the fruits of action which he performed during his worldly existence.

29. If his actions are pious throughout his existence, he will enjoy pleasures as a man during the course of his life.

30. But, if while doing acts of piety, he takes recourse to impious deeds, he gets joys and sorrows succeeding each other.

31. If his activities are absolutely unholy, he goes to Yama's region (Hell) where he suffers misery and distress and therefore, is born in lower species as a beast etc.

32. Now, listen, in which particular life or existence, a deluded person is born and for what action of his.

33. It is recorded in the holy treatises—Śāstras and Vedas

—that the dreadful world of Yama is interlinked with the world of mortals.

34. O Brāhmaṇas, there are spots as holy as celestial regions. These are progressive and specially designed for the mortals.

35. O Brāhmaṇas, in the world of Yama which equals the world of Brahmā, the jīva, bound by the fast chains of his actions reaps the fruits thereof.

36. I shall, now, tell you about those actions which cause a person to assume an ugly form.

37. A Brāhmaṇa though well versed in the Vedas is born as an ass if he receives charity from a fallen person.

38. O Brāhmaṇas, he is born and lives as an ass for full fifteen years. Dying as an ass he becomes a bull and in the form of a bull he lives for seven years.

39. Dying as a bull, he is born a Brahma-Rāksasa and in the form of a Brahma-Rāksasa he lives for three months. Then he is born a Brāhmaṇa.

40. If he officiates at a sacrifice performed by a low person, he is born a worm and in the form of a worm he lives for fifteen years.

41-43. Released from the form of worm he is born an ass and in the form of an ass he lives for five years; in the form of a cock for five years; in the form of a jackal for five years; then he is born in the form of man; then a jealous person; then an animal. On betraying confidence he is born a fish.

44. He remains in that form for eight years. Then he is born a fawn, O Brāhmaṇas. He remains in that form for four months. Then he is born a goat.

45. He remains in that form for one year. Then he is born as an insect, then a man.

46-47. He who steals unwittingly rice, sesamum seeds, bean, gram, linseed, chick-pea, leguminous seed, kidney bean, wheat, lamp or other corns, is born a rat, O noble sages.

48-50. Afterwards, he is born as a boar. As soon as born, he dies of some disease. Then, afterwards, he becomes a dog, then a dumb person, then again a dog for five years. Then in the form of man he copulates with another man's wife and is

born as a wolf, then a dog, a jackal, a vulture, a snake or a tiger, a heron, a crane.

51. He who out of delusion, with a guilty mind, seduces the wife of his brother is born a male cuckoo and remains in that form for a year.

52-54. Overpowered by the sex-instinct, if he seduces the wife of his friend or preceptor or the ruling monarch he is born as a boar and remains in that form for five years, as a crane for ten years, as an ant for three months, as a worm for a month. Having passed through these births he is born as a worm. He lives in that form for fourteen years.

55-57. When his sins are exhausted he is born as a man. If a person consents to wed his daughter to a youth but then changes his mind and intends to give her to another person, if a person, being stupid, acts contrarily to the wishes of his preceptor, he enters three wombs. O Brāhmaṇas, first of all, he is born as a dog, then a carnivorous demon, then an ass. Passing through these forms, he is born a Brāhmaṇa.

58-60. If a pupil, prone to sinful deeds, sexually approaches the wife of his preceptor, not actually but mentally, he is born, by the perversity of his sinful mind, a dog. He lives in that form for full one year. Then after death he is born in the form of a Brāhmaṇa.

61. If a preceptor kills his pupil who is no less than his son without any rhyme or reason, but just at his own sweet will, he is born in the form of a ferocious animal.

62-63. Being a son if he disregards his parents, O Brāhmaṇas, he is born an ass. As an ass he lives for ten years. Then he is born a thief and lives as a thief for a year.

64. He with whom his parents are angry or he who is not attentive to the instructions of his teacher is born an ass.

65. As an ass he lives for two years. As a cat he lives for seven months, then he is born as a man.

66-67. If he reproaches his parents he is born as a female parrot. If he strikes his parents he is born as a porcupine. He lives in that form for three years. Then he is born as a snake. He lives in that form for six months. Then he is born as a man.

68. If he joins the king's service but is in league, he, the

deluded one is born a monkey. He remains a monkey for ten years, as a rat for seven years, as a dog for six months. Then he is born a man.

69-70. He who mis-appropriates a deposit goes to hell. Then passing through a series of births and deaths he is born a worm.

71-72. O Brāhmaṇas, he remains for fifteen years in that form. When the consequences of his evil deeds are exhausted he is born a man. If otherwise he is born a worm. O best of brāhmaṇas, he lives in that form for thirteen years.

73. When he is released from the results of his unrighteous deeds he is born a man.

74-77. If he fails to perform rites due to manes or deities, if he does not offer libations of water or balls of rice to the deities, he is born a crow. He remains in that form for one hundred years, then he becomes a cock. He is born as a snake and remains in that form for a month. He is born a man. He who disregards his elderly brother, who is no less respectable than his own father, is born a heron. He lives in that form for ten years. Then he is born a cakora bird, then a man. If a Śūdra approaches a Brāhmaṇin woman he is born a worm.

78-80. Then he is born a boar. As soon as born he dies of a disease, O Brāhmaṇins. As a result of his sinful acts he becomes a dog. When the fruits of his acts are exhausted he becomes a man. He generates progeny from the womb of a woman. Then he is born a rat. O Brāhmaṇas, as an ungrateful wretch he goes to the region of Yama.

81. He is bound by the cruel agents of Yama who beat him with canes, clubs, tridents, fire-sticks.

82. He suffers from various sorts of pains in hell, coming in contact with leaves as sharp as swords, or in hell full of hot sands, or in hell where the wicked are tortured with sharp swords.

83-84. He undergoes sufferings and is born as a worm. He remains in that form for fifteen years. He then enters the womb but dies there.

85-93. He then undergoes a series of births and deaths. He then becomes an animal. Then he undergoes suffering for a number of years. Then he is born as a tortoise. By stealing curd

he is born a crane or a frog; by stealing unroasted fish he is born a honey-bee. By stealing fruits, radish or sweet bread he is born an ant. By stealing corn he becomes a rat. By stealing rice boiled in milk he is born a partridge; by stealing powdered bread he is born an owl. By stealing water he is born a crow; by stealing copper he is born a pigeon. By stealing silver vessel he is born a dove. By stealing gold vessel he is born a worm. By stealing silk garment he is born an osprey. By stealing a silken upper garment he is born a parrot. By stealing a lower silken garment he is born a swan.

94-98. By stealing a cotton cloth he is born a heron. By stealing a woollen or a silken cloth he becomes a hare or a peacock. By stealing red cloth he is born a cakora. By stealing paints and perfumes, a greedy person is born a musk-deer. He lives in that form for fifteen years. After exhausting the fruits of his wicked actions he is born a man. By stealing milk he is born a crane. By stealing oil he is born a tailapāyi (?) (the drinker of oil).

99-104. If a person with weapon kills one with no weapons for monetary gains or out of enmity he is born an ass. He lives in that form for two years; he is then killed by weapons. He is born in the form of a deer and suffers from grief. He lives in that form for a year and is then killed. He then becomes a fish and is caught in the net. He is then born a tiger. In the form of a tiger he lives for ten years. Then after death, when the fruits of his karmas are exhausted and he is awakened intellectually he is born as a man.

105-114. By stealing musical instruments he is born hairy. By stealing food inclusive of oil-cake he is born a brown hairy rat biting people. By stealing butter he is born a crow or a low-class person. By stealing the flesh of a fish, he is born a crow. By stealing salt he is born a cricket. By denying or misappropriating deposit he is born a fish. Born a man, he commits sin after sin. Then after his death he is born an animal. He does not know what Dharma is nor about the right means of knowledge. He who commits sin after sin and discards vows is struck by grief and suffers from disease or is reduced to a naked state or degraded to a low caste. This is said of those who are of sinful character, greedy and passionate.

Those who do not commit sins since their very birth remain free from disease and are possessed of beauty and wealth.

115. Even women in association with the sinful men incur sins.

116-118. O best of Brāhmaṇas, this in brief I have narrated to you. In another context, you will hear more. O revered ones, thus I have heard from the mouth of Brahmā when he was addressing the assembly of gods and sages. I put questions too, now and then. I too have narrated to you in entirety. O best of sages, you hear the same and be interested in Dharma.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINE

Gift of food the best of all charitable acts

The sages said :

1. O lord, you have addressed us on the course of adharma. now let us know about the course of dharma too.

2. Having done sinful deeds, how do people meet with disaster ? By what righteous activities do the people attain prosperity ?

Vyāsa said :

3. Having performed evil actions, having come under the control of adharma, with his mind averse to dharma, man goes to hell.

4. He who out of ignorance performs acts of impiety but repents afterwards with his mind concentrated on his self never comes to grief.

5. Inasmuch as his mind dislikes performing evil deeds, in the same proportion is his body released from the control of adharma.

6. O Brāhmaṇas, if he confesses his guilt before the pious Brāhmaṇas, he is soon released from the guilt accruing from adharma.

7. Inasmuch as he confesses his guilt with his mind concentrated on himself he is released from that guilt.

8. As a snake casts off his slough, so he casts off guilt incurred previously. By giving charitable gifts of all sorts and with his mind concentrated on his self he attains heaven.

9-10. O best of Brāhmins, I shall let you know about the gift by which a man attains piety, though he may have done evil deeds.

11. Of all the gifts, the gift of food is the best. The upright honest person who is eager to follow the path of piety should give all sorts of food in gift. Food is the breath of people. A person is born of food.

12. People abide in food. Food is praised therefore. Gods, sages and manes praise food itself.

13-17. By gifting food man goes to heaven. The best sort of food earned by just means should be given as gift to the educated Brāhmaṇas with mind full of joy.

If he invites ten Brāhmaṇas to eat at his house, though he feeds them once, with his joyous mind, he is never born as an animal. If he feeds ten thousand Brāhmaṇas, even a hard sinner, ever engaged in sinful acts is released from impiety. If a person proficient in the Vedas collects food by begging and gives it to a Brāhmaṇa who is engaged in studies, he obtains happiness.

18-27. If a Kṣatriya spares the wealth of Brāhmaṇas, guards the same as the rules of law permit, if he gives his surplus money and food to the people of three castes who have learnt Vedas, he is purified and released from the fruits of his evil deeds.

By giving to the twice-born a portion of the produce of cultivated field, after it has been taxed at the rate of production, a Vaiśya is released from sins.

By giving to the twice-born, the food earned at the risk of life, by emaciating his body, a Śūdra is released from sin.

He who earns food by the sweat of his brow, and that too without violating the right of others, never succumbs to trouble. If a person joyously gives food earned by him lawfully to a person well-versed in the Vedas, he is released from sin. By

giving food which invigorates men, the person becomes invigorated. If he follows the path of the good he is released from sins.

The path is made by those who know the benefits of gifts. The wise go by that path. There too, those who gift food. There too those who follow tradition.

In all circumstances, the food that is earned by right means has eternal value. By giving such food a man attains the highest position. He is blessed with the fulfilment of all desires. Thus the person attended by merit is released from all sorts of sins.

28. Thus the food not attained by unlawful activities should be gifted. He should, first of all, pour offerings of food into the fire with the formula Prāṇāya Svāhā and then eat food.

29-30. A man should not render the day unproductive but should make gift of food. If a person feeds a hundred of top-most knowers of Veda, Nyāya, Dharma and Itihāsa, he does not go to a dreadful hell nor does he enter transmigration.

31. He attains the fulfilment of all desires and then after death he gets happiness. Thus performing good actions and devoid of fever he enjoys life. He is blessed with beauty, fame and wealth.

I have thus told you the fruit of gifting food as well as the basis of all these dharmas and donations.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TEN

On the performance of Śrāddha and the associated legend

The sages said:

1. How should sons and relatives perform Śrāddha for the manes who have departed to the other world and who are abiding in the region assigned to them according to their actions ?

Vyāsa said :

2. I bow to Varāha, lord of the universe, creator of the people. Listen, I shall tell you all about Śrāddha, as was recorded afore.

3. In days of yore, the lord uplifted the manes who were drowned in the waters of Kokā river, by performing Śrāddha for their sake, O best of Brāhmaṇas.

The sages said :

4-5. Why were the fathers drowned in the waters of the Kokā river ? How were they uplifted by Varāha, O best of Brāhmaṇins in that holy place of pilgrimage that grants fruits in the form of worldly enjoyment as well as release ?

We wish to hear about it. Tell us all in detail. It is a matter of great curiosity to us all.

Vyāsa said :

6. In the intervening period of Tretā and Dvāpara Yugas, the diverse human beings—the manes, stood in the company of Viśvedevas at the top of Meru mountain.

7. Once, they were sitting (as usual) there (at the top of Meru). A beautiful divine girl born of Soma appeared before them with hands joined in reverence. Among the manes who had assembled there, those shining with resplendence spoke to her.

The pitrs said:

8. O auspicious lady ! Who are You ? Who is your lord ? Please tell us.

Vyāsa said:

9. She said to the resplendent manes. I am Kalā, born of the Moon, You are my lords whom I can choose, if you so desire.

10. My first name is Urjā; second is Svadhā; third is Kokā. This latter name you have given me this very day.

11. The manes, the divine beings heard her speak this. They fixed their eyes on her face but were not satisfied.

12. When Viśvedevas saw that they were gazing at the face of the girl and had fallen off Yoga, they left their company and went to heaven.

13. When the holy god Moon did not see his daughter Urjā, he was upset. Where she may have gone ? He thought to himself.

14. The Soma came to know the facts. He knew that manes were after her, that they were sexually inclined to her and had accepted her by the virtue of their penance.

15. The Moon was overcome with anger. He cursed the manes, "Fall off from your Yoga, be confounded".

16-17. Since you passionately desired my daughter, without my permission; since, she of her own accord accepted you as her husbands, disregardful of me, her father; since she transgressed the dictates of Dharma and acted independently, let her become a river by name Kokā and resort to Mount Himālaya.

18. Thus cursed by the Moon, the manes, the divine men were deprived of yoga and fell off at Mount Himavat.

19-20. Urjā fell off at the top of Himavat mountain, at the confluence of seven rivers. She was called Kokā. By flowing along with hundreds of rivers over the peak of the mountain she came to be known as Sarit.

21-23. Then those manes fallen off yoga assumed the forms of Brāhmins. They saw the river Kokā of cool water but they could not recognize her as the beautiful-eyed girl they once loved. Then the mount Himālaya observed that the manes who were cursed to assume the form of human beings were very hungry.

He arranged for their sustenance, the cow 'Badari' yielding sweet honey, milk, the sweet waters of Kokā river and the berry fruit.

24. O best of sages, the manes living on that sustenance passed ten thousand years as it were a single day.

25. Thus, when the world was deprived of the services of manes and of Svadhā, the asuras, yātudhānas and rākṣasas became powerful.

26. Then the asuras, yātudhānas and rākṣasas found that the manes were estranged from Devas and they fell upon them.

27. The Brahmins stationed on the bank of Kokā (who were formerly manes) saw asuras and yātudhānas pouncing upon them. The infuriated brahmins caught hold of a lofty slab.

28. The fast-flowing Kokā saw them holding the slab. She concealed the manes in her waters which overflowed Himālaya.

29-30. The asuras, yātudhānas and rākṣasas found that they were concealed. They ascended the peak Vibhītaka and disappeared. Meanwhile the manes felt hungry and thirsty. Distressed by hunger and thirst, the manes sang songs of praise in favour of Viṣṇu.

The manes said :

31. Victory to Govinda : O the abode of the universe, O Keśava, be pleased to favour us with Victory. O Janārdana of pure and spotless impression, uplift us from the cavity of waters.

32. O lord, Viṣṇu, O Boar, Vaikuṇṭha, Nārāyaṇa, lord of lords, lotus-navelled, worthy of praise, we are afraid of asuras, of dreadful sight; protect us, O lord, and grant us victory.

33. O Viṣṇu, the younger brother of lord Indra, O Yogin, the slayer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha demons, O Endless, of steady disposition, Vāsudeva, holding bow, discus, lotus and conch in your hands, O lord of Devas, protect us from rākṣasas.

34. O Śambhu, you are the father of universe, the dreadful asuras are unable to assail you. Hence, we come to your shelter.

35. As soon as your name is uttered, the asuras fly away, the evil-doers disappear, the enemies are destroyed. Dharma, Truth etc. attain eminence.

Vyāsa said :

36. Thus praised by the manes, the lord in the divine form of a boar, the sustainer of this Earth saw the manes, merged in the waters of Kokā carrying slabs over their head.

37. Lord Viṣṇu, in the form of a boar, saw the manes hidden in the waters of Kokā out of fear from the asuras and thought of uplifting them to the Earth.

38. The boar cast away the slab with the tip of his tusks and brought up the manes to the Earth.

39-40. The manes, when they came into contact with the boar (incarnate of Viṣṇu) looked splendid. Made fearless by Viṣṇu, they stood at Kokāmukha. Having uplifted them thus the lord poured libation of water for the manes at Lohārgala.

41-46. Then, with a handful of Kuśa grass produced from his hair and the Sesamum seed grown up from his sweat, Keśava made a fire-brand. He made a torch as bright as the light of the sun and a vessel. He stood under a wish-fulfilling, holy, tall, banyan tree. He took up the sacred waters of Gaṅgā and the juices of sacrificial herbs from the lofty peak of the mountain. He brought honey and milk and fragrant substances such as odorous flowers, perfumes and sweet-smelling unguents; he brought forth a cow from the lake and the gems from the ocean; he scratched the earth with his tusk and sprinkled and smeared the same with drops of perspiration, scratching it up again, encircling it with the fire-brand and sprinkling it up again and again. He took up a handful of Kuśa grass, with their tips pointed to the east while their ends were stuck into the pores of hair. He then invited the sages and asked their permission, saying "I shall like to pour libations of water to the manes".

47. They said : "You may" The Lord then invoked all gods and on their arrival gave them seats.

48. Adorned with discus and mace, he planned out their protection with the unbroken rice.

49. The unbroken rice and the barley seeds are born of parts of all-gods. These ward off calamities from all sites; they are produced for the sake of protection.

50. In this mobile and immobile world, none among Devas, Dānavas, Daityas, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas is able to effect their destruction.

51-52. As they are not broken by any, they are called akṣatas. Of yore, they were appointed by Viṣṇu to guard the people. The Boar incarnate of Viṣṇu, propitiated all of them with the holy Kuśa grass, incense and barley seeds. He poured libation of water to all gods and then said :

53. "I invoke the manes, both divine and mortals." When they agreed to be invoked, he invoked them.

54. He held a handful of sacred grass together with the

sesamum. He put his left hand on the left knee and gave each of them a seat.

55. Similarly, he put his right hand on the right knee and the sacred thread on the right side and invited them with the mantra 'āyāntu nah'.

56. Varāha recited the mantra 'apahatā' and warded off the asuras from the site. He then transferred his sacred thread to the right. Uttering the names and gotras he invoked the pitṛs by the personal and gotra names.

57. Varāha then uttered the mantras 'āpyāyayantu' and 'samvatsaraiḥ' and poured arghya to the Pitṛs who as a result of the curse had assumed the form of Brahmins.

58-59. He uttered the mantra 'yāś tiṣṭhatyamṛtā vāco yanmā' and poured water mixed with Kuśa, incense, sesamum seed and flowers to the Pitṛs while he wore the sacred thread on the right side. He repeated the mantra 'yanmā' and poured water for the grand-father. Again, he repeated the mantra 'yanmā' and poured water for the great-grandfather.

60. Varāha (incarnate of Viṣṇu) repeated the same procedure for the maternal grandfather. He propitiated them again with incense etc. and offered them perfume with devotion.

61-63. The lord of the universe uttered the mantra 'Āditya Vasavo Rudrāḥ' He then held food and butter mixed with sesamum seeds and Kuśa grass and put the same in the vessels as previously. He then asked the permission of the sages, "shall I make offering in the fire". Permitted by them he made three offerings to the fire. One to Soma, one to Fire and one to Yama. He repeated the seven mantras of the Yajurveda beginning with "Ye māmakā".

64. The residue of the sacrificial material he offered thrice to each of the Pitṛs, by their personal and gotra names.

65. The residue of the material such as "food" he put into the vessel wherein the rice-ball was kept. Then, he gave the tasty food together with the rice boiled in milk.

66-70. He served Brāhmaṇas with fresh and tasty meals, with less vegetables, abundance of fruits, with six flavours, nectar-like. He put the same anointed with butter and sprinkled with honey in the rice-ball vessel meant for Pitṛs, preceded by Devas,

by reciting the mantra beginning with *Pṛthivī* and the three *ṛcas*: *Madhuvātā ṛtāyate* etc. When the Brāhmaṇas started eating, he recited the five mantras beginning with the mantra ‘yat te’. He also recited the three Madhu and three Suparna portions from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, the mantra of solar deity and *Puruṣa Sūkta*. When the Brahmins had finished meals he asked them, “are you satiated”.

71. On their reply, “we are satiated”, he gave them water for breaking silence. He gave the rice-ball vessel to Chāyā.

72. He divided food into two parts. Then each into three parts. Varāha scratched the Earth and covered the same with the particles of Kuśa grass.

73-74. He turned the tips of Kuśa grass to the South, put the seat (*āsana*) on the Kuśa grass, for, the Pitṛs like to sit upon Kuśa grass uprooted from the very root and on which the sesamum seeds have been spread. He placed incense, flowers etc. over the rice-ball and recited the formula ‘*Pṛthivī dadhi*’ and gave the rice-balls to grandfather, great-grandfather, maternal grandfather.

75-76. The residue of the rice-ball material was offered to the paternal ancestor in the fourth, fifth and sixth degree. He repeated the formula ‘*Etad Vahī Pitar*’ with the mind full of devotion and offered fresh white pieces of cloth to the Brahmins. He gave them incense and flowers and circumambulated them.

77-79. He should sip water from the palm of his hand, also make the Brahmin pitṛs sip at first and then Devas too. He should sprinkle the place with water mixed with flowers and rice. He should give water mixed with the sesamum seeds to the Pitṛs at first, then to Devas mixed with rice. He should recite ‘*akṣayyam nah*,’ for the pitṛs and ‘*Priyatām*’ to Devas.

80. Having pleased them thus, he should move aside, repeat *aghamarṣaṇa* thrice. Withdrawing himself, he should repeat ‘yan me’.

81-82. O Pitṛs, give us residence abounding in grains and riches. Repeating the formula ‘*Urjam Vahanti*’, he put the rice ball, the ring of Kuśa grass and rest of the material consisting of cold milk, honey and sesamum seeds into the Arghya vessel. Then he offered libation of water to the Pitṛs.

83-84. When the officiating Brāhmaṇas had said: "Welfare to you", and they felt gratified on the Amāvāsyā day, Varāha incarnate of Viṣṇu gave silver-fee (*rajata-dakṣinā*) to each of the Brāhmaṇas. When he asked "Is the rite completed", they said, "Yes". When he asked "may you be pleased", they said: "We are already pleased". When he asked them about the remaining food, they said, "You may partake of it together with your people".

85-86. He caught hold of the Brāhmaṇas by his hand and led them outside the ritual altar repeating the formula 'Vāje-Vāje'.

87. Then sprinkling the massive heap of hair with the collected waters of holy rivers he begged blessings of Brāhmaṇas.

88-91. The Brāhmaṇas blessed him, saying, "May our patrons prosper in riches". Varāha circumambulated them; touching their feet with reverence; he offered them seats to take rest. He held the middle ball of rice and gave the same to Chāyā. That beautiful lady took hold of the rice-ball and said : "May the Pitṛs enter the womb". She then bowed at the feet of the Brāhmaṇas. Then the boar-incarnate Viṣṇu thought of letting the Pitṛs go.

92-94. Then Kokā and Pitṛs spoke out their self-interest. We were formerly stationed in heaven when we were cursed by the Moon, "You fall off from Yoga and descend to the nether region". We were falling to the nether regions but are saved by you. Being fallen off from Yoga, we were deserted by the guardians. Now, may all-gods protect us again.

95. O lord Boar, by your favour, we shall go to heaven. Let Soma (the Moon-god), the observer of Yoga be our guardian.

96-99. May Soma, the source of Yoga, protect us. Through Yoga may we live in heaven as well as on earth. May some of us attain prosperity within a month, in the firmament. This Urjā known by her popular name Svadhā endowed with Yoga, be the mother of Yoga (roaming) in the middle region.

Thus requested by the manes lord Varāha addressed the river Kokā and the manes : Whatever you have asked will indeed be accomplished.

100. Let Yama be your deity; Moon the preceptor; Fire the priest.

101. Let Fire, wind and Sun be your abodes; Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra be your guardians.

102. Let Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras be your forms. Let Yogis, embodying Yoga make yoga as your basis and observe vows.

103-105. Let you move at will bestowing fruits of actions upon the people at large. Let you elevate by the strength of your Yoga both the mobile and immobile stationed in heaven, hell and earth.

This Urjā, daughter of the Moon, fashioned by flesh and wine will be born as the daughter of Dakṣa, Svadhā by name. This good-faced lady will be your wife.

106. Known as Kokā, she will resort to Himālaya. She will be as efficacious as the crores of holy places all together.

107. I shall stay in Kokā from this very day, smashing sins of all mankind. The sight of lord Boar is holy. His worship grants worldly pleasures and salvation.

108. Drinking the water of Kokā destroys sins. The plunge yields merit. The fast leads to heaven.

109. Charity gives imperishable fruit; it destroys sins of birth, death and old age.

110-111. In the dark fortnight of the month of Māgha, on the Amāvasa night, when there is no moon, one should come to Kokāmukha and stay there for five nights. During the time, the person who offers libation of water to the pitṛs will reap the fruit of the same. There is no doubt in this. I shall be staying here on the eleventh and twelfth tithi always.

112. He who fasts here reaps the fruit thereof as mentioned previously. O blessed ones, you are now free to go to your places at your will.

113. "I too shall rest here", saying this lord Boar disappeared. When lord Boar had gone, the pitṛs took leave of Kokā and went away.

114-115. Kokā took up her abode on that mountain. Chāyā, the Earth conceived by lord Boar generated asura Naraka known also by the name Bhauma. Lord Viṣṇu gave him Prāgjyotiṣa, the capital city of Kāmarūpa.

116. Thus have I described at Kokāmukha the Boar incarnate of Viṣṇu who confers boons to the people. On hearing this description, a man is purified from dirt, becomes devoid of sins, and obtains the merit of performing Aśvamedha Sacrifice.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN

The details of the Śrāddha ritual

The sages said :

1-2. O sage, tell us further in detail about the ritual of Śrāddha. O ascetic, let us know how it was performed, at what place, when and by whom ?

Vyāsa said :

O great sages, hear in detail about the ritual of Śrāddha, how it was performed, where, when, in which nakṣatras or tithis, in what region and by whom ?

3. Brāhmaṇas and Vaiśyas should perform Śrāddha each following one's own dharma and reciting mantras.

4. Women and Śūdras too should perform the same under the direction of Brāhmaṇas. But there should be no recitation of mantras or ritual of sacrifice.

5-13. Śrāddha should be performed in holy places as Puṣkara, or meritorious spots, peaks of mountains or sacred regions, in streams of holy waters, rivers or lakes, in the confluence of rivers or in any one of seven oceans or in one's own home purified or smeared with cowdung or spots enjoined by the Sāstras, at the root of holy trees or in lakes worthy of sacrifice. One should hold Śrāddha at such places. Śrāddha is prohibited among Kirātas, Kalingas, Koṅkaṇas, Kṛmis, Daśārnas, Kumāryas, Taṅgalas, Krathas, on the northern bank of Sindhu, on the southern bank of Narmadā, to the east of Karatoyā. Śrāddha should be performed every month on the Amāvasa day. In Ṛksagocarya (?) Śrāddha should be performed on Pūrṇamāsi for the manes as well as Devas. Nitya Śrāddha is performed for

gods. There are other Śrāddhas performed for the attainment of desired objects. O Brahmins, they should be done every year. Vṛddhi Śrāddha should be performed on such occasions.

14. When the sun enters zodiac Kanyā, there are fifteen days exclusively meant for Śrāddha.

15-33. Pratipat is for riches, Dvitiyā for progeny, Trtiyā for sons, Caturthī for destroying foes, Pañcamī for obtaining wealth, Saptamī for lordship, Aṣṭamī for intelligence, Navamī for conjugal relations, Daśamī for fulfilling desire, Ekādaśī for acquiring Vedic knowledge, Dvādaśī for victory, Trayodaśī for increase in progeny, animals, intellect, independence, prosperity, longevity and supremacy, Caturdaśī for those who died in youth or who were killed by weapons and Amāvāsyā for fulfilling all desires including the attainment of heaven as an abode for eternity. O best of sages, I shall now tell you the material for food which pleases the pitṛs and the period of propitiation.

If in the Śrāddha, the sacrificial food is offered to the Brahmins, the Pitṛs are fed for a month. If the flesh of a fish is offered, the Grandfathers are fed for two months. If a goat's flesh is offered, the Pitṛs are fed for three months. If a hare's flesh is offered, the Pitṛs are fed for four months. If a bird's flesh is offered, the Pitṛs are fed for five months. If a hog's flesh is offered, the Pitṛs are fed for six months. If a ram's flesh is offered the Pitṛs are fed for seven months. If black deer's flesh is offered the Pitṛs are fed for eight months. If ruru deer's nine months; if cow's for ten months; if ram's for eleven months. If cow's milk or rice cooked in cow's milk for one year; if of rhinoceros or of rohita fish for endless period of time. So also food for progeny. He who offers Śrāddha at Gayā with sesamum seeds mixed with sugar, honey or honey-mixture obtains endless stock of corn. The Pitṛs say : "May there be born one in our lineage who may give us oblation of water, rice cooked in milk and mixed with honey, during the rainy season, in Maghā nakṣatra." One should wish for many sons. If even one of them goes to Gayā or marries a girl of eight years or releases a blue-coloured bull or worships Pitṛs in Kṛttikās he obtains heaven.

34-42. One who performs Śrāddha in Rohini gets progeny, in Saumya splendour, in Ārdra valour, in Punarvasu fields for cultivation, in Puṣya eternal wealth, in Āśleṣā longevity, in

Maghā progeny and prosperity, in Phālgunī, good fortune, in Uttarā-s progeny and benevolence, in Hastā proficiency in Śāstras, in Citrā beauty, splendour and progeny. Śrāddha performed in Svātī bestows gains in merchandise, in Viśākhā gives sons, in Anurādhā sovereignty, in Jyeṣṭhā Lordship, in Mūla good health, in Āśāḍhā attainment of fame, especially in Uttarās, in Śravaṇa fulfilment of auspicious desires, in Dhaniṣṭhā abundant riches, in Abhijit the knowledge of the Vedas, in Vāruṇa efficiency in medicine, in Prauṣṭhapadī skill in goats and sheep, in Uttara Bhādrapada cows, in Revatī a vessel of brass, in Aśvini horses, in Bharanī longevity. The performer of Śrāddha obtains the result in these nakṣatras. O Brahmins, thus are the Śrāddhas performed for the attainment of particular desire.

43. When the sun has entered the Kanyā Zodiac, the performer of Śrāddha in that period obtains whatever desire he has in his mind. Nāndimukha should be performed during the same period. It should be done in Pūrnimā as stated in Varāha Purāṇa.

44-47. When the sun entered the Kanyā zodiac, the Pitṛs mobile or immobile, living in heaven, earth or firmament, wish for the rice-ball. The first sixteen days of the month, when the sun has entered Kanyā, one should propitiate Pitṛs with the libation of water, vegetable and roots. He gets the rare fruit desirable from the performance of Rājasūya and Aśvamedha sacrifices.

48-56. If a person propitiates Pitṛs, when the sun has entered Uttarā or Hastā, he goes to heaven.

When the sun enters Hastā asterism, Pitṛs leave home at the command of Yama. They remain out till the sun enters the sign Scorpion of the Zodiac.

When the sun has passed through Scorpion, Pitṛs return to their abode, together with Devas, sobbing and cursing their progeny.

In the ages of Manu, the Śrāddha should be performed in Aṣṭakas and Anvaṣṭakas. It should start serially beginning with the Mother. During the period of eclipse, in Vyatipāta at the confluence of the Sun and the Moon, on the day of natal star, during the oppression caused by the planet, he should perform Pārvāṇa Śrāddha.

During the interval between the solstices, on the day of equinox or at the sun's equinoctial passage, Śrāddha should be performed without offering the rice-ball. On the third of Vaiśākha, on the ninth of Kārttika, on the Pūrnimā day, the Śrāddha should be performed as at the equinoctial passage.

On the thirteenth day of the Bhādrapada month, on the amāvāsyā day of the month of Māgha, one should do Śrāddha by means of rice cooked with milk in the manner it is performed at the winter solstice.

57. When a Brahmin versed in the Vedas and the fire-rituals comes to the house, he alone should be considered as worthy of Śrāddha.

58. When the material for Śrāddha approved by the experts is available, he should perform Pārvana Śrāddha with the help of Brahmins well versed in the Śrāddha.

59. One should celebrate the anniversary of one's departed parents, also of the uncle and elder brother if they died sonless.

60-62. In Pārvana offerings should begin with Devas. In Ekoddiṣṭa no offerings should be made to Devas. In Śrāddha pertaining to Devas, he should offer two Piṇḍas, in that pertaining to Pitṛs three or a single piṇḍa should be offered to each. Similarly, in regard to maternal grandfather.

When a person is dead his son should offer rice-ball with libation of water with Kuśa grass and sesamum seeds outside the village on the bank of a river or a pond. On the third day, they should collect the bones.

63. If the deceased is a Brāhmaṇa, the purification of relatives of the same gotra is effected after ten days, if Kṣatriya, after twelve days, if Vaiśya after fifteen days, if Śūdra after a month.

64. After purification, they enjoin Ekoddiṣṭa, on the twelfth day, or after the expiry of a month or at the end of three fortnights.

65. O Brahmins, Śrāddha should be performed every month, for a year. Then he should perform sapiṇḍikarāṇa rite after a year. When that is done, he should perform Pārvana. The deceased then change their states as Preta to that of Pitṛs.

66. Pitṛs are twofold : mūrta and amūrta. Nāndimukhas are amūrta and Pārvanas are mūrta. Pretas receive Ekoddīṣṭa, Pitṛs receive Pārvana Śrāddha.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE

The details of Sapindikarana Rite

The sages said :

1-3. How should the rite of Sapindikarana for the dead be performed, O best of Brahmins, according to the Sāstras? O best of speakers, let us know all.

Vyāsa said :

O Brahmins, listen, I shall tell you how the rite of Sapindikarana should be performed. Herein no offering is made to Devas. A single libation of water is enjoined. One ring of Kuśa grass is sanctioned. No offering in the fire. No invocation. A single brahmin is fed in that rite.

4. This rite is to be performed, every month, for a year. Listen attentively. I shall tell you what is additional to this rite.

5. There should be four vessels, three for the Pitṛs, mixed with sesamum seeds, incense and water and one for the Preta.

6. In each of the three vessels some water from the Preta pātra should be poured. In each case, he should recite the mantra "Ye samānā".

7. In regard to women also, the same procedure should be adopted. But sapindikarana need not be performed if the deceased woman had no sons.

8. In case of women sapindikarana should be done every year by men. The rite should be performed on their death anniversary, as enjoined by the sāstras.

9. If there be no son, this should be performed by the relatives connected by the offering of rice balls. If there be no such relatives, brothers should do the same. If there be no brothers, grandsons or great-grandsons should perform the sacrifice.

10. The daughter's son should perform the rite for his maternal grand-father. They are named *dvyāmuṣyāyaṇa* (for they are linked to both : the maternal grandfather and the paternal grandfather).

11. They should propitiate both, by *Nitya* and *Naimittika Śrāddhas*. If none of the aforesaid is there, the women should perform the rite but without mantras.

12-13. If there are no women too, the king should get the funeral rite done by his distant relatives or in their absence, he should do the same by himself, because the king himself is the relative of all. O Brahmins, thus I have told you *Nitya* and *Naimittika* rites.

14. I shall now tell you other sorts of *Nitya* and *Naimittika* rites. *Darśa Śrāddha*, performed on the *Amāvasa* day is *Naimittika*, for it is linked with the diminution of the moon.

15-32. *Nitya* is the fixed period of time, when one should do this rite as prescribed by *Dharma*.

After the rite of *Sapindikaraṇa* has been performed, the great-grandfather of the father forfeits the right of receiving *piṇḍa*. He can receive only the residue of the *piṇḍa*. This fourth one loses importance in relationship. Hence his share in the rice-ball is reduced to residue.

The trio, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, are the rightful recipients of the rice-ball. Further, the three beginning from the grandfather of the grandfather are the sharers in the residue of the rice-ball. The seventh is the performer of sacrifice himself. Thus the relationship link is sevenfold as told by the sages.

After *yajamāna* (the performer of the ritual) the *Pitṛs* cease to have the right of partaking *piṇḍa*. Even distant relatives whether placed in hell or born in low species or transformed into evil spirits, imps, devils and the like become well fed with the leavings of food scattered on the ground. O Brahmins, the water dropped from the edge of bathing costume quenches the thirst and allays the hunger of those who are transformed into trees. Those who have reached divinity receive nourishment from the fragrant drops of water fallen from the rice-ball. Similarly, those who are born into animal creation receive nourishment by drinking drops of water fallen from the rice-balls.

The infants who are dead before teething, the youths who are forbidden to perform ritual and have died without any rite get their hunger and thirst allayed by the water used in wiping floors or used in cleansing the feet of brāhmaṇas.

Whatever particles of water or leavings of food, pure or impure, are dropped by yajamāna or the brahmins, by that the departed spirits, whatever form of existence they have attained, get nourishment. By the Śrāddha performed with the riches acquired through unfair means, the low class of people—cāndālas etc. get nourishment. Thus, one should perform Śrāddha for the departed in the family, even by means of vegetables (in the absence of other materials) as prescribed in the Śāstras. By the drops of water and bits of food, dropped from the rice-ball, he alleviates thirst and hunger, not only of his close relatives but also of distant kins born in different species of existence.

33-35. By performing Śrāddha no one comes to grief in the family. Only those of the Brahmins should be invited at Śrāddha who possess self-control, who are accustomed to agnihotra, who are pure in deeds, who are learned in Śāstras as well as in the Vedas. The invitee should be the one who thrice kindles the Naciketā fire, who knows the three verses beginning with Madhu or Suparna, who knows six ancillaries of the Veda, who is devoted to his parents, who has sisters, knows Sāman. The performer of Śrāddha should feed the priest who officiates at the sacrifice, the family priest, the spiritual guide or a teacher.

36-37. The following should be invited to dine at Śrāddha—the maternal uncle, father-in-law, brother-in-law, a relative, the family teacher or the teacher in society, one who is expert in interpreting the Purāṇas, not greedy or with a little greed, not accustomed to charity. Brahmins with these qualities should be invited at Śrāddha. They are purifiers of society.

38. The list of Brahmins as mentioned above should be invited a day before Śrāddha. Whether the rite pertains to gods or manes, he should appoint them accordingly.

39-41. The invitees to the Śrāddha should control their sense-organs. If the person performs Śrāddha and then after taking meals copulates with woman, his deceased ancestors sleep in that semen for a month. Again, if a person copulates with the woman, then partakes of Śrāddha, his deceased ances-

ters live upon semen and urine for that month. Hence, the performer of Śrāddha should invite the Brāhmaṇas on the day of Śrāddha or a day before. Those who are addicted to women should be excluded.

42-43. If, on the day of Śrāddha, the yatis of controlled mind come for alms, he of controlled mind should propitiate them with respectful homage and then feed them liberally.

44-68. The pitṛs have yoga as their base. The yogis should always be honoured therefore.

If among a thousand brāhmaṇas, there be a single yogī, he alone can take Yajamāna and the invitees across the ocean of existence, as a boat in the river.

Those versed in the Vedic lore recite a verse in the context, which was formerly sung in the assembly of king Aila.

"When in our family will there be born a son to one of the members who will give us rice-balls, when the yogis have taken meals? We desire in Gaya, a rice-ball, flesh of rhinoceros, oblation, Kāla-śaka (?) butter mixed with sesamum seed or Kṛṣṇa (?) pertaining to Viśvadeva and Samya. We desire the flesh of rhinoceros from the feet to the head."

One should give Śrāddha on Trayodaśī in Māgha according to the prescription of the Śāstras in the winter solstice. He should offer rice cooked in milk as also honey and butter. Therefore, the performer should propitiate the Pitṛs, out of devotion. Satiated with Śrāddha, the Pitṛs will fulfil all desires of the performer, bring freedom from sins and set Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, constellations, planets and stars to favourable disposition.

Propitiated with Śrāddha, the Pitṛs confer longevity, progeny, riches, knowledge, happiness, sovereignty, heaven and Mokṣa.

Pitṛs prefer noon to forenoon. When the brāhmaṇas reach the house, he should welcome them, honour them. While he is wearing kuśa-ring, he should give them water to sip and ask them to sit comfortably on the seat. He should perform Śrāddha accordingly to Śāstraic injunctions and let the best of Brāhmaṇas feed on sweet dishes and then dismiss them with sweet words and obeisance devotedly. He should follow them to the gate and return with their permission. Then he should perform his daily rōutine and then let his guests take meals. Some pandits

hold that the rites to the Pitṛs should be performed everyday. 'Not so to the pitṛs', say others. Other rites should be performed as usual. He should take meals in the company of his family. Thus he should perform Śrāddha attentively, as prescribed in the Dharmaśāstra, in the manner as it pleases the learned Brahmins.

Now I shall tell you the sort of people who are forbidden to receive Śrāddha: one who deceives friend, one who has diseased nails, one who is impotent, one who is suffering from tuberculosis, one who is suffering from jaundice, one who lives by trade, one who has dark-brown teeth, bald-headed, one-eyed, blind, deaf, dull, dumb, lame, cripple, eunuch, of bad skin, deformed, leper, red-eyed, hump-backed, pigmy, ugly, indolent, friend's enemy, of bad family, a herdsman, despised, one who has married before his elder brother, an unmarried elder brother whose younger brother is married, the son of Parivedanikā, son of a woman whose husband has married before his elder brother, the husband of a Śūdra woman and their son too, one who has officiated at the religious ceremony of the Śūdra's son, one who has not married, one who has married the widow of his brother, one who is salaried teacher or one who is taught by a salaried teacher, one who partakes of food from the family in pollution, one who is a hunter, one who trades in soma, one who is under curse, a thief, a fallen one, a usurer, a rogue, back-biter, one who has abandoned the injunctions of Veda, one disinclined to charity, sacrifice, the king's priest, the king's servant, devoid of knowledge, jealous, ill-disposed to the elderly people, one who is short-tempered, harsh, stupid, an attendant upon an idol, an astronomer, maker of an arrow or the wearer of a foreign dress, one who officiates as a priest at the sacrifice of a person who is not worthy of holding sacrifice. Those of low class should not be invited to Śrāddha since they defile the social circle.

69. Where the wicked are honoured and the good are dishonoured, the terrible divine punishment befalls the people immediately.

70. Contrary to the Śāstraic injunction and in violation of the customary laws, if the performer of Śrāddha feeds a stupid person, he comes to grief.

If the holder of Śrāddha excludes the family brahmin and feeds another he is consumed by the fire of his grief.

71. If the holder of Śrāddha does not gift clothes, his performance of Yajña and penance, and his knowledge of Veda are of no avail. Therefore, he should give clothes especially on the occasion of Śrāddha.

72. He who gives fresh garments, made of silk or cotton, obtains the fulfilment of his desire.

73-74. Just as a calf finds out its mother from among several cows, similarly, the Pitṛs obtain food from the bellies of the brahmins who have partaken of Śrāddha meals.

75. The Pitṛs receive food offered to the brahmins who utter the Pitṛ's name, gotra and mantras. Although they are not present in physical forms they get satiated thereby.

76. Homage to Deities, Pitṛs and Yogins. Homage to Svāhā, Svadhā for ever and for ever.

77. At the beginning and the end of Śrāddha, he should repeat the same thrice. At the offering of the rice-ball as well, he should recite this attentively.

78. Pitṛs come very soon. Rākṣasas fly away. They get propitiated in the three worlds. This mantra, indeed uplifts them.

79. He should gift a fresh thread, silken, hempen, cotton, one made of patronṇa, patka or kauśeya. Variety should be avoided.

80. The wise man should avoid that piece of cloth which in spite of its being full has no fringe. The aforesaid variety does not propitiate the Pitṛs and the donor too comes to grief.

81. Piṇḍa is not to be given to one who is alive. He should be fed with the meals of his taste according to Śāstraic injunctions.

82. With faith and devotion he should offer ball into the fire. If he is in need of progeny, he should give it to his wife, reciting the mantras.

83. If he wishes for brilliant splendour, he should offer it to the cows. If he wishes for wisdom, fame and renown he should offer the same into waters.

84. If he wishes for longevity he should give it to the

crows. If he wishes for children, or a house, he should give it to the cocks.

85. Again, some brahmins opine that Piṇḍa should be lifted by the front. He should do so when the Brahmins have said: "Now, lift it up please".

86. Therefore, Śrāddha should be performed as the sages of yore have stated. Otherwise, he incurs sin, and the Pitṛs do not receive the essence thereof.

87-88. The following should be given in Śrāddha: barley, rice, sesamum seeds, beans, wheat, chick pea, kidney bean, śyāmaka variety of corn, mustard, wild rice, hasti-śyāmaka, priyaṅgu, prasātika (a kind of rice) along with the grains.

89-91 The mango-fruit, hog plum, bilva, pomegranate, bij-apūraka, old myrobalan, milk, fruits of coconut, parūsaka, vatsaka trees, dates, grape, wood apple of blue colour, a fruit of patola tree, vine, fruit of jujube tree, berry, vaikaṅkata, orange, bijapūra—these fruits should necessarily be given in Śrāddha.

92-99. Treacle, sugar, juice of the sugar-cane, juice of other plants, mūrmuras, cow's milk, curd, butter, oil squeezed from sesamum seeds, salt produced from ocean or lake should be offered in Śrāddha. He should offer essence of fragrant substances, sandal paste, aloe, saffron, Kālaśāka, Tanḍuliya, Vāstuka, Mūlaka, wild vegetables, and the following flowers: jasmine, Campaka, Lodhra, Mallikā Bāṇa (Blue flower), Barbarī, Vṛntakāśoka, Tulasī, Tilaka, Pāvantī, Satapatrā, fragrant Sephālikā, Kubjaka, Tagara, Mṛga, wild Ketakī, Yuthikā, Atimuktā. O Brahmins, these flowers are worth offering in Śrāddha. Moreover, day-lotus, night-lotus, white lotus, blue lotus, red water-lily, white water-lily, Kostus (Kuṣṭa) Māṁsi, Bālaka, Kukkuṭī, Jātipatraka, Nalikā Uśira, Mustā and Granthiparnī—these and other fragrant substances are worthy of Śrāddha.

100. Guggulu, sandal paste, Śrivāsa, Aguru, and such other instances as are available.

101. Beans, Caṇakas, Masuras, Koradūṣakas, Vipruṣas, Markaṭas, Kodravas should be avoided.

102. He should avoid milk, curd, ghee produced from Mahiṣa, Camara, Mṛga, Avikā, Ekaśaphā (an animal whose hoof is not cloven) (as a horse, ass etc.), the breasts of women, camel.

103. Tāla, Varuṇa, Kākola, Bahupatra, Arjuniphala, Jambīra, red Bilva, and the fruit of Śāla should be avoided.

104-110 He should avoid fish, boar, tortoise and cows especially. Pūtika, musk, Gorocanā, lotus-paste, Kāleyaka, Ugragandha, Turuṣka, Pālaṅka, Kumārī, Kirāta, Piṇḍamūlaka, Gr̥ñjana, Cukrikā, Cukra, Varumā, Canapatrikā, Jīva, Śatapuspā, Nālikā, Gandha-Śūkara, Halabhṛtya, Sarṣapa, Palāṇḍu, Laśuna, Mānaskanda, Viṣaskanda, Vajrakanda, Gadāsthika, Puruṣālva, Sapiṇḍālu—these should not be used.

He should also leave Alābu, Tiktaparṇī, Kuṣmāṇḍa, three sorts of Kaṭukas, Vārtāka, Śivajāta and the hairy Vaṭas, Kāliya, Crane of red colour.

Similarly, the fruit of Vibhītaka, Āraṇāla, partially broken conch shell and stale food.

111-131. Things of bad odour should not be given in Śrāddha. Similarly, Kovidāra, Śigruka, that which is sour, picchila, rūkṣa, vātayāma should not be given. Similarly, that which is devoid of taste or emits smell of wine should be cast off. Hiṅgu of bitter smell, Phaṇiśa, Bhūnimba, Nimba and Rājikā, Kustum-buru growing in Kaliṅga, sour Vetasa, pomegranate, Māgadhi, Nāgara, Ārdraka, Tittidī, Āmrātaka, Jīvaka, Tumburu—these are not prohibited. Similarly, rice cooked in milk, Śālmalī, Mudga and sweet balls should be included. Drinks made of mango juice and cow's milk should be included. So also those which are in common use, sweet and oily, though a little sour and bitter. Those which are extremely sour, bitter and tasteful to Devas should be used in Śrāddha. The meat of goat, quail, partridge, hare, jackal, Lāvaka or Rājīva fish should be used.

Besides, the flesh of rhinoceros, red jackal, a fish having scale, a fish named Simhatuṇḍa, osprey should be used in Śrāddha. Though Manu has allowed the flesh of Rohita, it should not be used. This is my considered opinion which is supported by Varāha. If he feeds on things prohibited in Śrāddha, he will go to Raurava hell. O ascetics, Varāha has prohibited the following which are forbidden to the twice-born. They should not be offered to the Pitṛs :

Rohita fish, pig, tortoise, iguava, swan, the Cakra bird, Madgu (diver bird), fish without scale, osprey, snakes, Vāsahāri, Kukkuṭa, Kalaviṅka, Mayūra, Bhāradvāja, Śāringaka, Nakula,

Ulūka, Mārjāra, Lopas, others which are not easily available, Tiṭṭibha bird, jackals, tiger, bear, hyena—if a stupid person eats the flesh of these and other prohibited animals or birds, he having incurred a great sin goes to the Raurava hell. If that sinner includes the prohibited flesh in Śrāddha, he will let his Pitṛs, though stationed in heaven, fall into hell.

If he eats Kusumbha-śāka (vegetable mixed with safflower), Jambīra, Śigruka, Kovidāra, Pinyāka, Vipruṣa, Masūra, Grñ-jana, Śāṇa, Kodrava, Kokilākṣa, Cukra, Kambuka, Padmaka, Cakora, flesh of Śyena, Vartula, Alābu, Tālinī and the fruit of tall trees, he goes to hell. If he gives these to the Pitṛs, he falls along with them in Pūyavaha. Therefore by all means, a wise person should not partake of them.

132-135. Varāha has said that they should not be offered to the Pitṛs. Better feed upon one's own flesh rather than partake of the forbidden meat.

If out of ignorance or negligence, one has eaten the forbidden things, he should perform the rite of expiation or atonement.

If he eats what is prohibited he should, for the atonement thereof, feed upon fruits, roots, curd, milk, buttermilk mixed with water, cows' urine, yāvaka—one each day for a week.

136-143. Thus should transgression be corrected, especially by the devotees of Viṣṇu. O ascetics, the forbidden things as mentioned above should be excluded. The material necessary for Śrāddha should be collected according to the capacity of the performer. Thus, if the person performs Śrāddha according to the prescribed rules and his resou ces, he will remain happy so long as he lives upon this earth.

The sages said :

If the father is alive, grandfather and great-grandfather are dead, how will he perform Śrāddha? Please tell us in detail.

Vyāsa said :

The son should offer Śrāddha to the departed who could duly receive the same from his father. There is no infringement of duty—secular or Vedic in regard to that.

The sages said :

If the father is dead but the grandfather is alive, how will he perform Śrāddha? You will kindly explain.

Vyāsa said :

He should offer Piṇḍa to the father and feed the grandfather who is alive. This is the judgement of Śāstras.

The Piṇḍa should be given to the dead, food should be given to the alive. He should not perform Sapindikaraṇa or Pārvana in that case. If the son performs Pitṛmedha, he is blessed with sons, riches and longevity.

144. He who recites this section on Pitṛmedha at the time of Śrāddha, O Brahmins, his Pitṛs feed upon his food for a number of years lasting for three yugas.

145. Thus I have told you the section on Pitṛmedha which destroys sins and increases merit. Men with controlled mind should hear it attentively and recite the same during the period when the Śrāddha is being performed.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEEN

Conduct of the Good

Vyāsa said:

1. Thus the Deities and Manes are to be duly worshipped by the householder by means of the Havya and Kavya offerings. The guests and kinsmen should be honoured with cooked rice.

2. The living beings, the servants, animals, birds and even ants; the mendicants who beg for alms and all other travellers who come to the house are to be received hospitably.

3. Brahmins observing the disciplined conduct of life of the good should be honoured by the good householder.

The sages said :

4-5. O brahmin, the Nitya and Naimittika rites have been

recounted by you. Human activities are three-fold: Nitya, Naimittika and Kāmya. O sage, even as you recount we wish to hear the rules of good conduct by pursuing which a man attains happiness here and hereafter.

Vyāsa said:

6. Good conduct should always be preserved by a householder. There is no welfare here or hereafter to one who is devoid of good conduct.

7. Sacrifices, charitable gifts and austerities are not conducive to the prosperity of the person who transgresses the rules of good conduct.

8. A person who maintains good conduct attains the longevity of Brahmā (?) Virtue and good conduct should always be maintained. Virtue is the symbol of good conduct.

9-10. O brahmins, I shall recount the form and general outline of good conduct. One shall maintain it with great concentration. Endeavour should be made by a householder in achieving the three-fold aim of life. The achievement of the householder here and hereafter depends on the realisation thereof.

11-12. With one-fourth of one's wealth the self-possessed man shall achieve the other-worldly welfare. With half of his wealth he shall sustain himself as well as perform the Nitya and Naimittika rites. With the remaining one-fourth one shall increase one's original capital. O brahmins, if one pursues thus, one's wealth becomes fruitful.

13-16. Similarly, for the sake of dispelling sins, virtuous rites should be performed by a learned man. Thus the other Dharma which has the fruit of welfare in the next world should be made fruitful here itself. The three (Dharma, Artha and Kāma) are of two types each. One type causes sinful offence; the other type is not antagonistic. One shall think about these as mutually complementary. O excellant brahmins, know them to be conducive to the contrary result. (For example) the wealth that is conducive to virtue is intrinsically virtuous. That which does not afflict the soul is virtue. Kāma (Desire) is split into two (?) by the other two : Dharma and Artha; and the other two are split into two by it (i.e. Kāma).

17-18. One shall get up in the Brāhma Muhūrta and think about virtue and wealth. After getting up, one shall perform the Ācamana rite. After taking both and making himself pure one shall worship the Sandhyās. The early Sandhyā (i.e. dawn) he shall worship even when the stars are seen. He shall worship the late Sandhyā (i.e. dusk) even when the sun is visible. He shall perform Sandhyā prayers duly. Unless in extreme case of emergency he shall not forsake it.

19. O brahmins, one shall avoid evil utterances, falsehoods and harsh words. He shall eschew ignoble scriptures, evil arguments and service of ignoble persons.

20. One shall perform Homa both in the evening and in the morning, with perfect restraint over the self. He shall not see sunrise and sunset directly.

21. The following activities should be performed in the forenoon :—Washing the teeth, applying collyrium, embellishing the hair, looking into the mirror and the Tarpaṇa rite to the deities.

22. Faeces should not be discharged on the path leading to the rural residences, holy centres and fields, nor in a ploughed field, nor in a cowpen.

23. One shall not look at the naked wife of another man; one shall not look at one's own ordure. (One shall avoid) seeing, touching and talking to a women in her menses.

24. One shall not discharge urine or faeces into the waters (of a tank etc.). Nor should one indulge in sexual intercourse under water. One shall not stand on faeces and urine nor on hairs or ashes. One shall not stand over the sharp edge of any cutting instrument.

25. An intelligent man shall not stand on scattered husk, burning coal, bits of ropes, clothes etc. on the road or in a ground.

26. After performing the rite of worship of the Pitṛs, Devas, human beings and other living beings, the householder deserves to take food in accordance with his affluence.

27. After performing the Ācamana rite, after restricting unnecessary talk, the man shall remain pure. He shall sit facing the East or the North and take food with the mind therein. He shall keep the hands between the knees.

28. Except in the case of utter destruction of food, the wise man shall not complain about the defects of food at the time of taking it. One shall avoid taking salt directly (i.e. salt should be mixed with food and then taken in). He shall avoid the leavings of food also.

29-31. The self-possessed man shall not discharge urine or faeces, while standing or walking. He shall not eat anything defiled by the leavings of food. If one is defiled by the leavings of food, one shall not speak anything. He shall avoid reciting the Vedas too. One shall not look at the sun, moon or the stars as one pleases. One should avoid using a seat, bed or a vessel if it is broken. One should honour and greet elderly persons by standing up and offering them seats.

32. An intelligent man shall talk in a way favourable to them (i.e. elderly persons). He shall follow them. He shall not act against them.

33-34. No intelligent man shall take food, worship the deities or invoke them with a single cloth on. O brahmins, no intelligent man shall perform a sacrifice, if there is no fire. No man shall take bath or lie down completely naked. One shall not scratch head simultaneously with both hands.

35. Head-bath should not be repeatedly undertaken by the intelligent men without cause. One who has already had head-bath should not touch any limb with oil.

36. One shall avoid studying the Vedas during the holidays. One shall never disregard or insult brahmins, fires, cows and the sun.

37. One shall discharge faeces and urine facing the north during the day and facing the south during the night. During distress he shall discharge them as he pleases.

38. One shall not speak out the misdeeds of the preceptor. If he is angry, one shall propitiate him. One shall not listen to others who slander him.

39-41. Priority in access to the path shall be given to the brahmins, to the king, to one who is miserable, to one of superior learning, to a pregnant woman, to one who is afflicted by sickness, to a greater person, to the deaf, mute or blind, to one who is elated and to one who has become mad.

A learned man shall circumambulate a temple, a tree in a monastery, cross-roads, and the preceptor who is of superior learning. One shall never wear shoes, clothes, garlands etc. worn by others.

42. One shall avoid taking oil bath or indulging in sexual intercourse with women on the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth lunations as well as on Parvan days.

43. No wise man shall ever stand with arms and upper leg (?) raised up. One shall not throw up the feet. One shall not keep one leg over another.

44. One shall avoid reviling, wounding the sensitive spots of and slandering an unchaste woman or a boy who has indulged in an unworthy act (?) or a fallen fellow.

45-46. A clever man shall never be arrogant, proud and harsh. One shall not laugh at or find fault with a fool, a mad fellow, a person in distress, ugly persons, persons with deficient limbs or poor people. One shall not lift up another man's stick to chastise a disciple or a son.

47. A wise man should not drag a seat with his leg and sit thereon. One shall not prepare a cake of wheat flour or a dish of rice and peas mixed together or meat solely for oneself.

48-52. Food should be taken in the evening and in the morning after worshipping the guests.

O brahmins, one shall always clean the teeth sitting silently facing the east or the north. One shall avoid the forbidden creeper. No man shall ever sleep with his head placed towards the north or the west. One shall place one's head towards the south or the east.

One should never take one's bath in scented water, especially in the morning. If at all, one has to take one's bath at other times during the day it should be only during the eclipse. The limbs should not be wiped off with the edges of cloths or with one's hands.

One shall never shake tresses or the clothes. No learned man shall ever apply unguents before taking bath.

53. One shall never wear a red, or a black cloth nor one of variegated colour. No one shall exchange clothes or ornaments (with others).

54. A cloth should be abandoned if it is excessively worn out and the threads come off, if it is defiled by worms and hairs or if it is touched by dogs.

55. One shall avoid the following types of meat : if it is licked by a dog; if it is defiled after the essence has been taken away; the meat of the back; or the forbidden meat.

56. A man shall never take in salt directly. O brahmins, a foodstuff that has been left over for a long time, that has become dry or that has become stale should be eschewed.

57. O excellent brahmins, the resultant products of sugar-cane juice, milk, vegetable and flour as well as the products of gravy need not be abandoned even if they are left over for a long time.

58-59. One shall avoid lying down at the times of sunrise and sunset. A man shall never take food : if he has not taken his bath; if he is sleeping; if his mind dwells on other things; if he is seated on the bed or on the bare ground or if he has not given a part of it to his servants. While taking food he shall not make sounds.

60-63. One shall take food only after taking bath in the morning as well as in the evening.

Other men's wives should not be carnally approached by a learned man. Sexual intercourse with other men's wives destroys the merits of Iṣṭāpūrta and also longevity. A thing so destructive of the span of life of a man does not exist in the world, so destructive as the outraging of the modesty of other men's wives.

It is only after duly performing the rite of Ācamana that one should perform the holy rites of Devas, Pitṛs and fire-god. The obeisance to the preceptor as well as the routine of taking food shall be performed only after the Ācamana rite. The water used for the Ācamana rite should be clear. It should be devoid of smell and foam. No sound should be made at that time. It should be eagerly performed.

64-68. One shall sit facing the east or the north and then perform the rite of Ācamana. Before that rite one shall wash his hands and feet after applying clay. The clay taken for this purpose shall not be any of these five : Clay

taken from under the water; that taken from residential localities; that taken from the ant-hill; the clay from the rats' den and the clay that remains after performing the purificatory rites. One shall avoid these five types of clay. With great concentration and keeping the hands between knees, one shall perform the Ācamana rite three or four times. After wiping off the limbs and whirling the water round the head, and after performing the Ācamana rite perfectly, the pure man shall perform the other holy rites. One shall perform the Ācamana rite after sneezing, licking, breaking the wind, spitting etc. After touching what should not be touched, (and as an expiation thereof) one shall look at the sun or touch the right ear.

69. These rites are in accordance with their availability. If the previous one is not available the later one is sought; when the previous is present the later is not used.

70. One shall not grind one's teeth, nor beat one's own body. While sleeping, meditating or taking food, one shall eschew the self-study of the Vedas.

71-72. One shall avoid sexual intercourse and journey during Sandhyā (Dusk). One shall perform Tarpaṇa rite unto the Pitṛs with full faith, in the early afternoon. The head bath and the holy rites unto Devas and Pitṛs also shall be done in the afternoon. One shall get the shaving done facing the east or the north.

73. For matrimony one shall avoid a girl with crippled limbs or one wanting a limb even if she is free from ailments or born of a noble family. One shall marry a girl removed by (not less than) seven generations on his father's side and (not less than) five generations on his mother's side.

74. One shall protect one's wife. One shall avoid jealousy as well as sleeping and indulgence in sexual intercourse during the day. One shall eschew infliction of pain on animals, and all other activities that cause distress and sorrow to others.

75. In the case of the people of all castes, a woman in her monthly course should be avoided for the first four nights. To prevent the birth of a female child, one shall avoid the fifth night also.

76. Thereafter he shall carnally approach her on the sixth night or other excellent nights even in number. Boys will be

born (if intercourse is carried out) on even nights and girls on nights odd in number.

77. Unrighteous persons indulge in sexual intercourse on Parvan and other days and impotent persons during dusk time. A clever man shall avoid Rikta days.

78. Even if rude people speak a lot, one shall never listen to them.

An honourable seat should not be offered to a person who is not magnificent.

79. After shaving, vomiting or sexual intercourse with a woman an intelligent person shall take bath along with the clothe worn. He shall take bath also after going to the cremation ground.

80-84. O brahmins, one shall not make slanderous remarks about the following nor laugh at them: Devas, Vedas, brahmins, noble and truthful persons, preceptor, chaste women, Brahman, Yajñas and ascetics.

One shall be in perfectly auspicious dress, clad in white garments and embellished with white flowers. One shall never be inauspicious in dress and features. He shall not be in friendly terms with arrogant persons, mad fellows, the foolish and impolite, persons of no good conduct, those who are defiled by the defects of age and caste, those who habitually spend much, those who are enemies, those who are censured, those who are inefficient in their work, those who are in contact with lecherous persons, those who have no money, those who are solely interested in arguing and other base men.

85. One shall stand up while meeting friends, persons who are initiated, kings, religious students who have finished studies and become householders and the father-in-law. When they come to one's house one shall greet them in accordance with one's affluences.

86. O brahmins, after honouring and worshipping them in accordance with his capacity he shall bid them farewell to their respective places, after they had stayed for a year.

87-94. One shall then offer worship. He shall offer oblations into the fire in due order. The first oblation shall be offered to

Brahmā; then to Prajāpati; the third to the Gr̥hyas; next to Kaśyapa. After offering oblation to Anumati he shall offer the (domestic oblation).

The holy rite that had been recounted by me before at the time of laying down the rules regarding the Nitya rites, shall be performed then. The Vaiśvadeva rite shall be done thereafter. O brahmins, even as I recount it, listen. After alloting the different divisions in the abodes (and places) in regard to Devas the devotee shall offer three oblations in the water jar to Parjanya, Āpaḥ (waters) and Dharitri (Earth) (?). To Vāyu he shall offer oblation in every quarter; he shall offer to the quarters beginning with the east and in due order. Then he shall offer to Brahmā, to the firmament and to the sun in due order. Subsequently, with purity he shall offer oblations to the Viśvedevas, to all living beings, to Uṣas (dawn) and to the Bhūtapatī (the lord of living beings). In the south he shall offer oblation to the Pitṛs after saying “Svadhā ca namah” making it anticlockwise. He shall duly offer the water mixed with the remnant of cooked rice in the south-east, uttering “Yaksma etat te”. Thereafter he shall perform the rite of obeisance to Devas and to Brahmins.

95-98. The line at the root of the thumb of the right hand is known as the Brāhma Tirtha for the rite of Ācamana.

The spot between the index finger and the thumb is cited as the Pitṛ Tirtha. Except in the case of Nāndimukha type of Pitṛs, water libation shall be offered by means of this spot to the Pitṛs. The Tirtha pertaining to Devas is at the tip of fingers. The holy rite unto Devas is by means of Pitṛtirtha. The Tirtha of Prajāpati should be assigned at the root of the little finger. Thus by means of these Tirthas alone should all the rites be performed to the respective deities along with the Pitṛs. They should never be performed through the Tirthas of others.

99-100. The rite of Ācamana by means of Brāhma Tirtha is excellent. The rites of Pitṛs shall always be performed by means of Pitṛ Tirtha; the rites of Devas by means of Deva Tirtha and the rite of Prajāpati by means of the Tirtha of Prajāpati. With the same one shall perform the rites of water libation and offering the ball of rice unto the Nāndimukha variety of

Pitṛs. Everything connected with Prajāpati shall be performed by means of Prājāpatya Tirtha.

101. No shrewd man shall hold water and fire together. One shall not stretch one's legs in front of one's preceptors, Devas, Pitṛs and brahmins.

102. One should not look at a cow suckling her calf; one should not drink water with the palms joined together to form a cup; an intelligent man shall not cause delay in the short and long periods of cleaning. One shall not blow fire with the mouth.

103. O brahmins, one should not stay in a place where the following four are not present, viz. one who offers debt; a physician, a brahmin well-versed in the Vedas and a river abounding in water.

104. An intelligent man shall always stay there where the king is strong, interested in virtue and has conquered his servants. Whence can one have happiness if the king is bad.

105. It is conducive to happiness to stay at a place where the citizens are united, where they abide by justice, where they are peaceful and where they rival with one another (to work for the welfare of all).

106. A shrewd man shall live in that country where the husbandmen are generally not very arrogant and where all medicines are available.

107. O brahmins, one shall not stay in that place where the following three exist together : one who is eager to conquer; a previous enemy and people who continuously celebrate the festivals.

108. A learned man shall stay among his fellow travellers of very good conduct. One shall always stay at a place where the king cannot be thwarted and where the earth yields plenty of vegetables.

109. Thus, O brahmins, everything has been mentioned by me for the welfare of you all. Henceforth I shall state the rules of procedure regarding the food-intake.

110. Cooked rice, though stale, can be taken in if it is soaked in oil. It can be kept thus for a long time. Wheat products, barley products and milk products, kept for a long time can be eaten even if they are devoid of oiliness.

111. The following can be eaten : hare, tortoise, alligator, porcupine and the fish with darts(?) The village boar and the cock should be avoided.

112. In the following circumstances, even if one eats meat, one is not defiled : if it is the remnant of offerings unto the Pitrs, Devas etc. or if it is cooked in Sraddha at the request of the brahmins and is sprinkled with holy water or if it is taken as a medicine.

113-114. The following articles can be cleaned with water : conch, rock, gold, silver, rope, garments, vegetables, roots, fruits, baskets of split bamboos, hides, jewel-studded cloth, coral pearl, (ordinary) vessels and vessels used for drinking Soma juice.

115. The cleansing of stony vessels may be with water or by scrubbing with a stone. The cleansing of oily vessels is by means of hot water.

116-117. The sieves, deer skins, mortars and pestles, or clothes in a bundle are cleaned by just sprinkling (water over the bundle). The cleansing of all types of bark-garments is by means of clay and water. The cleasing of wool and all types of hairs is done in this manner :—

118-119. It shall be cleansed with the Kalka (paste) after being boiled well of white mustard or sesamum seeds. The purification of all articles likely to get destroyed is always thus. The cleasing of cotton dress shall be with water and ash; that of wood, ivory, bones and horns is through paring.

120-122. The purity of pots made of clay is effected by baking it again. What is received by way of alms, the hand of an artisan and the mouth of the harlot—these are pure. The following are pure : the perfect knowledge and passage through the street, that which is consecrated by the servants, that which is praised at the outset, that which is past after a long time, that which is hidden by many, that which is light, that which has many boys within, that in which old people are active, the chambers of barn and storage for sugarcane, grain etc. and the two breasts of a woman.

123. The flowing waters devoid of odour are pure. A plot of land becomes pure by the efflux of time, by being burnt, by being swept or when herds of cows pass over it.

124-136. (The ground becomes purified) by smearing (with cowdung), by scraping, by sprinkling (with water), by sweeping. Clay, water and ash must be put over cooked rice in the following circumstances for the sake of purity: if it is defiled by hairs or worms, if it is sniffed at by a cow or if flies settle on it.

The purity of (a vessel) made of Udumbara tree, tin or lead is effected by means of alkaline water (?). The purity of bell, metal vessels is effected by means of water mixed with Bhasman (ashes). If a liquid is defiled by contact with impurities, it is to be filtered or its foul smell is to be dispelled by means of clay and water. One shall remove the colour and the (bad) odour of other materials too (similarly). The (piece of) meat dropped down by a Cāṇḍāla, beasts and birds of prey etc. is pure (intrinsically). Oil etc. that is spilt on the street is pure. The water that gives satisfaction to a cow is pure. Dust particles, fire, the shadow of horses and cows, rays (of the sun), wind, earth, sprays (of water) flies etc. are not defiled by means of their contact with (other) defiled things. Goats and horses are pure in their mouths but not the mouths of cows and calves. The flow of milk of the mother is pure. A bird felled down by an arrow is pure. Seats, beds, vehicles, river banks, grasses etc. are purified by the rays of the sun and the moon, and by the wind like the articles of trade.

One shall duly perform the rite of Ācamana after traversing through streets, after a bath and during the activities of hunger and drinking. One shall perform Ācamana after wearing a cloth.

The purity of those who are touched by the foul marshy water of the street is effected by contact with wind. So also the purity of platform built of baked bricks.

One shall take away the upper part of the cooked food defiled much, and leave it off and sprinkle the remaining part with water along with clay (?). The means of purity of the person who partakes of a defiled food is fasting for three nights and performing the rite of Ācamana by means of water. This atonement is prescribed when the partaking is due to ignorance. If it were to be with full knowledge that defect does not subside.

After touching a woman in her monthly course or a woman who has come into contact with her or a woman who has given birth to a child and persons belonging to the meanest caste, one shall take bath for purity. So also one shall take bath after

touching persons who have borne a dead body. If a brahmin touches a human bone he can become pure by taking an oil bath.

137-138. If he does not take oil bath he shall perform the Ācamana rite, touch a cow and look at the sun. (He shall then become pure.)

One shall not tread on spittle or vomitted matter.

The leavings after food, faeces, urine, and water used for washing the feet shall be cast out of the house.

Without concluding the rite of offering five Pindas one shall not take bath in the water belonging to others.

139. One shall take bath in natural water reservoirs (literally, those dug by gods), in eddies and Gaṅgā (and other) rivers.

An intelligent man shall never remain in gardens and other places at wrong times.

140-147. One shall never converse with those persons who are hated by the people as well as women bereft of sons.

One becomes purified by looking at the sun if one touches or converses with the persons who speak in contempt of deities, manes, scriptures, performance of sacrifice and saintly persons.

This selfsame purificatory rite should be performed by intelligent persons after looking at the following persons etc. : a woman in her monthly course, a dead body that has been left abandoned and lying (unattended), persons devoid of righteousness or persons of other religions, a woman who has given birth to a child, a eunuch, a naked man, a man of the lowest caste, persons who have carried a dead body and those who are enamoured of other men's wives.

A person who is conversant with righteousness becomes purified by taking a bath if he touches these : a medicant who is not worthy of being fed (?), a heretic, a cat, an ass, a cook, a fallen man, an outcaste (a person ostracised), a Cāṇḍāla and those who bear dead bodies, a country pig and a woman in her monthly course. Similarly one has to take bath for purification if one touches any one of these : persons defiled by a woman who has given birth to a child or a person who has the pollution due to child birth or a person who fails to perform his daily round of duties at home or he who is abandoned by

brahmins or the meanest man who commits sins by his (indiscriminate) eating.

One shall never fail to perform the daily duty of observing rituals. I shall mention the occasions when they need not be performed. On the occurrence of a death or a birth (in his family) a brahmin shall refrain from the rites of performing sacrifice, offering sacrificial fee, etc.

148. (In similar circumstances) a Kṣatriya shall remain without performing the Nitya rites for twelve days, a Vaiśya for half a month and a Śūdra for a month.

149-150. Thereafter all these shall perform their duties duly.

Water (libation) should be offered to the dead man by the members of his Gotra after going out of the house. The bones of a dead person shall be collected on the first, fourth, seventh or the ninth day. They should be gathered by the members of his Gotra on the fourth day.

151. After the rite of Sañcayana (collection of bones after cremation) the touch of their limbs is laid down in the Sāstras. The rites should be performed by the members of the Gotra, after the rite of Sañcayana.

152-156. (Defective) On the day of death two Sapindas can touch each other, for they are related to each other. If death takes place due to weapons, hanging, fire or enemy the prescription is the same as mentioned afore. If death takes place due to protest fasts or starvation, men are purified immediately. But the Sapindas will have pollution for three days. When a Sapinda dies after the death of another (i.e. immediately thereafter), a single purificatory rite is sufficient. The routine daily rites should be performed there. The same is the procedure when a birth takes place during the postnatal pollution due to a person's birth in the case Sapindas and Sodakas.

According to injunctions the father shall take bath at the birth of a son. He shall take bath along with clothes he is wearing at the time of the birth.

157-158. Even in the case of (post-natal pollution) if another birth taken place while a pollution is current, the purity is mentioned as having been effected in the course of days of

the previous birth. The castes shall duly perform their duties and rituals after ten, twelve, fifteen or thirty days have passed.

159. Thereafter the rite of *Ekoddīṣṭa Śrāddha* should be performed by learned men in regard to the dead man and gifts should be given to the brahmins.

160. Whatever was pleasing unto, whatever was liked by him in the house, should be given to a worthy Brahmin by the person who wishes that the same should be inexhaustible.

161. When the days are completed the people shall touch water by their vehicles and weapons. After giving water libations and *Pindas* to the dead men people of all castes would have fulfilled all their due rites.

162. They shall perform all rites maintaining purity for prosperity here and hereafter. The *Vedas* should be studied everyday. One should try to be a learned scholar.

163-167. One should earn and amass wealth righteously. One should assiduously perform sacrifices whereby the Ātman will not be infuriated. O brahmins, it shall not be treated with contempt. Without hesitation one shall perform that rite which need not be concealed by great men.

O brahmins, if a householder practises the foregoing conduct of life thus, he attains virtue, wealth and love. It is splendid for him here and hereafter.

This is an esoteric secret. It is conducive to longevity and affluence. It increases intellect. It dispels sins. It is meritorious. It bestows glory, health and nourishment. It is auspicious. It confers fame and renown. It increases splendour and strength. It is a means of attainment of heaven. It should always be practised by men, O excellent sages. It should be practised by Brahmans, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras.

168-170. This should be known carefully by those who desire prosperity. He who understands and practises it on all occasions shall be rid of sins. He is honoured in the heavenly world. O excellent brahmins, this is the essence of all essences that has been related. It is the virtuous path mentioned in *Śrutis* and *Smṛtis*. This secret should not be imparted to anyone, least to an atheist, a defiled mind. Nor should it be imparted to an arrogant fellow, a foolish person or a prattler of unsound arguments.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN

Assignment of duties to different castes and stages of life

The sages said :

1. O holy one, we wish to hear about the special duties of different castes. O excellent brahmin, recount the duties of four Āśramas also.

2. Listen with restraint to the duties of different castes, Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras in due order as they are being recounted by me.

3. A Brahmin shall be devoted to (the practice of) sympathy, charitable gift, austerities, sacrifice unto the gods and study of his own branch of the Vedas. He shall regularly perform water libations. He shall maintain sacrificial fires.

4. For his livelihood he shall perform sacrifices on behalf of others. He shall teach Vedic lore to the twice-born. O brahmins, for performing sacrifices he shall accept monetary gifts with discretion.

5. O brahmins, he shall do everything beneficial to the world. He shall not perform what is detrimental to anyone. Friendliness to all living beings is the excellent asset of a Brahmin.

6. O brahmins, he shall view a cow and another man's precious gem as equal. O brahmins, his carnal approach to his wife during the permissible period after the days of menstruation, is commended.

7. A Kṣatriya shall give charitable gifts to the brahmins as much as they wish. O brahmins, he should perform different sacrifices and read the Vedas.

8. He shall maintain himself through his weapons. Protection of Earth is his excellent means of livelihood. Sustenance of Earth is his primary duty.

9. Rulers of men (kings) are content only by due sustenance of the Earth, since the protection of the king himself is accomplished by such holy rites as sacrifice.

10. By chastising the wicked and protecting the good, the king attains desired worlds. He is one who establishes and stabilises different castes.

11. O excellent sages, Brahmā, the grandfather of the worlds, granted breeding of cattle, trading activities and agriculture as means of livelihood unto a Vaiśya.

12. For him the following activities too are recommended: Reading of the Vedas, sacrifice, charitable gifts, practice of piety and the performance of compulsory and optional rites.

13-14. The holy rites of a Śūdra depend upon the collaboration of the twice-born. For that purpose he supports and nourishes them through riches earned by purchase and sale of articles or by practising arts and crafts. A Śūdra shall offer charitable gifts. He shall worship by means of Pākayajñas (offering cooked food unto gods). He shall perform rites unto the Pitṛs.

15-18. There are certain virtuous observances common to the four Varṇas. All of them can accept gift for sustaining their dependents. O excellent brahmins, they should carnally approach their own respective wives during the permissible period after the days of menstruation. The following are recounted as the noble characteristics of all the Varṇas, O excellent brahmins: Kindness and sympathy towards all living beings, forbearance, absence of over-exertion (?), auspiciousness, loving gentle speech, friendliness, absence of desire, abstention from miserliness and being devoid of jealousy. O brahmins, these alone are the characteristics common to all stages of life. There are special qualities and subsidiary duties of the Brahmins and others.

19. In times of adversity the vocation of a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya is recommended for a Brahmin; the vocation of a Vaiśya to a Kṣatriya and the jobs of a Śūdra to both Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas.

20. O brahmins, in case of incompetence that shall be avoided. That alone shall be pursued during adversity, but chaotic mixing up of jobs shall not be effected.

21. Thus, O brahmins, the duties of a Brahmin have been mentioned by me. Understand now the respective duties of the people of various stages of life even as I explain them well.

22-23. A boy who has been invested with the sacred thread shall be devoted to the acquiring of Vedas. Residing in the abode of his preceptor, O brahmins, a religious student shall be mentally pure. He should be devotedly engaged in the practice of cleanliness. Service should be rendered to the preceptor. He shall maintain devotional observances and grasp the Vedas intelligently.

24. O brahmins, with concentration and purity of mind he shall make obeisance to the sun-god and fire-god at dawn as well as at dusk. He shall salute the preceptor too.

25. O excellent brahmins, he shall stand when the preceptor remains standing. He shall follow when the preceptor goes ahead. When the teacher is seated he shall be seated on a lower level. He shall avoid what is contrary to the preceptor.

26. He shall sit in front of him. Without his mind dwelling on anything else he shall repeat the Vedic text recited by the preceptor. Thereafter, on being permitted by him, he shall partake of the cooked food received as alms.

27. He shall take bath in the water wherein the preceptor has taken bath. Early in the morning everyday he shall fetch water for libation and sacrificial twigs for the preceptor.

28. Having learnt the requisite Vedic texts he shall pay fees to his preceptor. On getting his permission he shall enter the stage of a householder.

29. He shall duly acquire a wife. O brahmins, after earning wealth by his own work he shall perform the duties of a householder.

30-31. The householder propitiates the Manes by means of oblations, Devas by sacrifices, guests by cooked food, sages by regular recitation of Vedic texts, the spirits and other living beings by oblations etc., and the entire world by the truthfulness of words. Thus he attains celestial regions by his own actions.

32. The recluses and religious students who sustain themselves by cooked food received as alms depend on the householder. Hence the stage of householder is the noblest.

33-34. O brahmins, some brahmins are engaged in disseminating the Vedic knowledge. Some wander over the Earth

for pilgrimage, taking holy dips in sacred waters. Some wander visiting different countries of the world. These have no abode of their own. They do not prepare their own food. To these people the householder offers a home and rest in the evening. Hence it is said that the householder sustains and supports them.

35. The householder should welcome them. He should speak sweet words always. He shall give them gifts. He shall offer seats, food and beds to those who come to his house.

36. A guest returning disappointed from a person's house goes, after taking his merits and handing over his own sins.

37. For a householder the following are despicable : Dishonouring (others), egotism, arrogance, slandering, attacking and speaking harsh words to others.

38. The householder who duly adheres to what is thus enjoined becomes liberated from bondage and attains the most excellent worlds.

39. At a ripe old age, O brahmins, the householder who has duly fulfilled his duties shall entrust his sons with the duty of looking after his wife and himself retire and go to the forest. Or he can allow his wife to accompany him.

40. O brahmins, there he shall stay as a sage sustaining himself with leaves, roots and fruits. He shall let the beard and facial hairs grow. He shall have matted hairs on his head. He shall sleep on the bare ground. He can be the guest of anyone.

41. O excellent brahmins, his wearing apparel and upper garment shall consist of leather, Darbha grass or Kāśa plants. Taking head bath thrice a day (in rivers or lakes) is recommended for him.

42. The following are highly recommended in his case: Worship of the deities, offering ghee into the fire, greeting and honouring visitors and guests, begging alms and offering oblations.

43. Massaging his limbs by means of oil obtained from forest products is also commended. O leading brahmins, ability to bear the extremes of chilliness and heat is a form of penance unto him.

44. The forest-dwelling recluse who regularly preforms

duties fixed for him shall burn off his defects like fire. He shall attain the eternal worlds.

45. O excellent ones, follow me even as I relate the nature and general characteristics of the stage of a mendicant sage, that is called the fourth stage by the wise.

46. O excellent brahmins, a mendicant shall eschew affection and attachment unto his sons, wife and assets. He shall enter the fourth stage of life after eschewing competitive spirit and rivalry.

47. O excellent brahmins, he shall leave off the enterprises of the three Varnas. He shall behave alike unto the friends and others. He shall be friendly to all creatures.

48. He shall maintain Yogic practice. He shall never injure the oviparous, viviparous and other creatures mentally, verbally or physically. He shall refrain from all attachments.

49. He shall never stay in a single place permanently. In a village he shall stay for a single night. In a city he shall stay for five successive nights. He has neither pleasurable attachment nor hatred unto the lower creatures and birds.

50. For sustaining himself he shall visit, begging for alms, the houses of men of noble caste where coal has ceased to burn but the inmates have not yet taken food.

51. He shall not be dejected when nothing is obtained. He shall not be overjoyous when something is obtained. He shall have that much which is necessary to maintain his life. He shall be out of all attachment to quantities.

52. He shall have absolute contempt for over-cherished acquisitions. Even the liberated sage is bound (again) by overcherished acquisitions.

53. Eschewing such defects as passion, anger, arrogance, greed, delusion etc., the full-fledged saint shall be free from all possessions.

54. After offering freedom from fear to all living beings he shall wander over the Earth. Liberated from his physical body he shall have no cause of fear anywhere.

55. By means of sacrificial offerings such as ghee acquired through begging the brahminical sage shall perform the symbolic Agnihotra in his own body. He shall perform Homa unto

the bodily fire through his mouth. He attains the other worlds through the funeral pyre.

56. He who is pure and endowed with good conceptions and intellect and passes through the stage of life pertaining to salvation in the manner mentioned above becomes calm like the fire wherein no fuel is put. That twice-born attains Brahma world.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN

Characteristics of mixed castes

The sages said :

1-3. O highly blessed one, you are omniscient. You are engaged in activities beneficial to all. O sage, there is nothing past, present or future that is not known to you. O highly intelligent one, by what activities does the downward fall of the Varnas take place? By what activities does their upward progress take place? Tell us. We wish to hear how and by what means does a Śūdra attain the status of a Brahmin and a Brahmin that of a Śūdra.

Vyāsa said :

4-6. The beautiful peak of the Himālayas is embellished by different minerals. It is covered by various trees and creepers. It is endowed with wonderful features. The three-eyed lord of Devas, that Supreme god, the destroyer of the three cities, was seated thereon. The goddess of charming eyes, the daughter of the king of mountains, bowed down to the lord, O brahmins, and put this question formerly unto him. O excellent sages, I shall describe that. Listen.

Umā said :

7-11. O three-eyed lord, O destroyer of the eyes of Bhaga, teeth of Pūṣan and the sacrifice of Dakṣa, I have this great doubt (to be cleared). The arrangement (of the people) into

four castes had been formerly brought about by the self-born lord. What are those activities, as a result of which a Vaiśya attains the status of a Śūdra? By what means does a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya become a Brahmin or a Kṣatriya ? O lord, how can Dharma be made to recede in such a reverse activity? By what activity is a Brahmin born in the womb of a Śūdra lady? O lord, by what activity does a Kṣatriya attain the status of a Śūdra? O lord, O lord of goblins, please clarify this doubt of mine. How do the persons of the three Varṇas attain Brahminhood naturally ?

Maheśvara said :

12. O goddess, brahminhood is very difficult to attain. The Brahmins are naturally auspicious, the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras are not auspicious.

13. The Brahmins fall off from their status by performing evil deeds. For the same reason one is forced down again even after attaining the most excellent of castes.

14. One who adheres to the characteristics of a Brahmin, whether a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya, attains Brahminhood.

15. He who forsakes brahminhood and resorts to the activities and features of a Kṣatriya incurs a downfall from the status of a Brahmin and is born of a Kṣatriya womb.

16-17. Even after attaining the rare distinction of being a brahmin, if he becomes greedy and deluded with deficient intellect and resorts to the activities of a Vaiśya, that Brahmin attains Vaiśya caste. A Vaiśya (in similar circumstances) attains Śūdra caste. A Brahmin deviating from his duties shall thereafter attain Śūdra caste.

18. That person who has fallen off from his Varṇa attains hell. He who falls from the world of Brahmā is born of the womb of a Śūdra lady.

19-20. O highly blessed lady of sacred acitivities, if a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya eschews his own duties and resorts to the occupation of a Śudra, he falls off from his original status and becomes one of mixed castes. A Brahmin or a Kṣatriya or a Vaiśya on becoming one of mixed castes, attains Śūdra caste.

21. A Śūdra who maintains his own duties, who is endowed with wisdom and perfect knowledge, who is conversant

with piety and who is engaged in holy activities attains the fruit of those holy activities.

22. O goddess, this too, another thing pertaining to the Ātman has been cited by Brahmā. Eternal achievement is resorted to by those who are desirous of righteous activities.

23. O goddess, the food cooked by the mixed caste Ugra is despicable. The food collectively cooked, the food pertaining to Śrāddha, the food defiled by pollution due to the birth or death of someone in the family and the food that is loudly proclaimed should not be eaten. The food cooked by a Śūdra should never be eaten.

24. The food cooked by a Śūdra is despised by gods and noble men, O goddess. That which is uttered by Brahmā is authoritative.

25. A Brahmin, a person who maintains sacrificial fires and one who performs sacrifice attain the goal of Śūdras if they were to die with the remnants of the food cooked by a Śūdra within the stomach.

26. A Brahmin, who has been ousted from Brahmā's abode by the remnants of food cooked by a Śūdra attains the state of a Śūdra. This is certain.

27. A Brahmin takes birth in the womb of a lady of the same caste as the person whose food he uses for sustenance or the remnants of whose food remain undigested in his stomach at the time of his death.

28. After happily attaining the rare privilege of being born as a Brahmin, if anyone slights it or if he partakes of forbidden food, he falls off from the status of a Brahmin.

29-30. A Brahmin falls off from his status if he is a wine-addict, a brahmin-slayer, a thief, a robber, one who has violated the vow of holy observances, an unclean one who refrains from regular study of the Vedas, is a sinner, a greedy person, one who indulges in misdemeanour, is a knave, one who does not observe religious vows, is the husband of a Śūdra woman, one who has taken food for sustenance from a bastard, one who sells Soma juice and one who serves a mean person.

31. A Brahmin who defiles the bed of his preceptor, who hates his preceptor, who delights in despising his preceptor or who is hostile to Brahmins, falls from Brahminical birth.

32. O goddess, by performing these splendid holy rites a Śūdra attains Brahminhood and a Vaiśya the status of a Kṣatriya.

33-36. A Śūdra attains the status of a Vaiśya in the following circumstances : He performs his duties justly and in accordance with his injunctions. He is hospitable to all and he partakes of the food left by them. He assiduously renders service to and attends upon the persons of superior castes. He is not dejected or disheartened in his attempt. He remains an excellent man. He clings to the path of the good. He honours and worships the twice-born and the gods. He observes hospitality to all as a holy rite. He approaches his wife only on the permissive nights after the period of menstruation. He is regular in habits and taking food. He is an expert. He seeks good persons for companionship. He partakes of the food left by others. He daes not partake of meat without consecrating it.

37-40. A Vaiśya becomes a Brahmin in the following circumstances: He is truthful in speech and an expert in the employment of peaceful means. He is not affected by mutually opposed extremes. He does not boast about himself. He performs daily sacrifices. He is devoted to the study of the Vedas. He maintains purity. He controls his sense organs. He honours Brahmins. He is not envious of any of the four Varnas. Taking meals twice a day he observes the duties of a householder. He does not hesitate to eat remnants of food. He controls his diet. He is devoid of passionate desire. He is not arrogant. He performs Agnihotra carrying out Homas in accordance with injunctions. He entertains everyone as his guest and partakes of their learning. He duly maintains the three sacrificial fires.

41-42. That Vaiśya who is pure is reborn in a noble family of Kṣatriyas. That Vaiśya who is reborn as a Kṣatriya shall be purified by performing the consecratory rites beginning with his maturity. After the investiture with the sacred thread he shall be devoted to all holy observances. Thus consecrated he becomes a Brahmin. He gives charitable gifts and performs sacrifices with rich monetary gifts. Always seeking refuge in

the three sacrificial fires and continuing the study of the Vedas, he shall hope to achieve heaven.

43-51. A Kṣatriya shall study the Vedas with a desire for the attainment of heaven. He shall seek refuge in the three sacrificial fires. He shall always make gifts so that his hands remain wet. He shall protect the subjects righteously. He shall be truthful. He shall perform truthful deeds, with his vision on purity for ever. By self-imposed righteous punishments he shall burn off his sins. He shall acquire virtue, love and wealth. He shall be self-controlled by his organs of action. He shall partake of only a sixth of the produce of his subjects. He shall be shrewd in monetary dealings. He shall not indulge freely in licentious activities. He shall be virtuous. He shall carnally approach his wife only during the prescribed periods after the days of menstruation. He shall be strict in the observance of fasts and other holy rites. He shall be engaged in the study of the Vedas. He shall be pure. Even in his house he shall always sleep in the well protected apartments free from strangers. He shall be hospitable to all in regard to three aims of life: virtue, love and wealth. He shall be pure in mind. To the Śūdras who are desirous of food he shall say, "Well, it is ready". He shall not look at anything with selfishness or passionate love. He shall gather all the things necessary for the manes, gods and guests. He shall duly perform worship, in his abode, even by resorting to alms (?). He shall duly perform Agnihotra twice everyday. He shall face even death in battle for the welfare of cows and brahmins. Such a Kṣatriya shall become a Brahmin. He shall purify himself by reciting Mantres for the maintenance of three sacrificial fires. He shall become richly equipped with perfect knowledge and wisdom. He shall consecrate himself. He shall master the Vedas.

52. O gentle lady, a virtuous Vaiśya shall become a Kṣatriya by performing his own duties. By the fruits of these activities of a lower birth he can become so.

53-65. Even a Śūdra who is richly endowed with the knowledge of the Vedas shall become a Brahmin and cultured. Even a Brahmin shall forfeit his Brahminhood and become a Śūdra if his conduct is base and if his diet and culture is base. Brahmā himself has said that even a Śūdra should be resorted

to like a Brahmin, O gentle lady, if he is virtuous, purified by holy rites or if he has conquered his sense-organs. A Śūdra who clings to his duties, should be considered purer than the twice-born ones. Neither the womb of birth, nor the consecratory rites, neither the Vedic knowledge nor the lineage can be the cause of Brahminhood. Conduct is the real cause. All men are Brahmins if their conduct is pure. Even a Śūdra who strictly adheres to good conduct attains Brahminhood. O lady of splendid hips, the inherent quality of a Brahmin is the same everywhere. He is a Brahmin, in whom the attributeless, faultless, pure Brahman resides. O gentle lady, those persons who are free from impurities are the exponents and guides of good conduct. These are mentioned by Brahmā himself, the bestower of boons, as he was creating the subjects. The Brahmin is, as it were, a great mobile field that has feet. If any one sows seeds therein it fructifies after death. A person who desires prosperity shall always be contented. He shall always cling to the path of the good. He shall abide by the Brahminical path. He shall be a householder regularly studying the Samhitās at home. He shall regularly study the Vedas but should not have the same as his means of livelihood. A Brahmin who is like this, who abides by the path of the good, who maintains the sacrificial fire and who studies the Vedas regularly becomes competent to attain liberation. O gentle lady, after attaining Brahminhood the man of controlled self shall protect it by holy rites such as acceptance of monetary gifts from worthy persons. O lady of pure smiles thus the secret doctrine has been recounted to you as to how a Śūdra becomes a Brahmin or how a Brahmin, falling off from virtue, attains the status of a Śūdra.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN

Review of Virtue

Uma said:

1. O lord of all living beings, O lord saluted by Devas and Aśuras, O powerful lord, please clear my doubts in regard to the notions of piety and sin among men.

2. All embodied beings are bound by three kinds of bonds, viz. thought, speech and physical action. How are they released therefrom ?

3. O lord, by what habitual practice, by what holy rite, by what sort of conduct and good quality do men go to heaven?

Maheśvara said:

4. O goddess Umā of perfect knowledge of the principles of piety, O gentle lady of permanent adherence to virtue, your question is conducive to welfare and wisdom of all living beings.

5. Persons of tranquillity, engaged in truth and piety and devoid of all external symbols are free from doubts. They are fettered neither by piety nor by blasphemy.

6. Those persons who are omniscient, who are conversant with the principles of creation and annihilation, who see everything and who are devoid of passionate attachment are released from the bonds of Karmans.

7. Those who do not injure anything whatsoever, mentally, verbally or physically, those who are not involved in anything, are not bound by Karmans.

8. Those who refrain from violence to lives, who possess good conduct and mercifulness, and who are equally amiable to others' hatred and love are released from the bondage of Karmans. They have self-control.

9. Those who are merciful to living beings, who are worthy of being trusted by living creatures and who have eschewed violent activities go to heaven.

10. Those who are indifferent to others' assets, who always avoid other men's wives and who enjoy the riches virtuously acquired by themselves go to heaven.

11. Those men who always associate with other men's wives as though they were their own mothers, sisters and daughters, go to heaven.

12. Those who cling to their own wives, who carnally approach them only during the prescribed period after the days of menstruation and who never indulge themselves in vulgar lechery, go to heaven.

13. Those who desist from stealth, who are content with their own wealth and who enjoy their own good luck go to heaven.

14. Those who view other men's wives with eyes enveloped by chastity, who have conquered their sense organs and who value good conduct very much, go to heaven.

15-16. This divinely evolved path should be resorted to by men. Only a path untarnished by sins should always be resorted to by wise men. Only a path that never needlessly harms others should be resorted to by wise men. A path of such holy rites as charitable gifts and austerities, a path of good conduct, cleanliness and mercy should be resorted to by those who wish to attain heaven. No other path shall be resorted to.

Uma said:

17. O sinless lord of living beings, recount to me those activities wherein a man is fettered verbally but is again released therefrom.

Maheśvara said:

18. Those who never utter a sin-based lie either for their own sake or for others' sake go to heaven.

19. Those who never utter falsehood either for livelihood, or for virtue or out of desire for the same go to heaven.

20. Those who welcome others speaking sweet, sinless and polished words with clearly pronounced syllables, go to heaven.

21. Those who never speak harsh, incisive and cruel words and who never indulge in slanderous gossip are good men who go to heaven.

22. Those who do not speak calumnious words or words that antagonise their friends or inflict pain on others, go to heaven.

23. Those who eschew harshness and malice to others and those who are calm and who mete out equal treatment to all living beings go to heaven.

24. Those who desist from knavish blabber, those who avoid antagonistic activities and those who speak gently go to heaven.

25. Those, who, out of anger do not utter words that wound the heart, those who attain peace in not being angry, go to heaven.

26. O gentle lady, this act of piety relating to speech, should be resorted to by men. False (speech) should be eschewed by wise men who possess the auspicious quality of truthfulness.

Umā said :

27. O highly blessed lord of gods, O Pināka-wielding lord, tell me those mental-acts whereby a man is held in bondage.

Maheśvara said :

28. O lady of weal, those who possess virtues of thought do always go to heaven. Listen, even as I narrate them.

29. O lady of splendid countenance, man is held in bondage by the mind led astray. Listen how his inner working binds him.

30. When another man's property is seen kept in a forest or a lonely place (good men) do not even think of appropriating it. They go to heaven.

31. Good men do not become overjoyed on seeing other men's property left in a lonely place whether in the village or in the house (nor do they think of appropriating it). They go to heaven.

32. Similarly, good men do not even think of molesting lecherously the wives of others (on meeting them) in lonely spots. They go to heaven.

33. Good men mentally view friends and enemies alike. They have a friendly attitude towards them. They go to heaven.

34. Good men are learned, merciful, pure and truthful; they are contented with their own riches. They go to heaven.

35. Good men are devoid of enmity. They do not overstrain themselves (?) They always maintain a friendly attitude. They are merciful towards all living beings. They go to heaven.

36. They possess knowledge. They perform holy rites. They are fond of their friends. They understand piety and sin. They go to heaven.

37. Good men, O gentle lady, are indifferent to the accumulating fruits of auspicious and inauspicious deeds. They go to heaven.

38. After attaining prosperity good men are devoted to gods and learned brahmins. They shun the sinful. They go to heaven.

39. They go to heaven due to the splendid results of holy rites. O gentle lady, those who tread the path of heaven have been enumerated by me. What more do you wish to hear ?

Uma said :

40. O great lord, I have a certain doubt concerning mortals Hence it behoves you to explain it fully.

41. O lord, by means of what holy rite does a man attain a long life ? By what type of penance, O lord of gods, does he obtain a great span of life ?

42. By means of what activity does man on Earth get longevity reduced ? O uncensured lord, it behoves you to narrate the consequences of actions.

43. Differences are observed in men. Some are highly fortunate. Others are less fortunate. Some are born noble and others are ignoble.

44. Some are very odious in appearance as if they are made of wood. Others are very pleasing to behold.

45. Some appear to be evil-minded. Some appear to be highly learned. Others have highly developed intellect with pure wisdom and prescience.

46. O lord, some are men of few words. Others are highly eloquent. Hence it behoves you to explain this diversity.

Maheśvara said :

47-50. O gentle lady, I shall explain upto you the outcome of the fruits of actions whereby all men in the mortal world deservedly experience their respective benefit. If a man raises weapon and kills host of living beings he is sure to fall into hell. Even a leader of Yogins(?) goes to hell if he injures living beings. A man ruthless to all living beings, one who causes heartburn even unto germs and worms, one who is extremely merciless and one who never affords refuge (unto others) falls into hell. One who is not like this is a pious soul and he is reborn in human form (?)

51. A man of violent nature goes to hell. A nonviolent man goes to heaven. The man who goes to hell undergoes terrible and unbearable torture in hell.

52. If anyone, by any means, survives and comes out of hell and attains human birth, he becomes short-lived.

53. O gentle lady, one who commits sinful actions, violence etc. is inimical to all living beings and becomes short-lived.

54-57. On account of his splendid activity, O gentle lady, a good man eschews slaughter of living beings. He lays aside his weapons. He does not mete out punishment (to others). He never injures others. He neither kills nor abets slaughter. He does not encourage killing. He does not make anyone kill anyone. He is friendly to all living beings. He views others as himself. A man of this type, O gentle lady, attains divinity. He enjoys pleasures and happiness deservedly. He rejoices, if ever he happens to be born in the mortal world. This is the path of men of good conduct and activity. As a result of their avoidance of injury to living beings they are destined to live long. This has been declared by Brahmā.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

Umā said :

1. What are those things which a man should regularly do in order to attain heaven? What should be his conduct and what holy rites should he perform ? What should he give in charity ?

Maheśvara said :

2-5. Any man coming under this category, O gentle lady, goes over to the world of gods : He should be a donor. He should honour Brahmins. The highly intelligent one should distribute edibles and foodstuffs, cooked food and drinks, clothes etc. among the poor, the distressed and the wretched. He should build places of rest and assembly chambers, sheds for giving water to travellers etc. He should dig lotus ponds. He should be pure in mind and body. He should perform daily routine of duties

enjoined. He should make charitable gifts of seats, beds, vehicles, houses, jewels, money, plants, fertile fields, young women etc. always with a tranquil mind.

6-7. He spends a long time in heaven enjoying unsurpassed pleasures. He sports about in Nandana and other gardens rejoicing in the company of celestial damsels. O great goddess, O gentle lady, after coming down from heaven he is born among men in a highly blessed family endowed with wealth and grain.

8. There, he will be possessed of desirable qualities. He will be joyous. The man becomes rich. He enjoys great pleasures and accomplishes great deeds.

9. These highly blessed living beings of charitable disposition are those spoken of formerly by Brahmā as men of pleasing appearance liked by all.

10. Other men, O gentle lady, are the twice-born ones of miserly nature who do not give anything to anyone. Those thoughtless ones do not give foodstuffs even when they have them.

11. Even after seeing the poor, the blind and the wretched mendicants, even on being requested by them, they turn away because they are gluttonous and so covetous of palatable things.

12. They never give away money, garments, means of enjoyment, gold, cows or items of cooked food.

13. They are highly greedy and covetous, atheists, devoid of liberal-mindedness. Men of this nature, O gentle lady, are the thoughtless ones who go to hell.

14. After the lapse of some time when they take human birth those men of deficient intellect are born in some family devoid of wealth.

15. They are tormented by hunger and thirst. They are boycotted by the world. Devoid of any hope for the enjoyment of pleasure they keep on living their evil lives.

16. They are born of families of inferior worldly pleasures. Those men are engrossed in spurious pleasures. O gentle lady, it is by these activities that men become devoid of wealth.

17-22. There are other types of haughty people who are arrogant and engrossed in other activities (?). These narrow-minded people do not offer seat unto those who deserve one. These thoughtless people do not yield way unto those who deserve one. They do not honour those worthy of honour due

to consecrated rites. Being thoughtless, they do not offer water for washing feet or drinking. They do not lovingly address their splendid and desirable elders in view of the fact that they are overwhelmed by greed that has increased due to their arrogance. They insult those who are worthy of honour. They slight elders. All men of this sort, O gentle lady, invariably fall into hell. If somehow those men come out of hell after many years, they take birth in the despicable family of Švapākas, Pulkasas of thoughtless despicable nature. It is in these families that those people are born who slight and insult preceptors and elders.

23-27. A man of the following nature, O gentle lady, attains heaven: He is neither arrogant nor overwhelmed by false pride or prestige. He worships deities and guests. He is worthy of worship by the whole world. He performs obeisance. He speaks sweet words. He is pleasing to all due to his activities. He is fond of all living beings. He does not hate anyone. He has pleasing countenance. He speaks polished sweet words full of love. He offers words of welcome unto all living beings. He does not violently hit or injure anybody. He honours everyone as one deserves by good actions. He stands aside after offering the path unto one who deserves it. He worships his preceptor always. He takes pleasure in receiving guests. He worships honourable visitors.

28-30. After his sojourn in heaven he takes birth in the mortal world in an excellent family. There he enjoys all sorts of pleasures and possesses all jewels. He gives to the deserving ones charitable gifts in accordance with their merits. He is devoted to pious rites. He is honoured by all living beings. He is bowed to by all the world. He obtains the fruits of his actions. This is the means of virtue declared by the creator himself and I have described it.

31-33. A man of the following mode of habits and conduct falls into hell : He has a horrible habit. He is terrifying unto all animals. O splendid lady, he tortures and harasses living creatures with his hands and feet, with a rope or a stick and with clods of earth, columns or other means. His mind is bent on violence. He makes creatures suffer. He approaches living creatures making them tremble with fear.

34-35. After the lapse of some time, if he attains human form or birth he is born in a base family overwhelmed by many kinds of sufferings. He is hated by the world. He is the lowliest among men as a result of his actions. This, O gentle lady, should be understood in regard to human beings in the midst of their kith and kin.

36-41. The other sort of man looks at all living beings with kindness. He is like a father to them. His eyes are full of fondness and friendship. He is devoid of inimical feelings. He has perfect control over his sense-organs. Being merciful he does not cause fear in the living beings. He does not kill them. He earns the confidence of all living creatures. He does not injure any living being with his perfectly controlled hands and feet. He does not cause them any harm or frighten them by means of a rope, a stick, clods of earth or weapon. The actions of the man are always splendid. A man of such habits and conduct goes to heaven. There in a divine mansion where he lives joyously like gods. If after the end of his tenure in heaven he returns to the mortal world he enjoys increasing happiness. He has less stress and strain. He is devoid of terrifying grief. He enjoys pleasures. He has no strenuous labour to undertake. He is always free from mental agony. This, O gentle lady, is the path of the good where there is no affliction.

Uma said :

42-45. Some of these men are observed to be clever and mightily enthusiastic. They are richly endowed with wisdom and prescience. They are intelligent and experts on the subject of wealth. Others, O lord, are evil-minded and devoid of wisdom and prescience. What is that action as a result of which a man becomes intelligent ? How does a man become deficient in wisdom ? O Śiva, clear this doubt of mine, O lord, the most excellent one among the virtuous. Others are blind by birth. Still others, O lord, are distressed by sickness. Some men are observed to be impotent. Please tell me the reason thereof.

Mahesvara said :

46-48. Men of the following type attain heaven: They enquire after the welfare or otherwise of the brahmins well-

versed in the Vedas, of the persons of accomplishment covariant with virtue. They avoid inauspicious activities and resort to splendid ones. In this world they attain happiness and they go to heaven later. If anyone among them takes human birth he is born with an extraordinary intellect. His learning is befitting the performance of sacrifices and is auspicious.

49. Those who cast their evil eye on other men's wives are born blind due to that evil conduct.

50. Men of sinful actions who look at a naked woman with a defiled mind become distressed due to sickness.

51. Foolish men of evil conduct who indulge in the sexual act with beasts become deficient and defiled in wisdom as well as impotent. They become eunuchs.

52. Men who bind animals or embrace them closely, men who defile their preceptor's bed and men who scatter their seminal discharge are born as eunuchs.

Uma said :

53. O the most excellent one among the gods, what is a despicable action ? What is it that is not despicable, by doing which a man attains prosperity and renown ?

Maheśvara said :

54. He who seeks the path of prosperity and asks brahmins about it, he who seeks virtue and he who yearns for good qualities attains heaven.

55. If at any time he takes up human birth, O gentle lady, he is born highly intelligent, wise and endowed with memory.

56. This, O gentle lady, is the path of virtue of the good. It should be followed. It is conducive to prosperity. This has been described by me for the perpetual benefit of men in the world.

Uma said :

57. There are other men of deficient wisdom who hate virtue. They do not wish to approach brahmins well-versed in the Vedas.

58. Some men observe holy rites. They have faith and they

closely adhere to the path of self-control (subjugation of sense-organs). Others are devoid of holy observances. They swerve from the path of discipline. They can be compared to the Rākṣasas.

59. Still others are regular performers of holy sacrifices. There are others devoid of delusion. Tell me how they become so. What is that action as a result of which they become so.

Maheśvara said :

60-63. The holy scriptures, composed formerly, prescribe the limits of pious activities of the world. There are holy men who obey them as their authority. They are seen to be men of steadfast holy rites. Those who are deluded call sin by the name of virtue. They do not observe holy rites. They do not observe rules of decorum and morality. They are said to be Brahmarākṣasas. If, due to the lapse of time or due to their endeavour (?) they are born as men they do become base men devoid of homas and vaṣṭakāras. In order to clear your doubts, O gentle lady, the ocean of virtue has been expounded by me. Men may be efficient or inefficient in its observance.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN

Dialogue between Maheśvara and the Sages

Vyāsa said :

1-3. On hearing these words of her lord from the beginning, O brahmans, that holy mother of the universe became pleased, delighted and surprised. Near the lord, the destroyer of the three cities, there were certain excellent sages who had been to that mountain in the course of their pilgrimage. They worshipped the trident-bearing lord, bowed to him and asked him to clear their doubt, with desire for the welfare of the world.

The sages said :

4-6. Obeisance to thee, O Three-eyed one, O destroyer of

Dakṣa's sacrifice. O Lord of the universe, we shall ask you some questions to clear the doubts lurking in our hearts. In this extremely terrible world that causes hairs to stand on end and strikes terror, men of deficient intellect aimlessly wander for a long time. Tell us that means whereby they are released from the bondage of births and worldly existence. We wish to hear it. Our eagerness is great.

Maheśvara said :

7. O Brahmins, I do not see any means other than the son of Vasudeva for the liberation of men bound by the noose of action (and reactions) who undergo misery.

8. Those who worship well that lord who wields conch, discus and club, by word, deeds and thoughts attain the highest region.

9. Of what avail is their life and the beast-like activity of those people whose mind is not directed towards Vāsudeva who pervades the entire universe?

The sages said :

10. O Pināka-bearing Śaṅkara, O destroyer of the eyes of Bhaga, O lord adored by the worlds, we wish to hear the greatness of Vāsudeva.

Maheśvara said :

11. Hari the eternal Puruṣa is more excellent than Brahmā. He is Kṛṣṇa with golden splendour like the sun shining in a cloudless sky.

12. He has ten arms. He has great splendour. He is the destroyer of the enemies of gods. He is Hṛṣikeśa marked by the scar Śrivatsa. He is the leader of gods.

13. Brahmā is born of his belly. I am born of his head. The luminaries are born of his hair. Devas and Asuras are born of his bodily hairs.

14. The sages and the eternal worlds are born of his body. He is the abode of Brahmā himself and of Devas too.

15. That lord of the three worlds is the creator of the universe. He is also the annihilator of all living beings, mobile and immobile. ...

16. He is the most excellent among gods. He is the lord of Devas. He overcomes enemies. He is omniscient. He is the creator of all beings. He goes everywhere. He has faces all round.

17. In the three worlds there is no other living being greater than he. He is eternal. He is blessed. He is known as Govinda.

18. For the fulfilment of the task of gods he takes up human form. He bestows honour on others. He will be killing all kings in battle.

19. Without the help of Trivikrama, the hosts of Devas will be leaderless and they will be incapable of performing their divine functions.

20-21. He is the leader of all living beings. He is the leader of Devas. He is identical with the slightest created thing and the greatest as well. He is the supreme Brahman. He is the perpetual refuge of the brahminical sages. Brahmā is stationed in his umbilicus. I am stationed in his body.

22. The gods are comfortably stationed in his body. That lotus-eyed lord has goddess Lakṣmī in his belly. He stays in the company of Śrī.

23-25. His weapons are Śārṅga (bow), discus and sword. He has (Garuḍa) the enemy, of all Nāgas for his emblem in the flag. He is possessed of excellent good conduct, purity, self-control, valour, virility pleasing body, ever-increasing power, of straightforwardness, kindness, beauty of form and strength. He wields all kinds of divine miraculous weapons very wonderful to behold.

26. He is thousand-eyed and he operates the Yogic Māyā. He is Virūpākṣa. He is noble-minded. By gentle speech he praises friendly folk. He is fond of his kith and kin.

27. That lord has ample forbearance. He does not boast of himself. He bestows (the power to realise) Brahman. He removes the fear of those who are distressed by fear. He increases the delight of his friends.

28. He is the seat of refuge of all living beings. He is engaged in the protection of the poor. He is richly endowed with learning and wealth. He is honoured by all living beings.

29. He helps those who resort to him. He causes fear in the minds of his enemies. He is conversant with polity. He is richly

endowed with the quality of justice. He is the expounder of Brahman. He has conquered his sense-organs.

30-41. For the sustenance of Devas the lord who is possessed of the greatest intellect will be born in the family of Manu, in the splendid path of Manu, descended from Prajāpati and consecrated by piety. There is a son of Manu named Arṁśa. Antardhāman is his successor. (The son of) Antardhāman is the Prajāpati, Havirdhāman the uncensured. O brahmins, Prācīnabarhiṣ will be born as the son of Havirdhārnān. Ten sons will be born to him with Pracetas as the eldest. Dakṣa the Prajāpati will be born as the son of Pracetas. Āditya will be the son of Dakṣa and (Vaivasvata) Manu will be born of Āditya. Ilā and Sudyumna will be born in the family of Manu. Purūravas will be born of Budha and Āyus will be born thereof. Nahuṣa will be born of him and his son will be Yayāti. Yadu of great prowess will be born of him and his son will be Kroṣṭr. The great son of Kroṣṭr will be called Vṛjinīvān. The unvanquished Uṣaṅgu will be born of Vṛjinīvān. The heroic Citraratha will be born as the son of Uṣaṅgu. His younger (brother, the younger son of Uṣaṅgu) will be famous by the name of Śūra. O excellent brahmins, in the family of these kings of well-known prowess, possessed of good qualities and conduct and of purity and readiness to perform sacrifices, the well-known excellent Kṣatriya, Śūra of great vigour and prowess, will beget his famous son Vāsudeva, Ānakadundubhi, who will expand his race and who will bestow honour on all. Vāsudeva of four arms will be born as his son. He will be liberal in gifts. He will honour brahmins. He will be fond of the twice-born. He will realise Brahman.

42-43. After killing king Jarāsandha, this scion of the family of Yadu will release the imprisoned kings. That powerful king will possess all earthly jewels of kings. He will be unhindered in the whole of the Earth due to his vigour and prowess.

44-47. He will be richly endowed with valour. He will become the Emperor of all kings. He will be staying in Dvārakā after he has slain the enemies. After conquering the wicked he will protect goddess Earth: Approaching him in the company of excellent deserving brahmins, all of you shall duly worship him like the eternal Brahmā. The powerful lord Vāsudeva of great prowess should be seen by anyone who wishes to see me and

Brahmā the grandfather. If he is seen I too am seen. I do not entertain any doubtful thought in this regard.

48-50. O ascetics, know that (Brahmā) is Vāsudeva. The hosts of Devas beginning with Brahmā will become pleased with that person of whom the lotus-eyed lord is fond. If any man in the world seeks refuge in Keśava he will attain fame and renown and go to heaven. He will become righteous and also the instructor in virtuous activities.

51. Acyuta, that lord of Devas, should be worshipped by a person conversant with virtue. When this lord is worshipped he will always possess virtue.

52. With a desire to do whatever is conducive to the benefit of all subjects, that lord of great splendour, the tiger among men created crores of sages for spreading Dharma (virtue).

53. They, beginning with Sanatkumāra, duly created by him, stay on the Gandhamādana mountain, performing austeries.

54. Hence, O leading twice-born, that eloquent lord conversant with Dharma should be bowed to. He shall salute on being saluted; he shall honour, on being honoured.

55. O excellent brahmins, that lord shall see on being seen; he shall offer refuge everyday, on being sought refuge in; On being worshipped regularly he shall accept worship.

56. Such is the great vow of the great primordial lord Viṣṇu the undesplicable. It is always followed by good people.

57. The eternal lord is always worshipped by Devas in the universe. They follow him by resorting to a befitting fearlessness.

58. That son of Devakī should always be bowed to, by thought, by speech and by deeds by brahmins exerting themselves. He should necessarily be seen.

59. O excellent sages, this is the pathway laid down by me. If that lord of Devas is seen, the excellent Devas shall be seen.

60. I too always worship and bow to that lord, the grandfather of the worlds, the great Boar, lord of the universe.

61. All the three deities will undoubtedly be seen in him. All of us, all the gods, stay in his body.

62. The ploughshare-wielding lord, well-known as Bala,

having the lustre of a number of white mountains put together will be born as his elder brother. He will hold the Earth aloft.

63-67. He has a three-hooded head. He is one whose end is not seen. Suparna, the powerful son of Kaśyapa, was not capable of seeing the end of that noble lord, in spite of his prowess. He is Śeṣa who joyously moves about. He stays within embracing the Earth by means of his body. Viṣṇu is the lord who bears the earth. He who is Rāma is Hṛṣīkeśa, Acyuta, the lord who bears aloft the entire Earth. Both of them are divine, tigers among men with divine exploits. They wield discus and ploughshare. They are worthy of honour. They should be seen, O ascetics, this is a favour shown to you. Hence, all of you shall strenuously worship the most excellent one among the descendants of Yadu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

Goal of the devotees of Viṣṇu

The sages said :

1. Oh, the wonderful greatness of Kṛṣṇa has been heard by us. It is holy. It dispels sins. It is conducive to wealth. It destroys the round of births and deaths.

2. O great sage, after worshipping Vāsudeva, duly and with devotion what goal do the men who are engaged in the worship of Vāsudeva attain ?

3. Do they attain liberation or heaven, O great sage? Or, O excellent sage, do they obtain both the fruits ?

4. O omniscient one, it behoves you to dispel this doubt lurking in our hearts. O excellent sage, excepting you there is noone else in this world who can dispel it.

Vyāsa said :

5. Well done, well-done, O excellent sages! What has been uttered by you is quite pertinent. Now listen to all those things

in order which bring about the happiness of the devotees of Viṣṇu.

6. By the mere initiation (into the fold) of Kṛṣṇa, men attain salvation. What then, in regard to those who devotedly worship Viṣṇu always !

7. O excellent sages, neither heaven nor salvation is inaccessible to them. Devotees of Viṣṇu obtain even the rarest things, would they desire them.

8. Just as after climbing the mountain of jewels one can take away any number as one pleases, so also O leading sages, one can obtain the cherished things from Kṛṣṇa.

9. Just as, after reaching the wish-yielding Kalpa tree, O brahmins, a person plucks the fruits as he pleases, so also one can take one's cherished things from Kṛṣṇa.

10. By duly and faithfully worshipping Vāsudeva, the preceptor of the universe, men attain the fruit of virtue, wealth, love and salvation.

11. By propitiating that lord of the universe with a purified inner soul men obtain desirable things difficult of access even unto Devas.

12. To those who devotedly worship the Imperishable lord Vāsudeva there is nothing inaccessible in the three worlds.

13. Blessed are those persons in the world who worship Lord Hari who dispels all sins and who bestows the desired benefits.

14. By worshipping the most excellent lord of Devas, brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, women, Śudras and men of low castes attain the greatest goal.

15. Hence, O sinless sages, listen. I shall expound what you ask. I shall succinctly narrate the goal of those noble souls.

16-19. They eschew this human body which is the abode of ailments, which is unsteady, which is transient as the bubbles of water and which is subject to old age and death. They eschew the body which emits the foul smell of flesh and blood, which is full of urine and faeces and other foul substances, which has the bones as the supporting pole, which is impure and which has sinews, vessels and skin. They go to the several abodes of the guardians of quarters of the worlds by means of an aerial chariot that can go to any place as desired, that

reverberates due to the divine Gandharva music, that has the colour (and lustre) of the mid-day sun and that is bedecked with series of stringed tinkling bells.

The Gandharvas will be singing songs of praise. They will be embellished by the celestial damsels.

20-28. They enjoy the pleasures of those several worlds for a period equal to a Manvantara. They enjoy all kinds of pleasures.

Thereafter, they go to the heavenly abode that bestows happiness. O brahmins, there they enjoy excellent pleasures for a period equal to ten Manvantaras.

O Brahmins, from there the devotees of Viṣṇu go to the Gandharvaloka. There they enjoy pleasures delightful to the mind for a period equal to twenty Manvantaras.

They are well honoured there and from there they go to the Solar region where they enjoys super-divine pleasures for a period equal to thirty Manvantaras.

From there, O Brahmins, they go to the Lunar region that bestows all pleasures. For a period equal to forty Manvantaras they enjoy splendid pleasures there. They are devoid of old age and death.

From there, O excellent sages, they go to the Stellar region bedecked with lofty mansions. They are embellished by all good qualities. For a period equal to fifty Manvantaras they enjoy all pleasures as they please.

From there, O Brahmins, they go to the region of Devas which is very difficult of access.

O Brahmins, for a period equal to sixty Manvantaras they enjoy rare pleasures along with the eightfold Siddhis. They are worshipped by Devas and from there they proceed to the region of Indra.

29-31. For a period equal to seventy Manvantaras they enjoy higher and nobler divine pleasures that heighten their mental happiness. From there they proceed to the excellent region of Prajāpati.

For a period equal to eighty Manvantaras they enjoy there all types of pleasures. From there, O brahmins, the devotees of Viṣṇu proceed to the region of Brahmā.

32-37. For a period equal to ninety Manvantaras they joyously sport there. Thereafter they return to the Earth and are born as brahmins of Yogic power in the excellent families of brahmins. They master the Vedas and scriptures and comprehend their meanings.

Thus they enjoy pleasures of all the worlds, come back to this Earth and go higher and higher.

In the course of every birth, O excellent brahmins, they enjoy all desired pleasures for a hundred years and thereafter proceed to the next world.

When a set of ten births is thus completed duly they proceed to the divine world of Hari from the region of Brahmā. After going there and enjoying inexhaustible pleasures full of good qualities for a period equal to a hundred Manvantaras, O excellent brahmins, they proceed to the World of Brahmā. They are devoid of births and deaths.

38. They take up divine bodies of great strength bedecked by earrings. Huge bodies, O excellent brahmins, they assume with a four-armed form, and sport there.

39. O excellent brahmins, in their eternal state they remain for ten thousand crores of years and are bowed to by all Devas.

40. Thereafter, O brahmins, those magnificent self-possessed men go to the abode of Narasimha. There they rejoice and sport for about ten thousand crores of years.

41. At the end of that period they go to the abode of Viṣṇu, resorted to by the Siddhas. There they play happily for ten thousand years.

42-44. Then O brahmins, those excellent aspirants go to the region of Brahmā. They stay there for a long time, for many hundred crores of years and then go to the city of Nārāyaṇa. The lordly aspirants enjoy the pleasures for millions of crores of years. Thereafter the excellent aspirants of divine form and great strength go to the city of Aniruddha. They are eulogised by Devas and Asuras.

45. Devoid of death and old age those devotees of Viṣṇu stay there for fourteen thousand crores of years.

46. Thereafter they go to the city of Pradyumna. Free of

ailments, O brahmins, they stay there for three hundred lakhs of crores of years.

47. They are delighted. They are endowed with strength and power. They can go anywhere as they please. Thereafter those Yogins go to the place where lord Saṅkarṣana rules.

48-50. After staying there for a long time and enjoying thousands of pleasures they enter the unsullied Vāsudeva devoid of form and name. In that supreme entity devoid of death and old age they become free. There is no doubt that after going there they become liberated.

Thus, O excellent sages, the intelligent men engaged in the worship of Vāsudeva attain worldly pleasures and salvation.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY

*The benefits of singing devotional songs of Viṣṇu
while keeping awake at night*

Vyāsa said :

1-5. There is no doubt about this that a man who fasts on the eleventh day of either fortnight and carries out the following observances, goes to the greatest region of Viṣṇu. With mental and physical purity he should duly take bath and wear a neatly washed cloth. He should conquer his sense organs. With faith and mental purity he should worship Viṣṇu by fragrant flowers, scents, lamps, incense, cooked foods, different offerings, repetition of holy names and mantras, homas, circumambulations, hymns of various kinds, divine and pleasing vocal and instrumental music, prostration and excellent utterances of Jaya (Be victorious). After duly worshipping thus he should keep awake for the whole of the night narrating the stories of Viṣṇu or singing his songs of prayer. He should be devoted to Viṣṇu.

The sages said :

6. O great sage, describe to us the benefit of the chorus song of Viṣṇu while keeping awake. Great is our eagerness to hear the same.

Vyāsa said :

7. Listen, O excellent sages, I shall describe duly the benefit of the chorus song of Viṣṇu while keeping awake, as mentioned before.

8. The city of Avantī is well-known in the world. Lord Viṣṇu wielding conch, discus and iron club occupies it.

9. At the outskirts of that city there was a Cāṇḍāla who was an expert in singing. He earned much wealth by legitimate means. He duly maintained his servants.

10. That Cāṇḍāla was a devotee of Viṣṇu and he strictly adhered to the observances of holy rites. On the Ekādaśī day he used to come (to the temple), observe fast and sing songs of prayer.

11. His songs in praise of Viṣṇu were sung in various notes such as Gāndhāra, Śadja, Niṣāda, Pañcama, Dhaivata etc.

12-13. He used to keep awake at night and to sing songs in praise of Viṣṇu. At dawn on the Dvādaśī day he used to worship the lord and return home. O excellent brahmins, after feeding his daughter's sons-in-law and nephews he used to take food along with his attendants.

14. Many years of his life were thus spent by him in propitiating Viṣṇu by means of different types of songs (of prayer).

15. Once, on the eleventh day in the dark half of the month of Caitra he went to the excellent forest for the purpose of serving Viṣṇu.

16. Engrossed in devotion, he wanted to gather flowers from the forest. He reached the foot of a Vibhītaka tree in the great forest on the banks of Kṣiprā.

17. There he was seized by a Rākṣasa in order to devour him. The Cāṇḍāla then said to him – “I should not be devoured by you today.

18. “O good Sir, you shall devour me (tomorrow) in the morning. In truth I will come back again. O Rākṣasa, I have a great task to be performed today. So release me.

19. “In truth, I will come tomorrow. You will then eat me. For the purpose of serving Viṣṇu I have to keep awake in the

night. It does not behove you, O Rākṣasa, to cause any obstacle in the observance of the holy rite by me."

Vyāsa said :

20. The Rākṣasa said in reply : "O Cāṇḍala, I have not taken food for the last ten days and today you have come across me.

21. I shall not set you free. I shall devour you. I am overwhelmed by hunger".

On hearing the words of the Rākṣasa, the Cāṇḍāla said to him, consoling him by uttering gentle words which were firm and truthful:

The Cāṇḍāla said:

22. O Brahmarākṣasa, the entire world has its root in truth. Hence, listen, on truth I promise my return.

23. All these know each and every action of men, viz. the sun, moon, fire, wind, earth, firmament, water, mind, day, night, the two junctions (i.e. dawn and dusk) and Yama.

24-38. O Rākṣasa, I promise you that if I do not come again to you let me be infested by the sins which the following persons acquire in the circumstances mentioned, viz. the sin of one who indulges in dalliance with other men's wives; the sin of those who take wealth of others; the sin of a brahmin murderer; of one who drinks liquor; of one who defiles the preceptor's bed; the sin of the husband of a barren woman; the sin of the husband of a Śūdra woman; the sin of a temple priest who misappropriates temple funds; the sin of one who takes fish and meat; the sin of one who habitually eats the flesh of pig and tortoise; the sin of one who regularly takes the flesh of the backbone; the sin of one who takes meat without offering the same to gods; the sin of one who kills his friend; the sin of an ungrateful fellow and the paramour of a widow (who marries again); the sin of a pollution due to death of a relative; the sin of a man of ruthless actions; the sin of a miser; the sin of one who sends away guests without entertaining them; the sin that befalls one who indulges in sexual intercourse on the

new moon day or the sixth, eighth or fourteenth day of a lunar fortnight whether dark or bright; the sin of a brahmin who cohabits with a woman in her monthly course; the sin of a person who indulges in sexual intercourse after performing Śrāddha; the sin of those who take food on Parvan days without taking bath; the sin that befalls one on eating filthy matter; the sin of those who cohabit with the wife of a friend; the sin of a back-biter; the sin of one who is fond of arrogance and deception; the sin of one who destroys honey; the sin that befalls one who promises to give something to a brahmin but does not give it; the sin due to a falsehood in regard to a virgin; the sin due to a falsehood in regard to cows and mules; the sin of a man who kills women and children; the sin of one who utters a lie; the sin of those who are disrespectful to Devas, Vedas, brahmins, kings, sons and friends and to chaste ladies; the sin of those who go to sleep after uttering a lie to or after being disrespectful to the teacher(?); the sin of those who commit arson; the sin of those who burn down forests; the sin due to the non-performance of domestic sacrifice of a householder; the sin of a slayer of cows; the sin of a base brahmin; the sin of a Parivitta and a Parivedin (i.e. the elder and the younger brothers of whom the younger marries before the elder); the sin of those who contract matrimonial alliance with them; the sin of a person who destroys a foetus. (Let all these sins befall me.) O Rākṣasa, of what avail are these different kinds of vows and pledges? Let a terrific vow be heard. It is being uttered though it is vey difficult to utter it. Let these sins befall me if I do not approach you, viz. the sin of one who sustains himself through the sinful activities of his own virgin daughter; the sin of a perjuror and that of a false witness; the sin of one who performs a sacrifice on behalf of a person unworthy of it; the sin of a Ṣandha (eunuch?); the sin of a Sramana; the sin of one who returns to a householder's life after having renounced the world once; and the sin of a lecherous religious student.

Vyāsa said :

39. On hearing the words of the Cāṇḍāla the Brahmarākṣasa became surprised. He said : "Oh, go, keep your promise".

40. On being told thus by the Rāksasa, the Cāndāla gathered flowers and went to the temple of Viṣṇu.

41. He handed over flowers to a brahmin who washed them with water, worshipped Viṣṇu and went to his abode, O ascetics.

42. The Cāndāla observed fast and kept awake during the night staying in the outer ground and singing songs of prayer.

43. As the night dawned into day he eulogised and made obeisance to the lord and set off to the place where the demon was waiting in order to keep his promise.

44. As he was going along the path a certain man asked him: "O gentle Sir, where are you going"? He told everything and the man said again :

45. "Since the body is the means of acquiring virtue, wealth, love and liberation, an intelligent man should maintain his body with great care.

46-48. It is the man who remains alive that obtains virtue, wealth, happiness and salvation. The living man obtains renown. A dead man has no place in the world. No one speaks about him."

On hearing these words, the Cāndāla replied indicating the reason :

"O gentle sir, it is because of my promise that I am going. I have taken vows."

Vyāsa said :

49. The man said again unto him: "Don't be a fool. O my good man, haven't you heard what has been uttered by Manu?

50. (Learned men) say that the following five untruths are not sinful, viz. the lie that has been uttered for affording protection to cows, women and brahmins; the lie uttered while celebrating a marriage; the lie that has been uttered for the sake of friends; the lie uttered when one is faced with death; and the lie uttered when one is being robbed of all riches.

51. (?) Injunctions regarding righteousness are not applicable in the case of untrue statements to women, and enemies or those uttered when one is faced with death or destruction of wealth or when one is being deceived".

On hearing his words thus, the Cāṇḍāla replied :

The Cāṇḍāla said :

52. Do not say thus. Welfare unto you. Truth is honoured in the worlds. Whatever happiness is in the world is acquired by truth.

53. It is due to truth that the sun blazes; it is due to truth that waters are juicy; it is due to truth that fire burns; and it is due to truth that the wind blows.

54. The achievement of virtue, wealth and love and the rare acquisition of liberation becomes possible due to the truth of men. Hence one shall never forsake truth.

55. Truth is the supreme Brahman in the world. Truth is the most excellent among sacrifices. Truth descends from heaven. Hence one shall never forsake Truth.

Vyāsa said :

56. Saying this, the Cāṇḍāla ignored that excellent man and went to the place where the Brahmaṛāksasa, the slayer of living beings, was waiting.

57. On seeing that the Cāṇḍāla had come, his eyes beamed with wonder. Shaking his head (approvingly) he told him:

The Brahmaṛāksasa said :

58. Well done, well done, O highly blessed one. You have kept your promise. I do not consider you a mere Cāṇḍāla since you have distinguished yourself due to your truthfulness.

59. Due to this action I think that you are a brahmin pure and not fit to be disposed of. I shall tell you, gentle sir, something based on righteousness. Tell me what was done by you there in the abode of Viṣṇu on that night?

The Cāṇḍāla said:

60. Listen. I shall tell you exactly what has been performed by me on that night in that abode of Viṣṇu.

61. I knelt down beneath that shrine of Viṣṇu. I kept awake for the whole of the night singing songs of praise of Viṣṇu.

The Brahmarāksasa said :

62. Tell me. How long have you been observing this rite of keeping awake devotedly in the abode of Viṣṇu?

63. He replied smilingly, "O Rāksasa, I have been observing this rite of keeping awake every month on Ekādaśī day, for twenty years" On hearing the words of the Cāndāla, the Brahmarāksasa said:

The Brahmarāksasa said:

64. It behoves you to carry out what I am going to tell you. O good man, give unto me the benefit of keeping awake for one single night.

65. In that case I shall set you free. I shall not leave you otherwise, O highly blessed one. I have vowed thrice.

After saying this he stopped.

Vyāsa said :

66. The Cāndāla said to him : "O night-prowler, my own self has been surrendered to you. What is the use of talking much? Eat me up as you please".

67. The Rāksasa said to him again: "Give me (the benefit of) keeping awake for two yāmas (six hours) along with the songs sung by you. It behoves you to take pity on me."

The Cāndāla said :

68. Why this irrelevant talk? Eat me up as you please. I will not give you the benefit of keeping awake.

On hearing the words of the Cāndāla the Brahmarāksasa said to him:

The Brahmarāksasa said :

69-71. Who is foolish and evil-minded enough to dare to look at you in order to harass you and inflict pain on you since you have been guarded by your own righteous activities?

Good men should be merciful towards a wretched fellow who has been overwhelmed by sins, who has been deluded by worldly pleasures and who has been distressed by the throes of hell.

Hence, O highly blessed one, take pity on me. Give me the benefit of keeping awake for a single yāma (three hours) and go back to your own abode.

Vyāsa said :

72-73. The Cāṇḍāla said to him again : "I will not go home nor will I give the benefit of keeping awake even for a single yāma". The Brahmarākṣasa then smilingly said to the Cāṇḍāla :

The Brahmarākṣasa said :

Give unto me the benefit of the song enthusiastically sung by you at the end of the night. Save me. Lift me up from (the mire of) sin.

Vyāsa said :

74-75. When this was uttered by him, the Cāṇḍāla said to him :

The Cāṇḍāla said :

What evil action has been committed by you formerly due to the fault of which you have become a Brahmarākṣasa?

Vyāsa said :

76. On hearing his words the Brahmarākṣasa remembered the evil actions committed by himself and became extremely distressed. He then said to the Cāṇḍāla :

The Brahmarākṣasa said :

77. Who was I before, what had I committed as a result of which I had to be born in an evil womb as a Rākṣasa—let it be heard.

78. Formerly, I was a brahmin well-known as Somaśarmā. I was the son of Devaśarman who used to perform sacrifices and regularly study the Vedas.

79. (faulty text) There was a certain king on whose behalf, I performed sacrifice though he had been ostracised and forbidden to use the mantras. Since I was interested in the holy rite I was engaged in the rites near the sacrificial post.

80. Afflicted by greed and delusion I performed the duty of Agnīdhra in the sacrifice. When it was concluded I performed an arrogant rite due to my folly.

81. (In my arrogance) I began to perform a sacrifice intended to last for twelve days. As it was being performed I had a stomach pain.

82-84. Ten days elapsed in full. But the sacrifice had not been concluded. As the offering was being offered to Śiva in a moment pertaining to Rākṣasa I died and due to that fault I became a Brahmarākṣasa. I was not conversant with the technique of sacrifice and I performed the sacrifice reciting the texts without proper accents and notes. Due to this faulty performance I became a Brahmarākṣasa.

85. I am therefore immersed in the great ocean of sin. Lift me up therefrom. It behoves you to give me the benefit of the last song of prayer at the holy rite of keeping awake.

Vyāsa said :

86. The Cāṇḍāla said to him: "If you desist from killing living beings I shall offer unto you the benefit of the last song of prayer".

87. "Yes, of course", said he and the Cāṇḍāla invoked by means of Mantras the holy rite of keeping awake for half of a Muhūrta and offered the benefit of the last song of prayer.

88. After the benefit of the song of prayer had been given the Brahmarākṣasa became delighted. He bowed down to the Cāṇḍāla and went to the holiest of pilgrim-spots named Pr̥thūdaka.

89-90. He decided on a fast unto death there, O brahmins, and died. Invigorated by the benefit of song of prayer he became freed of his Rākṣasahood. As a result of the great power of the holy centre he attained the region of Brahmā which is difficult of access. Freed of all agony he stayed there for ten thousand years.

91. At the end of that period he was born as a brahmin endowed with the faculty of memory and control over his sense-organs. O brahmins, I shall tell you his story later on.

92-93. Even as I narrate listen to the rest of the story of the Cāṇḍāla. When the Rākṣasa departed that self-possessed

(Cāṇḍāla) of good control over himself returned to his house. Remembering the incidents in the story of that brahmin this pure man became disinterested in worldly pleasures. He entrusted his wife to the care of his sons and began the circumambulation of the Earth.

94. Beginning with Kokāmukha (holy centre) he went up to the holy shrine of Skanda. After visiting Skanda he performed the rite of circumambulation in Dhārācakra.

95. O brahmins, he then came to the lofty rocky top of the excellent mountain Vindhya and reached the holy spot Pāpapramocana.

96. That scion of a Cāṇḍāla family performed the holy dip that dispelled his sins. Freed from sins he remembered many of his previous births.

97. In a previous birth he had been a mendicant who had restrained his body and controlled his speech and mind. He was intelligent and he mastered the Vedas.

98. Once while cows were being taken away by thieves the alms became defiled by dust and they were discarded by the mendicant.

99-102. Due to that fault and sin he was born as a Cāṇḍāla. He took his holy dip in the Pāpapramocana and passed away on the banks of the Narmadā river. O brahmins, he was reborn as an excellent brahmin though foolish. After he had completed his stay there for thirty years, a man of great spiritual attainment who was endowed with Yogic Māyā and Śakti was wandering here and there assuming an ugly form. On seeing him the foolish brahmin mockingly saluted him and said: "Welfare O Siddha, whence are you coming?"

Vyāsa said :

103. On being addressed thus, the venerable one thought that he had been recognized and replied: "I have come from heavenly region."

104. The foolish one said to the Siddha : "In the heaven do you know Urvaśī the most excellent celestial damsel born of the thighs of Nārāyaṇa ?"

105. The Siddha said: "I know that Urvaśī who is the

chief ornament of heaven, whose birth and parentage is very noble and who bears the Cāmara for Indra."

106-108. The brahmin bereft of straightforward ways said to the Siddha: "O my friend, my message should be conveyed to Urvaśī by you, with great respect. You will please tell me what she says in reply". The Siddha said: "Of course". The brahmin was pleased at that. The Siddha went to heaven at the top of Meru and met Urvaśī. He told her what had been said by the brahmin.

109. She said to that excellent Siddha: "I do not know the brahmin who is the ruler of Kāśī. The truth has been mentioned to you. The fact is not retained in my mind."

110. On being told thus the Siddha returned. After some time he went to Varāṇasi and was again met by the foolish brahmin.

111. On seeing him he asked again: "What did the lady born of the thighs, say to you ?" The Siddha said: "Urvaśī spoke to me thus, 'I do not know'".

112. On hearing the words of the Siddha he said again with a gentle smile separating his lips: "Urvaśī should be told thus by you—'How will you know ?'"

113. "Of course I will do this." After saying this the Siddha went to heaven and saw Urvaśī coming out of Indra's abode.

114-119. The excellent Siddha said (everything) to her. She replied : "Let the excellent brahmin perform some holy rite whereby Siddha, I can know him. Not otherwise". Approaching the foolish brahmin again, the Siddha told what was said by Urvaśī. The brahmin thereupon pledged the following holy rite: "O Siddha man, this holy observance has been taken up by me in front of you. From today onwards I will not eat mixture. The truth has been uttered by me."

On being told thus, the Siddha went to heaven, met Urvaśī and said: "The man has said thus : 'From today onwards I will not eat Saktu at all'".

Urvaśī spoke to him again : "Now I have come to know him. The manner of taking up such a vow indicates he is foolish and ridiculous." After saying this Urvaśī went to her abode.

120-122. The Siddha roamed over the Earth as he pleased. The excellent lady Urvaśī went to Vārāṇasī and took her bath in the waters of Matsyodarī assuming her divine form. This foolish brahmin too had gone to the river Matsyodarī. On seeing Urvaśī bathing there he was overwhelmed by passionate love that agitated him too much.

123. He showed many gestures and pranks befitting a foolish person. Urvaśī understood him. Coming to know that he was the selfsame fool as mentioned by Siddha she smilingly spoke:

Urvaśī said :

124. O highly blessed one, what do you desire from me ? Let it be mentioned quickly. I shall carry out your injunctions. Rest assured.

The foolish brahmin said:

125. O lady of pure smiles, save my life by surrendering yourself.

Vyāsa said :

126. Then Urvaśī said to the brahmin: "I am now in the midst of a holy observance. Stay here for a while. Await my arrival".

127-130. The brahmin said: "I am staying (here). She then went to heaven. The celestial damsel returned after a month and saw that brahmin lean and emaciated as he had been staying on the banks observing the fast. Seeing him steadfast in his decision she assumed the body of an old woman. She then went to Matsyodarī and prepared a mixture of sugar, honey and ghee. After taking her bath the lady of nice eyes stood on the bank with a meaningful intention. She then called the brahmin and said :

Urvaśī said :

131. For the purpose of prosperity and well-being, O brahmin, a holy vow has been undertaken by me. At the conclusion of observance I am making this charitable offering. O brahmin, please accept it.

Vyāsa said :

132. He said : "What is this that is being offered ? It is sugar-coated. O gentle lady, my throat is being parched due to hunger. Hence I am asking. Please tell me".

133. She said: "O brahmin, it is a mixture prepared from flour mixed with sugar. Take this and please yourself. Do not delay".

134-135. On hearing that the brahmin remembered what had happened before. Although he was afflicted by hunger he said: "O gentle lady, I cannot accept this. In front of the excellent Siddha, the holy vow that I will not eat the mixture had been undertaken by me in order that Urvaśī might recollect me. Give this to someone else."

136. She said : "O gentle Sir, the observance undertaken by you refers to the wooden one. This is not made of wood. You have been extremely afflicted by hunger. Eat this".

137. The brahmin replied to her: "O gentle lady, the statement had not been qualified by me. A general vow had been undertaken by me."

138. That lady then said again: "O brahmin, if you do not want to eat take this home. Your family shall partake of it."

139-141. He said to her: "O lady of bright teeth, I am not going home. The excellent lady who surpasses everyone in the three worlds (Urvaśī) by her qualities had been here. Afflicted by love I had requested her and I had been consoled by her saying: 'Stay here for a while' and I had said: 'I shall stay'. O gentle lady, a month has elapsed after she had gone and I have been staying here. O one who has undertaken a vow, I have been steadfast in my love for truth and I am eager to have a union (with her)."

142. On hearing his words, Urvaśī resumed her excellent form. Smiling with a majestic grandeur she said to the brahmin:

Urvaśī said :

143-145. Well done, O brahmin. Desirous of seeing me you have observed the holy rite with fully concentrated mind.

I am Urvaśī, O brahmin, and I have come here with a desire to know you. You have been tested (and found to be) firm in

your decision. You are saintly and truthful in your austerity. Go to the place Sūkarava well known as Rūpatīrtha.

O great brahmin, you will achieve a great Siddhi. Then you will attain me.

Vyāsa said :

146. O brahmins, after saying this Urvaśī flew up to heaven. That brahmin of truthful austerity went to Rūpatīrtha.

147. There he was devoted to peaceful enterprises. He was pure and he undertook holy observances. After casting off his physical body he went to the excellent Gandharvaloka.

148. For a period of one hundred Manvantaras he experienced all pleasures and then was born as a king in an excellent dynasty. He was eager in delighting and encouraging his subjects.

149. He performed various sacrifices, concluding them with excellent monetary gifts. After entrusting his sons with the work of ruling the realm he went again to Saukarava.

150. He died in the holy spot Rūpatīrtha and again went to the region of Indra. After enjoying pleasures there for a period of hundred Manvantaras he came off.

151-152. O sages, for the union with Urvaśī he became Purūravas, the son of Budha in the excellent city Pratiṣṭhāna. Thus any brahmin of truthful austerity can attain salvation after enjoying pleasures if he propitiates Viṣṇu in the holy spot Rūpatīrtha in this birth.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYONE

Manifestation of Māyd

The sages said :

1-2. The benefit of the song of prayer at the time of keeping awake in propitiation of Viṣṇu has been listened to by us. By virtue of it the Cāṇḍāla attained the greatest goal. O extremely intelligent one, tell us how devotion to Viṣṇu can be

effected. Now we wish to hear about the holy rite or penance whereby that becomes possible.

Vyāsa said :

3. Listen, O leading sages. I shall mention in due order how a person shall attain devotion to Viṣṇu with great benefit.

4-5. The worldly existence is extremely terrible. It strikes terror into all living beings. It causes sorrows to men. Hundreds of miseries abound in it. A soul is born again and again in thousands of species of lower living organisms, O brahmins, and with great difficulty it attains human birth.

6. After human birth he attains brahminhood, power of discrimination, sense of piety and happiness in successive births.

7. Until the ultimate destruction of all sins of men accumulated in different births, devotion to Vāsudeva identical with the universe, is not possible.

8-9. Hence, O brahmins, I shall tell you how devotion to Viṣṇu is effected.

A person may be devoted to other Devas mentally, verbally and physically. His soul is directed to those gods. Thereby, O excellent sages, he may become inclined to perform sacrifices.

10. Then, O brahmins, with great concentration and purity of mind he begins to love the fire-god. When the fire-god is propitiated he becomes a devotee of sun.

11. O brahmins, he worships sun-god regularly. When that god is pleased he becomes devoted to Śaṅkara.

12. He performs the worship of Śambhu duly and strenuously. When the three-eyed god is satisfied he becomes devoted to Keśava.

13. By worshipping the imperishable lord of the universe named Vāsudeva, O excellent brahmins, he attains worldly pleasures and salvation.

The sages said :

14. O great sage, some men are averse to devotion of Viṣṇu. O brahmin, tell us why they do not worship Viṣṇu.

Vyāsa said :

15. In this world, O excellent sages, two types of created beings are well-known, viz. Āsura (demonic) and Daiva (divine). They are created formerly by the self-born lord.

16. By attaining the divine nature men worship Acyuta. Those who have attained the demonic nature slander Hari.

17. The wisdom of those base men is obliterated by Māyā of Viṣṇu. Without attaining Hari, O brahmins, they attain lowest states.

18. His Māyā is deep and incomprehensible to Devas and Asuras. It causes great delusion to men. It cannot be surmounted by persons who are not self-possessed.

The sages said :

19. We all wish to comprehend that insurmountable Māyā of Viṣṇu. O sage conversant with details of virtue, it behoves you to narrate. Our eagerness is great.

Vyāsa said :

20. That Māyā is like a dream or the jugglery of a conjuror. It pulls and stretches the world, excepting the lord himself who is competent to comprehend Hari's Māyā.

21. Even as I narrate, O brahmins, listen to the confounded states of a brahmin and Nārada due to this Māyā.

22. Formerly, in a city there was a glorious king well known as Āgnidhra. His son was a pure soul named Kāmadamana.

23. He was Dharmārāma (who sported in piety). He practised forbearance. He was engaged in devotedly serving his parents. He was skilful in delighting his subjects. He exerted himself much in the Vedas and scriptures.

24. The father endeavoured to celebrate his marriage but he did not like it. So the father asked him: "Why don't you like to take a wife unto you ?

25. Indeed all men desire it for pleasure. A wife is the root of all happiness. Hence take one unto you".

26. Even after hearing the words of his father he maintained silence with solemnity. O brahmins, the father urged him frequently.

27. Then he said to his father : "O dear father, I have resorted to an attitude befitting my name (i.e. Kāmadamana). This is clearly a devoted service to Viṣṇu and it protects us".

28-29. Approaching him, the father said: "O my son, this is not a righteous thing. This should not be adopted by a learned man. Do as I direct you, my son. I am your father and hence your lord. Do not immerse my family in the slough of hell due to the (impending) extinction of the family.".

30. On hearing the behest of his father the son of perfect self-control was reminded of the old strange ways of the world. He said :

The son said:

31. Listen to my words, dear father. It is a statement of truth with cogent reasoning. O king, one should act in conformity with one's name. It is very truthful.

32. I have acquired thousands of births, hundreds of deaths and old age and acquisitions of and separation from wives in all of them.

33. Hundreds of different states have been attained by me —like those of grass, shrubs, creepers, winding plants, reptiles, animals, birds, beasts, women, men etc.

34-35. I have been by turns a Gaṇa, a Kinnara, a Gandharva, a Vidyādhara, a great serpent, a Yakṣa, a Guhyaka, a Rākṣasa, a Dānava, an Apsaras, a divine being etc. Again and again I have attained a thousand oceans (?). I have been created many times during creation. I have been killed many times during annihilation.

36. In view of my being united with [a wife I had been the victim of deception. Listen to what happened in the third preceding birth. I shall briefly mention it together with the greatness of a holy spot.

37. After passing through many births as man, god, Gandharva, Nāga, Vidyādhara, birds and Kinnaras, dear father, I was born in a family where I became a sage given to penance.

38. Then my devotion to Viṣṇu, the slayer of Madhu and the lord of worlds, was very steady. By means of devotion and different holy rites and fasts, the wielder of discus, club and other miraculous weapons was propitiated by me.

39. The delighted noble Viṣṇu came there riding on the lord of birds (Garuḍa) (with the intention of) granting me boons. He said in a loud voice: "O twice-born one, let any boon be prayed for. I shall give you whatever you desire."

40. Then I said to lord Hari: "O Keśava, if you are pleased I shall choose a boon. O Janārdana, I wish to know that great Māyā belonging to you".

41. The enemy of Madhu and Kaiṭabha then said to me: "O brahmin, of what avail is that Māyā to you ? I shall give unto you virtue, wealth and love, prominent sons and freedom from sickness.

42. Then I said again to the enemy of Mura : "This is my desire to conquer wealth and virtue. I wish to know your Māyā, O Puṣkarākṣa (Lotus-eyed one). Show that unto me".

43. Then lord Viṣṇu, the prominent Man-Lion, the lord of goddess of wealth said these words to me : "No one knows my Māyā nor will any one ever know it.

44-45. O brahmin, formerly the celestial sage Nārada, son of Brahmā, was a great devotee of mine. With great devotion, like you, he propitiated me formerly. I went unto him in order to grant him a boon. He too chose this very boon. Although he was prevented by me, he chose the same boon like you now, due to his excessive foolishness.

46. Then I said : "O Nārada, sink unto the water and you will know my Māyā". Thereupon Nārada dipped himself under water. He was transformed into the daughter of the king of Kāśī named Suśīlā.

47. When she reached the prime of youth (the king of Kāśī) gave her in marriage to Sudharmā of fine virtue, the son of the king of Vidarbha. O great sage, in her company he indulged in unsurpassed pleasures.

48. When his father passed away, the kingdom duly passed on to him. Sudharmā of great valour became delighted and ruled over the Vidarbha kingdom. He was surrounded by sons and grandsons.

49. Then a great battle ensued between king Sudharmā and the king of Kāśī. In that battle were both the king of Vidarbha and the king of Kāśī together with their sons and grandsons.

50. (Defective text) Suśilā came to know that her father and her husband were killed along with sons and grandsons. She set off from the city and went to the battlefield. On seeing her dead father and husband along with their sons and grandsons Suśilā grieved much.

51-54. The distressed lady lamented for a long time in the midst of the armies of her husband and father. Grief-stricken she rushed to her mother. She then took the dead bodies of her husband, father, brothers, sons and grandsons to the great cremation ground and prepared the funeral pyre. She herself lit the fire. When the fire blazed forth, Suśilā rushed into it crying loudly "Alas ! my son, Alas ! my son". She was then transformed again into the sage Nārada. The fire too assumed the pure lustre of cool crystal. The full lake appeared and he came out of it. Lord Keśava stood in front of him with conch, iron club, sword (etc.) in his four hands. Laughingly he said to Nārada the celestial sage:

55. "Who is your son ? Tell me, O great sage. With your senses gone whom do you prevail ?"

Thereupon, Nārada was ashamed. Then I said to him :

56. O Nārada, such is my Māyā. It is full of pain and misery. It cannot be understood by the lotus-seated lord, Indra, Rudra, and others. How will you comprehend this incomprehensible Māyā ?

57. On hearing my words the great sage said : "O Lord Viṣṇu, grant me (the boon of) devotion to you. Whenever opportunity arrives let me remember you. Let me have your perpetual vision.

58. O Acyuta, let the place where, in my grief, I had stepped on to the funeral pyre become a holy spot. Let it be presided over by you, O Keśava, together with the lotus-born lord Brahmā."

59. Then, O brahmin, Nārada was told by me thus "Let your funeral pyre be in the holy spot Śitoda. I, as Viṣṇu, shall stay here always. Maheśvara will stay on the northern side.

60. After cutting off that head of Brahmā which uttered harsh words, the three-eyed lord will come to this holy spot of thine for casting off the skull.

61. When the destroyer of the three cities, Śiva, takes his holy dip in this Tīrtha, the skull will drop down on the ground. Thereafter, this holy spot will become well known all over the Earth as Kapālamocana."

62. Ever since then the cloud-vehicled Lord Indra has never forsaken this holy spot. O brahmin, say that the sin of the slaughter of a brahmin ceased to become fierce in him (defective verse).

63. As long as the slayer of the enemies of Indra does not forsake that holy spot it will continue to be great and sacred. This secret holy spot has been eulogised by Devas as Avimukta. It is called Imperishable. It bestows merit.

64. Even after committing sins, if a man enters that Tīrtha he becomes pure and free from lapses. When he meditates on me he becomes pure and attains salvation due to the grace of the Lord.

65. In another birth he is born as one called Rudrapiśāca and experiences some misery. After many years he is freed from sins and he takes birth in the abode of a brahmin.

66. He will be pure and one having self-control. At the time of his death Rudra will repeat the beneficial Tāraka Mantra to him. After saying this to Nārada, an excellent brahmin, I went to the ocean of milk, my abode.

67-68. That brahmin (i.e. Nārada) went to heaven and is being honoured by the king of Gandharvas.

"Thus everything has been told to you to enlighten you. My Māyā cannot be understood. If you wish to know enter this water and you will come to know."

That brahmin, thus enlightened by Hari merged himself under water by the force of the inevitable future.

69-70. O father, that brahmin merged himself under the water in the Tīrtha Kokāmukha and then he was transformed into a girl in the abode of a Cāṇḍāla. She was endowed with beauty, good conduct and excellent qualities. She attained youthful age. She was married to Subāhu, son of a Cāṇḍāla, who was devoid of handsome features. She did not like her husband but he liked her much.

71. She gave birth to two sons bereft of eyesight and a

daughter who was deaf. The husband was very poor and so the helpless girl used to go to the river bank everyday and cry.

72. Once she went to the river taking the water pot with her. In order to take her bath she entered the water but was immediately transformed into her original form of a brahmin of good conduct engaged in holy rites and yogic practice.

73. As a long time passed by after her departure, her husband came to the holy river in search of her. He saw the water pot but not her on the bank. Thereupon in his excess of grief he lamented loudly.

74. Then the two blind sons and the deaf daughter came there. They too were distressed and on perceiving their crying father they wept bitterly.

75-76. Then he asked some brahmins who were on the river bank : "Tell me. Was a woman seen by you coming this way for water ?"

They said : "She entered the river but never came up. Only this much are we aware of."

On hearing their terrible words he began to cry again. Tears flooded his eyes.

77. On seeing him cry along with his daughter and sons I too became distressed. Grief reminded me, O King, that I was myself the Cāṇḍāla maiden.

78. Then, O King, I said to that Cāṇḍāla : "Why do you cry in distress ? You are not going to get her back by your foolish cries. It is in vain. Of what avail to you is this lamentation ?"

79. He said to me : "Both these sons are blind. The only girl is deaf. How can I, O brahmin, console these and bring them up ?"

80. After saying this he cried all the more loudly along with his children. The longer I watched the Cāṇḍāla crying the more I pitied him.

81. Preventing him from crying further in his grief, I narrated to him the incidents of my life. Thereupon the distressed man entered the waters of Kokāmukha.

82. Immediately after his entry into the water the Cāṇḍāla became free from sins by the efficacy of the Tīrtha. Even

as I stood watching, he entered an aerial chariot bright as the moon, O father, and went to heaven.

83. After his entering the water and passing away my grief increased causing me great delusion. Then, O excellent king, I dived into the sacred waters of the Kokā and went to heaven.

84. Again I was born, this time in the family of a Vaiśya. Here also I was distressed due to pain. I was endowed with the faculty of remembering my previous births due to the grace of the excellent Tirtha. With a dejected mind I went to Kokā-mukha putting sufficient restraint on my mind and utterances.

85. I observed holy rites and made my body emaciated. Then I went to heaven. Coming down therefrom I am now born in your abode. O father, I can remember my previous births by the grace of Hari.

86-87. I propitiated the lord in Kokāmukha. I have discarded my desire for both auspicious and inauspicious things.

After saying this he bowed to his father and went to Kokāmukha. He propitiated Viṣṇu in the form of Boar. The excellent man attained Siddhi.

Thus Kāmadamana forsook his defective physical body in the Kokāmukha, the extremely sacred and excellent Tirtha. He went to heaven by aerial chariots resembling the sun, along with his sons and grandsons.

88. Thus O brahmīns, the Māyā of the great lord, has been described by me. Even Devas are not able to think about it. It is like a dream or the jugglery of a conjuror. The whole universe is deluded by it.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYTWO

Foretelling future

The sages said:

1. What has been narrated by you, O Vyāsa, regarding the inscrutable Māyā of Viṣṇu, has been heard by us.

2. From you, O great sage, we wish to hear the precise process of annihilation at the end of a Kalpa, called Mahā-pralaya.

Vyāsa said :

3. Let it be heard precisely, O excellent sages, how the process of annihilation takes place at the end of a Kalpa as well as at the time of Prākṛta Pralaya.

4. O excellent brahmins, the human month is a day unto the Pitṛs (Manes), the human year is a day unto the heaven-dwellers and a thousand sets of four Yugas constitute a day of Brahmā.

5. Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali constitute a set of four Yugas containing twelve thousand Divine years.

6. The four Yugas are similar in form. Kṛta is the Yuga first. O sages, Kaliyuga is the last.

7. That is because creation is carried out by Brahmā in the first Kṛta yuga and similarly annihilation is carried out in the end in the Kaliyuga.

The sages said:

8. O holy Sir, it beloves you to describe in detail the nature of Kaliyuga when the four-footed sacred Dharma undergoes deficiency.

Vyāsa said:

9. Understand the form of Kali, O sinless brahmins, about which you have asked me. It is extensive but understand it briefly.

10. In the age of Kali the actions of men are not based on the conduct prescribed for Varnas and Āśramas. Nor do they follow the specific injunctions of the Sāma, Rk and Yajus Vedas as their guide.

11. In Kaliyuga marriages are not sacred ties, students are not under the control of preceptors, sons are not righteous, there are no orderly holy rites in the sacred fire.

12. In Kaliyuga the strongest man, whoever he may be and in whichever family he is born, becomes the lord of all. Man maintains himself through girls taken from all the castes.

13. A brahmin is initiated in the Kali age by any expedient and, O leading brahmans, anything can be considered a mode of atonement.

14. Everything is considered a sacred text in the Kali age, O brahmans. Whoever utters whatever thing is taken to be a holy scripture. Deities are on the same footing in the Kali age. Everything is everyone's Āśrama (stage in life).

15. Fast, exertion and charity constitute pious activities in Kali age and rites are performed as one pleases.

16. In Kali age men become haughty and arrogant even with a little wealth. Pride of beauty in women will be on the basis of their tresses of hair.

17. As gold, jewels, diamonds as well as garments dwindle in the Kali age, women will be embellished by their tresses.

18. Women will forsake their husbands having no wealth. In Kali age it is the moneyed man who becomes the lord of damsels.

19. Whoever gives the maximum amount is considered their lord. Nobility in men is based on this lordship.

20. Hoarded wealth is exhausted in the maintenance of a home; intellect has the one end of hoarding wealth; riches come to an end in the enjoyment of pleasures in Kali age.

21. Women in Kali age will be harlots desirous of luxury. They covet men who have earned much by illegal means.

22. At that time, O brahmans, no man will brook a loss to his vested interest even to the extent of a fourth of a Paṇa (the smallest coin) even when he is entreated by his own friend.

23. O brahmans, in the Kali age, the mind will always be manly and courageous. Cows will be solemnly honoured as long as they yield milk.

24. Fearing a drought the subjects will be afraid of hunger. They will then have their eyes riveted to the sky.

25. Like the sages of yore men will have roots, leaves and fruits for their food. They will think of killing themselves in their misery due to the absence of rain.

26. They will have perpetual famine and pain. They will be incapable of mastering things. By virtue of their lapses their happiness will be spoiled.

27. At the advent of Kali age people will take food without taking bath. They will not honour and worship fire, gods, and guests. They will not offer libations and oblations with water and balls of rice.

28. In Kali age women will be greedy and lecherous. They will have puny bodies but they will be gluttonous. They will have little good fortune but plenty of offsprings.

29. Scratching their heads with hands, women will disobey their elders and husbands. They will be unrestrained.

30. Women will be furious. They will be more interested in sustaining themselves; they will be wanting in the purity of bodies. They will habitually speak harsh and untruthful words.

31. Even the women of noble families will be ill-behaved. They will yearn for men of bad conduct. They will be unchaste and disloyal to their husbands.

32. Men of no holy rites will study the Vedas. Householders will not perform homas nor will they give appropriate things in charity.

33. Forest-dwellers will take to the diet pertaining to the villagers. Mendicants will be influenced by filial affection and other contacts towards sons.

34. At the advent of Kali age kings will no longer protect their subjects. They will take the wealth of common man under the pretext of taxes and fees.

35. Whoever happens to possess horses, chariots and elephants will become the king. In the Kali age, those who happen to be weak will be servants.

36. Vaiśyas will forsake their traditional duty such as agriculture, trade etc., and take to the Śūdra activities. They will sustain themselves by means of crafts etc.

37. Śūdras will take up the holy rite of begging for alms. Base men will display their signs of renunciation. Unconsecrated men will resort to heretic activities.

38. Harassed by the burden of taxes and famine, people will become miserable. They will migrate to those lands where wheat and barley abound.

39. As the Vedic path falls into disuse, as the people become more and more heretic, sins will increase and the span of life of the people will shrink.

40. When men begin to undertake austerities not prescribed by sacred texts there will be infantile mortality due to the fault of kings.

41. Girls will give birth to children at the ages of five, six and seven years begotten by men of the ages of eight, nine and ten.

42. Hairs will begin to turn grey at the twelfth year. No one will live upto the twentieth year.

43. Men will be destroyed in a short time because their wisdom and intelligence will be mediocre and their kings will be wicked. They will wear false marks.

44. The increase in the severity of the Kali age should be inferred by wise persons as the heretic activities are observed more and more.

45. Whenever there is destruction and loss of good people following the Vedic path the increase in the severity of Kali age should be inferred by wise persons.

46. When the undertakings of men of virtuous activities do not flourish, O brahmins, the prominence of Kali age should be inferred by wise persons.

47. When persons cease to perform sacrifices in the worship of Puruṣottama, lord of sacrifices, the influence of Kali age should be inferred.

48. The increase in the severity of Kali should be inferred by wise and intelligent persons when there is no interest in Vedic discussions and heretical doctrines are entertained.

49. In the Kali age, O brahmins, men overpowered by heresy will never worship Viṣṇu, the lord of the Universe, the Supreme lord, the Creator of everything.

50. Men influenced by heresy will prattle thus : of what avail are Devas ? Of what use are the brahmins and the Vedas ? Of what avail is the purificatory wash with water ?”.

51. At the advent of Kali age, O brahmins, clouds will shower less rain, plants will produce less, and fruits will have less nutritional value.

52. In Kali age clothes will come down only upto the knees, the trees will be like the Šamī tree, the castes will exhibit the characteristics of Śūdras.

53. When the Kaliage approaches and advances foodgrains will turn into atoms; cow milk will be mostly that got from goats and the unguent will be Uśita grass.

54. In the Kali age, O excellent sages, mothers- and fathers-in-law will be mainly considered elders. Men and women shall take food in open buildings (Eating Houses) along with their friends (?).

55. Men following their fathers-in-law will say : "Whose mother ? Whose father ? A man is the product of his own Karman."

56. Men of insignificant intellect will be afflicted again and again by verbal, mental and physical faults and they will commit sins everyday.

57. O brahmins, everything that is conducive to misery in respect of persons without truth, cleanliness and honourable shyness will take place in the Kali age.

58. At that time when there is no self-study of the Vedas, when there is no utterance of the Mantra Vaṣṭ, when there is no utterance of Svadhā and Svāhā, there will rarely be a brahmin in the world.

59. In a short time he will perform an excellent meritorious rite which in the Kṛta yuga is done by hard penance.

The sages said :

60. At what time does a simple act of piety yield a great benefit? It behoves you to mention it entirely. We have a keen desire to hear.

Vyāsa said :

61. In the blessed Kali age, O brahmins, there shall be a great benefit through less strain. Women and Śūdras shall become blessed. Understand one thing more.

62-63. In regard to penance, practice of celibacy, performance of Japa, O brahmins, what is achieved in the Kṛtayuga in ten years is achieved in a year in the Tretāyuga. It is achieved in a month in the Dvāparayuga and in a day and night in the Kali-yuga. Hence we can say a person achieves good things in the Kali age easily.

64. By singing songs in praise of Keśava in the Kali age one obtains what one obtains in the Kṛta yuga by meditation, in the Tretā yuga by performing sacrifices and in the Dvāpara by conducting worship.

65. In the Kali age, a person attains increased virtue by means of a simple effort. People become well-versed in piety with a little strain. Hence I am pleased with Kali age.

66-69. Formerly, the twice-born grasped the Vedas by observing the holy rites. Thereafter, they performed sacrifices by means of wealth acquired by pious means. Meaningless talk, eating unconsecrated food (Vrata Bhojana) and aimless squandering of money (Vrata Svam) shall lead to the downfall of the twice-born along with their attendants. Improper performance of everything leads to faults. O brahmins, the twice-born cannot take in food and drink as they wish because they are bound by certain conventions in every activity. They are endowed with humility and they attain other worlds with great stress and strain.

70. But a Śūdra achieves salvation merely by serving the twice-born. He is authorized in Pākayajña (mere cooking of his food is no less than a Yajña). Hence a Śūdra is more blessed.

71. In the Kaliyuga, there is no restriction on what should be eaten or what should not be eaten. There is no restraining law in regard to sins. O leading sages, hence this has been mentioned as something good.

72. Wealth should be acquired by men without a conflict with their duties; wealth should be distributed among deserving persons; sacrifices should be duly performed.

73. In its acquisition and maintenance there is great strain and pain, O excellent brahmins. Similarly, in the matter of utilising it properly too there is great effort; wealth should be known as something very difficult to deal with.

74. By means of these and other strenuous efforts, O excellent brahmins, people attain Prājāpatya and other worlds in due order.

75. A women attains other worlds by duly serving her husband by thoughts, words and deeds. That is because, O brahmins, she attains the same world as he.

76. Thus she attains those worlds without much effort like the man.

For the third time it has been mentioned by me that women are good.

77. Thus has been mentioned, O brahmins, what you have come here for. Hence, ask as you please. I shall explain everything clearly to you.

78-80. In the Kali age, virtue is achieved with very little effort by men who wash off their sins by means of water in the form of qualities of the soul. O excellent sages, the same is achieved by Śūdras devoted to the service of the twice-born. Similarly, it is achieved by women without strain merely by serving their husbands. Hence, all these three are considered by me highly blessed.

In the Kṛta and other yugas the twice-born have to undergo great strain in accomplishing piety.

81-82. But O excellent sages, in Kaliyuga, men attain Siddhi (spiritual achievement) by means of simple austerities. Blessed people act virtually. O sages, conversant with virtue, what has been desired by you has been described by me even without being asked. What else shall be done, O brahmins?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYTHREE

Foretelling Future (contd.)

The sages said :

1-3. We do not know whether the advent of Kali is imminent or far off. Therefore, we wish for final Yuga and the end of Dvāpara age. For the present we have come here for the acquisition of Dharma. We shall take up the greatest virtue and happiness with the smallest effort. The final Yuga that causes terror and heartburn has approached. It has destroyed Dharma. O sage, conversant with Dharma ! it behoves you to describe it along with the symptoms in detail.

Vyāsa said :

4. In the final Yuga will come up those kings who will cease to be protectors and take away the portion of oblations. They will be interested only in saving themselves.

5. In the final Yuga, non-Kṣatriyas will become kings, brahmins will resort to Śūdras for sustenance and Śūdras will maintain the conduct and way of life of the brahmins.

6. In the final Yuga, O excellent sages, brahmins well-versed in the Vedas as well as fallen evil ones will take food sitting in the same row. Havis offerings will be devoid of usual holy rites.

7. Men will become ill-mannered. They will be devoted to the hoarding of wealth. They will be fond of liquor and meat. Base men will carnally approach the wives of their friends.

8. In the final Yuga, thieves will carry out the activities of kings. Kings will practise thieving, servants will take food and enjoy without taking permission first.

9. In the final Yuga, wealth and assets will become important. The conduct and activities of the good will not be honoured. The fallen ones will not be rebuked and treated with contempt.

10. Men will be ugly with the noses missing and the hairs in disarray. Girls less than sixteen in age will give birth to children.

11. In the final yuga, cooked food will be sold in the open places; brahmins will sell the Vedas; women will sell their honour.

12. Everyone will discuss and expound the supreme Brahman and the Vedas. Brahmims will follow the Vājasaneyā texts. The propounders will resemble the Śūdras and the brahmins will become the disciples (of Śūdras).

13. Śūdras will begin to expound Dharma. Their teeth will be white. They will conquer their sense-organs. They will wear ochre robes. They will sustain themselves with knavishness and crooked intellect.

14. In the final Yuga beasts of prey will increase in number and cows will dwindle in number. Good men will decrease.

15. The base ones will stay in the end. The subjects will lose bashfulness. They are doomed in that final age.

16. Even the excellent brahmins sell fruits of their austerities and sacrifices. The seasons will become adverse during that ultimate age.

17. Similarly, steers under training will be yoked to the plough even when they are two years old. When the yuga comes to a close, the clouds will begin to shower in a quaint way.

18. Those who are born in the family of heroes will become kings as the lower subjects become baser and baser at the close of the age.

19. Charitable gifts will be obligatory on the parts of parents while the sons will never perform sacred rites as the age comes to a close.

20. When the age comes to a close, the Earth will be mostly barren arid soil; the highways will be infested with robbers; almost all the people will become merchants.

21. Sons will eagerly share the hereditary assets and charitable gifts. Urged by greed and other bad qualities they will be antagonistic to one another and will even attempt to take away other's shares.

22. At the close of the Yuga when tenderness, beauty and jewellery cease to exist women will be decked by means of their tresses.

23. A householder devoid of stamina and virility will attempt to have sexual pleasure. When the Yuga comes to a close no sexual indulgence will be on a par with that with one's own wife.

24. The following is the characteristic feature of the close of the Yuga. Most of the men will be base in character and ignoble; their handsomeness will be futile; men will be in a minority; there will be more women.

25. Population will consist mostly of beggars; people will never give anything to one another. They will perish on being harassed by kings and robbers or destroyed by fire or fighting.

26. When the Yuga comes to a close, plants will cease to bear fruits; young men will exhibit the characteristics of old men and men of no good conduct will be happy in the world.

27. When the Yuga comes to a close rough and low winds showering hailstone will begin to blow in the rainy seasons; the other world will become of doubtful existence.

28. Kings like the Vaiśyas will maintain themselves with wealth and foodgrains. When the Yuga passes off, no one will behave like kinsman to anyone.

29. Agreements and promises will cease to function. When the Yuga comes to a close a debt will lose itself along with a sense of propriety and decorum.

30. Delight of men will be fruitless and the anger of men will be fruitful. When the Yuga comes to a close people will begin to rear goats for getting milk.

31. Similarly, sacrifices will be performed not in accordance with the sacred texts. Men who profess to be scholars will be acting in an unauthorized manner.

32-36. There is no doubt that there will not be anyone to expound what is mentioned in the scriptures. Without resorting to elderly persons everyone will come to know everything; when the close of the Yuga is imminent there will be no one who is not a poet; all the stars will be devoid of Yogas; the twice-born people will not abide by their holy rites. When the close of the Yuga is imminent, the kings will be robbers. Bastards, dishonest men and liquor addicts will begin to expound Brahman. At the close of the Yuga, excellent brahmins will perform horse sacrifice. Brahmans will eat forbidden food. They will perform sacrifices on behalf of those who do not deserve them. When the close of the Yuga is imminent brahmins will become greedy of wealth. They will utter the word “Bhoḥ”. No one will learn (the Vedas).

37. Women will have a single conch shell (tied round their necks) which they will tie up with a rope. Stars will be devoid of lustre. The ten quarters will become adverse.

38. At the close of the Yuga the red lustre of twilight will be of a burnt hue. Sons will employ their fathers in their own jobs and the daughters-in-law their mothers-in-law.

39. In the ultimate Yugas women as well as men will live like this. They will take food and enjoy without conducting holy rites. Brahmans will not perform sacrifices in the sacred fires.

40. Without offering alms and oblations men will partake of their meals. Deceiving their husbands who are asleep women will go elsewhere.

41. The husbands may not be sick, nor devoid of handsomeness; they may not be weak, they may not be jealous too. (Still the women are disloyal to them.) When the Yuga comes to a close no one will be grateful for helps rendered.

The sages said :

42-43. When virtue is held in abeyance and suspense thus, in which country will those men who are harassed by taxes reside? What will be their diet? What will be their pastimes? What will be their rites? What will be their likes? What will be their magnitude? What will be their span of life? What quarter will they resort to before they reach once again the Kṛta Age?

Vyāsa said :

44. After this, when the virtue falls down the subjects will become devoid of good qualities. After attaining loss of good conduct they will attain deficiency in their longevity.

45. They will incur decline in strength due to deficiency in longevity; pallor and discolouration due to decline in strength, sickness and pain due to pallor; and despondency due to pain of sickness.

46. Due to despondency self-knowledge will be aroused in them; due to self-knowledge inclination towards piety (will be acquired by them). By attaining the highest point thus they will reach the Kṛta Yuga.

47. Some will be practising piety to a certain extent; some will attain a neutral state; some will follow misconceived piety; some will attain jolly temperament.

48. Some will come to the conclusion that only perception and inference constitute true testimony; others will say that nothing can be true testimony.

49. Some will be addicted to atheism and ruin piety; some will become deluded. Brahmins will profess to be great scholars.

50. People will be excluded from the knowledge of scriptures. They will retain faith only in what is current for the nonce. Men devoid of knowledge will become arrogant.

51. When piety becomes unsteady and disarranged, there will still be people honoured by the noble ones who will practise auspicious rites and resort to charitable deeds.

52. When people begin to eat indiscriminately, when they think that they are protected by themselves, when they conceal themselves, when they become devoid of mercy, when they are shameless in their character, these are the signs of Kali age.

53. During the period of the onslaught of Kali that destroys strict adherence to wisdom, even unprepared persons will attain Siddhi in a short while.

54. O brahmins, if the people of lower castes resort to the perpetual course of conduct of the brahmins, it is a feature of Kali.

55. When the Yuga comes to a close there will be great wars, heavy downpour, strong gusts of wind and scorching heat. It is the characteristic feature of Kali.

56. When the close of Yuga is imminent, Rākṣasas and beings who know through the spies enjoy the Earth in the guise of brahmins.

57-60. The following types of evil men will abound in the world : Persons devoid of self-study of the Vedas; persons who do not utter Vāsat mantras; evil leaders; arrogant ones; those who eat flesh; those who eat indiscriminately; those with futile holy rites; foolish ones greedy of wealth; petty ones; those with insignificant paraphernalia; those who are surrounded by diverse dealings (?); those who have fallen down from perpetual piety; those who take away other's jewels; those who harass other men's wives; passionate men; wicked men; deceitful persons; and men fond of risky adventures. When these persons abound there will be sages of many forms. They will be men of want and privation (?)

61. Men will honour and worship by means of discourse all those important persons who are born in the Kali Age.

62. There will be persons stealing vegetables, garments, foodstuffs and small baskets and boxes.

63. There will be thieves outwitting other thieves, there will be slayers of murderers. When the thieves are destroyed by other thieves, there will be peace everywhere.

64. When a time characterized by worthlessness and full of disturbances comes and there are no holy rites, men who are afflicted by the burden of taxes, will resort to the forest.

65. When the holy rites of sacrifices cease to be performed, demons, beasts of prey, worms, mice and serpents will attack men.

66. At the close of the Age some excellent men in certain places will enjoy prosperity, abundance of food, of good health and self-sufficiency in the kinsmen.

67. In the different regions there will be separate groups of persons equipped with rafts and requisites. They will be protected by themselves as well as robbed by themselves.

68. As time passes on, men will be dislodged from their countries; they will lose valuable things along with their kinsmen.

69. They will be afflicted by starvation and they will run away in great fright taking their children with them. They will cross the river Kauśikī.

70. They will resort to the lands of Āṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Kāśmīra and Kośala. They will occupy valleys and chasms between the mountains abounding in sages.

71-72. They will occupy the entire ridge of the Himālayas and the coasts of the briny sea. They will use rotting leaves, barks of trees and skins of deer and stay there when the Age comes to a close. The men will stay in the forests along with the alien barbarous groups of Mlecchas.

73. The Earth will be neither void nor full of forests. Kings will be both protectors and non-protectors.

74. Men will sustain themselves by means of deer, fish, birds, beasts of prey, serpents, insects, worms, honey, vegetables, green fruits and roots.

75. Like sages men will use barks of trees, skins of deer and will have for their food the rotting and decaying leaves and fruits.

76. The people will not be able to extract oil from seeds. They will be assailed and struck by darts fixed to wooden pieces. They will always rear goats, sheep, asses, mules and camels. ~

77. They will resort to the banks of rivers and for the sake of diverting the course of water they will restrain the flow of currents. They will be engaged in mutual petty trade and deal in cooked food.

78-79. The hairs growing from their bodies will remain so and dirt will get accumulated in between. Some of them will have many children, and others will be devoid of progeny. They will be devoid of nobility of birth and good conduct. Some will sustain themselves by evil means. The base and vile subjects will follow a base moral code.

80-82. The maximum expectation of life of those men will be thirty. The people will be weak and emaciated due to the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. They will be overwhelmed by the sadness of old age. Due to sickness their virility becomes reduced. Since the reliance on life expectation is restrained people desist from indulgence. They are desirous of meeting and serving pious men. As business dealings become rarer, they will resort to truthfulness.

83. Due to the non-fulfilment of their desires they will be pious in their conduct. Themselves afflicted by destruction they will perform consecratory rites.

84. Thus the people, desirous of serving, will adhere to the good practice of charitable gifts, truthfulness and protection of living beings. Then Dharma (virtue) will function to the extent of one-fourth and the people will attain welfare.

85. As people gradually change for the better and their capacity to infer improves they will enquire, "What is the tasty thing?" They will see that it is Dharma (virtue).

86. The people, who had incurred loss and damage once, will attain prosperity when they take to virtue. They will then see the Kṛta Yuga.

87-88. People are of good conduct in the Kṛta Yuga and it is said that there is loss in the Kali Age. The time "is but one even as the moon is but one. When the moon is enveloped in darkness it does not shine. It is then like the Kali Age. When the moon is released by darkness, it shines. It is then like the Kṛta Yuga.

89-93. This classification of Ages is mere secondary assertion. But the supreme Brahman is the real meaning of the

Vedas. It is non-disjoined, it is not realized; it is held as hereditary legacy.

Penance is assertion of what is desired. It is made fixed and steady. Holy rites are achieved by means of good qualities and good qualities are purified by means of holy rites.

Benediction is in consonance with place and time on viewing the person (who is the recipient of the same). In every Age it has been cited by sages at the proper time.

The auspicious and meritorious benedictions are but the reaction of virtue, wealth, love, salvation and gods. So also is longevity in the different ages.

The changes of the Ages have begun to function long since due to the nature of the creator. The world of living beings is always undergoing change by fall and rise. It does not remain still even for a moment.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYFOUR

Description of Annihilation

Vyāsa said :

1. The reabsorption of all living beings is of three kinds. (1) Naimittika (conditional) (2) Prākṛtika (natural) and Ātyantika (the ultimate one).

2. The conditional re-absorption is Brāhma (pertaining to Brahmā). It is the re-absorption at the end of a Kalpa (set of four Yugas). The ultimate one is salvation and the Prākṛta (natural one) is (delimited) by the Parārdhas.

The sages said :

3. O holy sage, explain the number of Parārdha as it has been mentioned before, and by doubling which the natural re-absorption has to be realized.

Vyāsa said :

4. O brahmins, each one of the digits is considered ten

times as much in value as the previous one on the right. Therefore at the eighteenth place it is called Parārdha (i.e. one followed by seventeen zeros).

5. Double the Parārdha is considered, O brahmins, as Prākṛta Laya (natural reabsorption). At that time everything manifest merges and dissolves into the unmanifest which is the cause of all.

6. Human Nimeṣa (i.e. winking time) is called a Mātrā and it is the basic unit of time. Fifteen Mātrās constitute one Kāṣṭhā and thirty Kāṣṭhās one Kalā.

7. Fifteen Kalās make a Nāḍikā. In the calculation of time by means of the measurement of water it is equivalent to half of thirteen Palas ($6\frac{1}{2}$ Palas of water trickling down through a hole may take a Nāḍikā of time i.e. 24 minutes to flow out completely).

8. According to Māgadha calculation it is time for the full trickling down of a Prastha of water through four holes four Āngulas from one another, pricked by means of golden pulses (?) (? Each hole is of the size of a pulse grain).

9. O excellent brahmins, two Nāḍikās make one Muhūrta (48 minutes). A day of twentyfour hours consists of thirty Muhūrtas and thirty days make a month.

10. Twelve months make a year and this constitutes a period of a day and a night in the heaven. Three hundred and sixty human years make one divine year.

11. Twelve thousand divine years make a set of four Yugas. A thousand sets of four Yugas are considered to be one day of Brahmā.

12. It is called a Kalpa. O excellent brahmins, fourteen Manus reign over that period of time. At the end of that period is the Naimittika Laya (conditional re-absorption) of Brahmā.

13. O leading brahmins, its nature is very terrible. Listen to it even as I narrate. I shall explain the Prākṛta Laya (natural re-absorption) afterwards.

14. At the end of a set of four Yugas when the surface of the Earth is almost worn off there will be a very severe drought extending over a period of a hundred years.

15. Then, O excellent sages, almost all of those earthly

things that are of poor strength are destroyed due to the excessive pressure.

16. Then the imperishable lord Kṛṣṇa assumes the form of Rudra and endeavours to keep the subjects within himself for the purpose of annihilation.

17. Then, O excellent sages, lord Viṣṇu is stationed in the seven rays of the sun and sucks up the water.

18. After drinking up the water present in the elements and living beings, O brahmins, he makes the entire surface of the Earth dried up and withered.

19. He dries up oceans, rivers, mountains and mountain springs. He sucks up the water that is present in the nether worlds too.

20. As every particle of water vanishes there will be seven suns, each of a thousand rays and they become increased in size due to their watery diet.

21. Blazing from beneath and above, O brahmins, those seven suns burn up the three worlds along with the nether worlds.

22. On being burnt by those blazing suns, the three worlds, along with the extensive area of mountains, trees and oceans, become devoid of viscosity.

23. Then the entire area of the three worlds, O brahmins, has all the trees and watery parts dried up. The Earth attains the shape of the back of a tortoise.

24. Thereafter lord Hara, the annihilator of all created beings, terrible like black fire, burns the nether worlds from below by means of the hot breath of the serpent Sesha.

25-26. After burning the nether worlds that huge fire reaches the Earth. It burns the entire surface of the Earth. Then the terrible fire burns the Bhuvah world and the Svarga world. With the clusters of flames whirling and curling the fire revolves there itself.

27-28. At that time the entire area of the three worlds appears like a frying pan. It is surrounded by whirling clusters of flames. At that time, O brahmins, the residents of the two worlds lose their strength. They are enveloped by the scorching heat. When their abodes are taken away (i.e. consumed by fire), they go to the Maharloka.

29. From there also people proceed ahead to Janaloka on being scorched by the great sunshine ten times more powerful. They are desirous of a supreme abode.

30. After burning the entire universe, O excellent sages, the lord in the guise of Rudra, produces clouds by means of breath expelled from his mouth.

31. Thereafter, rise up in the sky the Samvartaka clouds that are terribly destructive. They are as huge as big herds of elephants. They contain fierce lightning streaks and they rumble.

32. Some of these clouds are like a collyrium mountain; some are like the elephant Kumuda. Some are smoky in colour. Some are yellow.

33. Some are turmeric; some resemble the exudation of lac juice; some appear like lapis lazuli; and some are like sapphire.

34. Some resemble a conch shell and others the turner's lathe; some are like Jāti flower (white jasmine) and some are like Kunda. Some are scarlet coloured like the tiny insect Indragopa (glow-worm) and some are like Manahśita (?)

35. Some of the terrible clouds rise up like the petals of a lotus; some have the shape of an excellent city; some are like big mountains.

36. Others resemble the apartments on the tops of houses; some are like the dry tracts of ground. They are huge in body and loud in their sound; they cover the sky completely.

37. Making heavy downpours, O brahmins, they subdue the extremely terrible fire that has spread over the entire area of the three worlds.

38. Even after the fire has been extinguished, O excellent sages, those clouds shower down water for more than a hundred years flooding the entire Universe.

39. After flooding the entire Earth by means of heavy downpours with the torrents, O brahmins, they flood the Bhūvarloka and the heaven above.

40. With the whole universe enveloped in darkness, with all beings mobile and immobile destroyed, those great clouds shower for more than a hundred years.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYFIVE

The natural re-absorption

Vyāsa said :

1. O excellent brahmins, when the water encroaches upon the abode of seven sages (Great Bear) the entire area of the three worlds becomes a vast sheet of water.

2. Then, O brahmins, the wind arising out of the expiration of Viṣṇu destroys those clouds in the course of hundred years and more.

3-4. Lord Hari, identical with all living beings, the creator of all living beings, the lord without beginning, the primordial cause of the universe who cannot even be contemplated upon, drinks up the whole of the wind. The lord then assumes the form of Brahman, Hari the cause of (everything) lies on the bed of the body of Śeṣa in that vast sheet of water.

5. He is (then) eulogised by Sanaka and other Siddhas abiding in the Janaloka. He is meditated upon by the aspirants of liberation abiding in Brahma-loka.

6. He then employs the divine Yoganidrā (yogic slumber) consisting of Māyā of the Ātman (soul). He is the Supreme lord pondering over himself with the appellation of Vāsudeva.

7. O excellent brahmins, this is called the Naimittika (conditional) Pratisaṅcara (re-absorption). The Nimitta or condition there is the fact that Hari lies down there after assuming the form of Brahmā.

8. When Sarvātman (the soul of all) is awake, the universe is active. When Acyuta lies down on the bed of Māyā (Illusion) this visible universe vanishes.

9. A thousand sets of four Yugas constitute a day of the lotus-born Brahmā. When the whole universe becomes a vast sheet of water, a period of as much duration is said to be his night.

10. Waking up at the close of the night, Brahmā continues the work of creation. As mentioned to you before, it is Viṣṇu who assumes this form of Brahmā and continues the work of creation. ~

11. This is annihilation at the end of a Kalpa (or) Intervening annihilation, brahmins. The Naimittika (conditional) annihilation has been described to you. Listen to the other one, the Prākṛta (natural) annihilation.

12-14. O brahmins, a series of annihilations is achieved by means of fire, absence of rain etc. in upper and lower regions. The created ones, Mahat etc. are particularly dissolved. When the process of reabsorption is thus brought about by Kṛṣṇa's will, the waters at the outset, grasp and destroy smell and other characteristic features of the Earth element. The Earth thus deprived of its smell is then ready for its reabsorption.

15-16. When the Gandhatanmātra (the subtle primary element of smell) is destroyed the Earth dissolves into the Water. The waters fill everything. They move about everywhere with great velocity and loud report. The Lokāloka (? the mountain of that name) is surrounded by water alone, the water with surging waves.

17. The (special) quality of the waters (i.e. taste) is drunk (consumed and destroyed) by the Fire element. When the Rasatanmātra (the subtle primary element of taste) is destroyed, the heated waters perish.

18-19. Then the waters with their taste element dead and destroyed attain the state of fiery element. When the water element has attained the state of fiery element and is enveloped by the fiery element all round, that fire spreads everywhere and takes up the water. Then the fire gradually fills the entire universe.

20. It spreads everywhere, at the sides, above and below along with its rays. The fire-element has its great quality, rūpa (colour), that causes lustre, that is destroyed by Vāyu.

21-23. When the fire element is dissolved, when everything has assumed the form of the wind element, then the rūpatanmātra (the subtle primary element of colour) is destroyed. The fiery element, bereft of its colour subsides and the great wind element begins to blow. When splendour is dissolved in the wind element and the whole world is deprived of light since it has been dissolved in the wind, the wind begins to blow in the ten directions, upwards and sideways.

24-26. Then Ether consumes and destroys the quality of touch, the quality of the wind element. Then the wind-element subsides. The Ether remains uncovered. It is devoid of colour, taste, touch and smell. It has no tangible form. It fills everything. Characterised by the quality of sound it stands enveloping everything.

27-28. Then the Supreme spirit of Ahamkāra (Ego) consumes and destroys its quality of sound. The elements and the Indriyas (sense organs) get simultaneously merged in Bhūtādi. This Bhūtādi (Ego) is of the nature of Abhimāna (referring all objects to self). It is Tāmasa (constituted of darkness). The Great Principle, the Cosmic Intellect consumes and destroys Bhūtādi.

29-30. The earth element and the Great Principle are at the extremities of the universe within and without. Thus there are seven Prakṛtis (causes) beginning with the supreme principle, the Cosmic Intellect. All of them get merged among themselves in the reverse order. Similarly this cosmic egg gets merged in water by which it has been enveloped.

31. (The cosmic egg) consisting of seven worlds along with the mountains, the seven continents and oceans is enveloped by water and it is drunk (i.e. destroyed) by the fiery element.

32-34. The Jyoti or fiery layer merges into the gaseous layer; the gaseous layer merges into the Ether; the Bhūtādi or Ego consumes the Ether and the Great Principle or Cosmic Intellect consumes it. O brahmins, the Prakṛti (Nature) consumes the Cosmic Intellect accompanied by all these. O excellent brahmins, that entity wherein there is the equilibrium of all the attributes (guṇas), none of them being enlarged or rendered deficient is called Prakṛti (Nature), Hetu (cause), Pra-dhāna (the Chief) and Param Kāraṇam (greatest cause). This is the Prakṛti, the whole of which is of the nature of (partly) manifest and (partly) unmanifest.

35-36. The form that is manifest merges, O brahmins, into the unmanifest. That imperishable one is pure and single, eternal and omnipresent. And that is the part, O excellent brahmins, of the supreme soul identical with living beings. It is here that the conceptions of names, classes etc. perish.

37. It is worth knowing. It is of the pure form of existence. It is of the nature of knowledge. It is greater than (the embodied) soul. It is Brahman. It is the greatest abode. It is the greatest soul. It is the greatest lord.

38-39. That Viṣṇu is identical with this (visible world), from whom no one returns. Prakṛti has already been mentioned by me as one of manifest and unmanifest forms. Prakṛti and Puruṣa (i.e. Individual Soul) merge into the supreme Ātman; and the supreme Ātman is the support of all. He is the great Lord.

40-42. He is sung about in the Vedas and the Vedāntas by the name of Viṣṇu.

The Vedic rites are twofold : 1 the Pravṛtta (the active), 2 the Nivṛtta (the refraining one). By means of both of these the lord is worshipped in the form of sacrifice. This lord of sacrifices, the best among Puruṣas, is worshiped by persons by means of (active paths) in Rk, Yajus and Sāman.

The lord, with (knowledge) as his soul and form, is worshipped by means of Jñānayoga as well as Nivṛtti Mārgas. Viṣṇu who is worshipped thus bestows the fruit of liberation.

43-45. Whatever thing exists and is mentioned by short, long and prolated vowels, and what is beyond the pale of words—all these are identical with Viṣṇu the unchanging. He is both manifest and unmanifest. He is the unchanging Puruṣa. He is the supreme Ātman. He is the universal soul. He is Hari who assumes the universal form.

Prakṛti which is of manifest and unmanifest forms merges into him.

46-49. Puruṣa, O brahmins, merges into the undistorted soul.

O brahmins, the time unit in the form of two parārdhas has been mentioned by me. O great brahmins, it is the day time of Viṣṇu the lord.

When Prakṛti merges into the manifest and when Prakṛti and Puruṣa remain firm therein—it is his night of an equal duration.

Really there is neither day nor night in regard to the eternal supreme soul. It is only figuratively mentioned thus in regard to that lord.

Thus O great sages, the Prākṛta Laya (re-absorption) has been mentioned to you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYSIX

The Ultimate Re-absorption

Vyāsa said:

1. After understanding the three types of suffering, O brahmins, beginning with the Ādhyātmika (i.e. the organic), a learned man realises perfect knowledge and has Vairāgya (detachment). He then attains the ultimate re-absorption.

2. The organic (suffering) is of two types, viz. the physical and the mental. The physical suffering is of various types. Let it be heard.

3-4. The physical suffering and ailment is of various types such as headache, cold, fever, fistula, enlargement of the spleen, piles, intumescence, asthma, nausea, ailment of the eyes, diarrhoea, leprosy, ailment of the limbs and many others. It behoves you to listen to the mental (suffering).

5-6. The suffering arising from love, anger, fear, hatred, greed, delusion and despondency, the attack of misery, jealousy, insult, envious impatience and spiteful malice—these are mental sufferings. O excellent brahmins, the mental suffering too is of various kinds. O excellent sages, they are different in these ways.

7. The Ādhibhautika (extraneous and material) suffering occurs to men from animals, birds, men, evil spirits, serpents, ogres, reptiles and other beings.

8. O excellent brahmins, the suffering arising from coldness, heat, winds, rains, water, lightning etc. is called Ādhidaivika.

9. O excellent sages, misery is of thousands of varieties arising from birth in the womb, old age, ignorance, death and (falling into) hell.

10. The creature in the womb is enveloped by faeces in plenty. Its back, neck and clusters of bones are broken.

11. It is excessively tormented by the scorching foodstuffs of its mother, of extremely pungent, sour, hot, bitter and saline taste. It suffers excessive pain.

12. It is unable to stretch or bend its limbs. It lies in the slough of faeces and urine. It is afflicted everywhere.

13. It gets suffocated. It is conscious. It remembers hundreds of births it has had. It stays in the womb in great misery as a result of its own actions.

14-15. At the time of delivery the child in the womb whose face is defiled by faeces, blood, urine and semen is excessively tormented by the wind Prājāpatya. His bones and joints are crushed. He is made to face down the powerful organic winds at the time of delivery. The child that is harassed thus manages to come out with difficulty from the womb of the mother.

16. On being touched by the external wind he attains an extremely senseless state. On being born, O excellent sages, he attains the loss of special knowledge (of the previous births).

17. His limbs are afflicted as it were by thorns. He is pierced and split as it were by saws. He is just like a worm that has fallen on the ground from a pus-discharging foul ulcer.

18. He is unable even to scratch himself. He is unable to turn on his sides. It is at the desire of others that he gets his food such as the milk from the mother's breasts.

19. He is dirty. While he sleeps on his bed he is bitten by flies and worms, still he is unable to remove them.

20. (Thus) the miseries at the time of birth are many. Similarly those Ādhibhautika (extraneous and material) miseries too that he undergoes after his birth in the course of his childhood, are many.

21. As a man he is enveloped by the darkness of ignorance. His mind is deluded. He does not know: "Where have I come from ?" "Who am I ?" "Where will I go ?" "Of what nature am I ?"

22. "By what bonds am I fettered ?" "What is its cause ?" "Is it without any cause ?" "What should be done ?" "What

should not be done ?" "What should be spoken ?" "What should not be spoken ?"

23. "What is good ?" "What is evil ?" "In what does it consist and how ?" "What is our duty ?" "What is it that we should refrain from ?" "What is it that is meritorious ?" "What is it that is faulty ?"

24. Thus foolish men who like animals are given to sex and eating suffer great pain resulting from ignorance.

25. Ignorance is a Tāmasika trait. In the case of ignorant persons, although there is a predilection for the commencement of what should be done, yet there is the omission of duty, O brahmins.

26. Sages say that the result of omission of duty is (falling into) hell. Hence ignorant people experience excessive misery both here and hereafter.

27. Then, during old age man undergoes many miseries as follows : His body is shattered by old age. His limbs are enfeebled and flaccid. His teeth are broken and loose. He is covered by wrinkles and protruding sinews and neves and veins.

28. His eyes are incapable of seeing far off. His pupils are fixed to the sky. Clusters of hair come out of his nostrils. The whole of his body shakes and shivers.

29. His bones are laid bare. The bones at his back are bent. Since his gastric fire does not function, he takes but little food. He is capable of only a few movements.

30. He experiences difficulties in rising up, in moving about, in lying down, in sitting and in his movements. His eyes and ears become less keen. Saliva exudes from his mouth and defiles his face.

31. With his sense organs intractable he looks up to his early death. He is not capable of remembering anything experienced at the very same moment.

32. In uttering a sentence even once he has to put in great effort. He spends sleepless nights due to the strain of ailments such as asthma, bronchitis (cough) etc.

33. The old man has to be lifted up or laid to rest with the help of another man. He is disdained and insulted by his servants, sons and wife.

34. He is slack in maintaining cleanliness. He continues to have a great zeal in eating and sporting to the great derisive merriment of even servants. All his relatives are disgusted with him.

35. Remembering the activities of his own youth as though they were experienced in another birth he is all the more distressed. He then heaves deep sighs.

36. These and similar ones are the miseries he experiences in the old age. Now listen to those miseries which he experiences at the time of death.

37. His neck, legs and hands become loose. He is overwhelmed by (physical) trembling. Again and again he becomes despondent. Again and again he gains the support of his knowledge.

38. He is distressed due to his excessive fondness for gold, grain, sons, wife, servants, house etc. He becomes worried with the thought "What will befall to these ?"

39. His bones and joints are torn and shorn as it were by great and terrible ailments like the saws that appear to be the arrows of the god of death. They pierce the vulnerable spots of his body.

40. The puplis of his eyes roll. He begins to beat and kick with his hands and feet. His palate, lips and throat become parched and he begins to snort and grumble.

41. The organic Udāna wind afflicts him by choking his throat. An excessive heat spreads over him. He becomes distressed due to thirst and hunger.

42. It is with great distress that the soul leaves the body. He is then afflicted by the servants of Yama. Thereafter with great distress and pain he adopts a Yātanādeha (the body for suffering the torture).

43. These and other similar ones are the miseries of men at the time of death. Now listen to those miseries which are experienced in hell by the persons who die.

44. The dead undergoes tortures in various ways. The servants of Yama catch him by means of noose etc. They strike him with sticks. The very sight of Yama is terrible. It is terrible to behold even the path (leading to Yama's place).

45. O exellecnt brahmins, the tortures in different hells are different. They are terrible and the means employed are mud, sand, fire, mechanical devices, weapons etc.

46-49. The tortures of men in hell are as follows: They are tormented by saws. They are flown in the crucible. They are split by daggers. They are buried under the ground. They are impaled on pikes. They are cast into the jaws of a tiger. They are devoured by vultures and eaten by panthers. They are boiled in oil. They are drenched in slushy corrosive acid. They are cast down from a great height. They are thrown obliquely by mechanical discharging devices. The tortures experienced by sinners in hell are numerous, O brahmins.

50. It is not in hell alone, O excellent brahmins, that there is range of miseries. Even in heaven one has no peace of mind because one is afraid of a fall therefrom due to the decrease of meritorious deeds.

51. Again he becomes a foetus in the womb. The man is born again. Again he gets merged into the womb on being born. He then perishes.

52-53. Sometimes the child is still-born, sometimes the child dies (later) in childhood (or) in youth.

Whatever is pleasing to men, O brahmins, that alone becomes the seed of the tree of misery.

The pleasure brought about by wives, sons, friends etc., house, fields, wealth etc. is not so much as the unhappiness that they bring unto men.

54-57. Thus, men are mentally distressed by the fiery heat of the sun of worldly miseries. Excepting the shade of the tree of liberation where else can those men get happiness ? The mass of misery is thus threefold and they afflict one in the womb, during conception, birth, old age etc. Learned men consider the ultimate attainment of the lord alone as the cure for these ills. This attainment of the lord is characterised by the feeling of happiness. There is no other source of delight higher than this.

Hence effort to attain it should be made by learned men.

58. O excellent brahmins, the means of attaining the same is said to be knowledge as well as holy rites. Knowledge is mentioned as twofold : 1) arising from scriptural texts and 2) arising from discrimination.

59-61. The Śabda Brahman (Brahman exemplified in words) is that arising from scriptural text. The Para Brahman (supreme Brahman) is that arising from discrimination.

Ignorance is like the pitch darkness. Knowledge arising from sense organs is like a lamp. Knowledge arising from discrimination, O brahmins, is like the sun.

O excellent sages, what Manu too has said after remembering the meaning of the Vedic Texts, let that be heard even as I say in this context.

"Two Brahmans are to be comprehended i.e. Śabda Brahman and Para Brahman.

62. One who is well-conversant with the Śabda Brahman attains the Para Brahman. The Atharva Veda says: "Two types of learning are to be understood".

63-64. The attainment of the Akṣara (Imperishable) is by means of Parā Vidyā (the superior knowledge). The Aparā Vidyā (the subsidiary type of learning) is the mastery of Ṛgveda etc.

Know ye all that omnipresent eternal material cause of all beings, which is unmanifest, which has no old age, which is difficult to ponder over, which is unborn, which is devoid of change, which cannot be pointed out, which has no form, which does not possess hands, legs etc. and which has no other cause.

65. Everything worthy of being pervaded is pervaded by it and poets see it. That is Brahman. That is the greatest abode. That should be meditated upon by those who desire liberation.

66-68. It is mentioned in the statements of the Vedas. It is subtle. It is the greatest region of Viṣṇu. He is called Bhagavān (Lord), who knows the origin and dissolution of living beings, the advent and departure of living beings as well as the Vidyā (Learning) and Avidyā (Ignorance).

The following are denoted by the word Bhagavān: knowledge, power, potentiality, ability to rule, vigour and all types of splendour except those qualities etc. that are to be despised and discarded.

All the living beings reside in the supreme soul.

69-70. Hence Vāsudeva is named Sarvātman, the soul of all. Prajāpati (Brahmā) mentioned this formerly. to the sages

when he was asked to comment upon the names of Vāsudeva, the endless, truthfully. Since the lord abides in the living beings and the living beings abide in him, he, Vāsudeva, is the creator and dispenser of the worlds. He is the supreme lord.

71. He is Saguṇa (having attributes) and transcends all beings, Prakṛti, Guṇas and Doṣas (merits and demerits). Since the entire inside of the universe is enveloped by him, he is Akhilātman (soul of all). He transcends all other coverings.

72. He is possessed of all splendid qualities. With a small portion of his power he maintains the creation of all living beings. Voluntarily he assumes a large physical body of his choice. He accomplishes everything that is conducive to the welfare of the world.

73. He is the sole receptacle of his power, vigour and other qualities. He is greater than the greatest. There is no great obstacle unto his splendour, power and ability to rule. In the great lord than whom there is no greater lord there are no pains etc.'

74. He is the lord named Parameśvara. He has both the individual and cosmic collective forms. His form is both manifest and unmanifest. He is the lord of all. He is the eye of all. He knows everything. He has all powers.

75. That whereby this pure, supreme single form (that is free from impurity and devoid of all defects) is comprehended, perceived or attained is Jñāna (knowledge). That which is other than this is Ajñāna (ignorance).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYSEVEN

Practice of Yoga

The sages said :

1. Now tell us the Yoga which is an antidote for the contact with miseries. On understanding it we shall come in unison with the unchanging Puruṣottama.

Sūta said :

2. On hearing their words, the highly delighted Kṛṣṇa-Dvaipāyana, the Yогin, the most excellent among those who understand Yoga, said thus:

Vyāsa said :

3. O brahmins, listen. I shall recount Yoga that destroys worldly existence. By practising it, a Yогin shall attain liberation which is extremely difficult of access.

4-5. At the outset the devotee shall propitiate the preceptor devoutly and listen to the Yogic scriptural texts. He must then efficiently master Itihāsa, Purāna and Vedas. The intelligent one shall fully understand the diet (of a Yогin), the pitfalls during the practice of Yoga, and the proper time and place for the same. He shall be free from the mutually opposed pairs. He shall desist from hoarding possessions and then practise Yoga.

6-9. The following diet is conducive to the steady practice of Yoga : flour of fried grains, rice gruel, butter milk, roots, fruits, milk, barley food, ears of corn and oil cakes.

One shall never practise Yoga when the mind is unhappy, when one is (excited) weary or hungry, when the mutually conflicting pairs are present, when it is very chilly, when it is too hot, when there is too much of wind.

One shall not practise Yoga in a place which is too noisy, too close to water or too near fire. One shall not practise it in a dilapidated cowpen, in a cross-road, in a place infested by reptiles, in a cremation ground, nor on the banks of a river. Yoga shall not be practised in a monastery, in an anthill, in a dangerous place or near a well. One should not practise it on a heap of dry leaves.

10. If out of foolishness, anyone were to practise Yoga without taking into consideration these restrictions as to places, certain defects are produced and they cause obstacles. I shall describe them.

11. Deafness, sluggishness, loss of memory, dumbness, blindness and fever are produced immediately. Similarly ignorance is caused.

12. Hence (arrangement for) safety should always be made by every means by a person conversant with Yoga, since the physical body is the means of achievement of virtue, wealth, love and liberation.

13-20. Places for the practice of Yoga shall be as follows : a lonely hermitage, a secret (one with privacy) place, a place free from noise, fear and (unnecessary) movements, a clean vacant house and a beautiful secluded temple.

The time for practice of Yoga shall be as follows : the first or last Yāma (a period of three hours) of the night or in the forenoon or at midday.

A devotee shall keep his mind pure and well-concentrated. His diet shall be proper. He shall control his sense-organs.

He shall be seated facing east on a beautiful seat that is comfortable and steady. It shall be neither too raised up nor too much depressed.

The devotee shall be pure, truthful in speech and devoid of desire. He shall observe moderate periods of sleep. He shall subdue anger. He shall be engaged in what is conducive to the welfare of living beings. He shall put up with the inconvenience of suffering the mutually opposed pairs (i.e. excessive heat and chill etc.). He shall be self-possessed. He shall keep his body, legs and head in a steady posture.

He shall place both the hands on the navel. He shall be calm. He shall be seated in the lotus posture. The eyes should be fixed on the tip of the nose. He shall control his vital airs and, speech. All the sense organs with the mind shall be withdrawn into the heart. Otherwise silent, he shall utter the Praṇava (Omkāra), continuously with the mouth well-covered. He shall be steady.

He shall subdue the activities of Tamas by means of Rajas and those of Rajas by means of Sattva. He shall maintain a pure and quiet posture with the eyes closed. (Thus) the Yogin shall always be in unison with Puruṣottama who is the bestower of salvation, who dwells in the cavity of his lotus-like heart, who is omnipresent and who is unsullied.

21. At the outset he shall fix the sense organs, the organs of action and the elements in his soul. He should unite his soul

with the supreme soul. It is then that the devotee performs Yoga.

22. The supreme region is characterized by the hundredth part of the tip of a hair (i.e. it is very subtle). The Yogins who are devoted to meditation see it by the lamp of their mind. The devotee conversant with Yoga is capable of withdrawing the sense organs like a turtle that withdraws its limbs.

23. If the mind of a person is able to find its ultimate end in the supreme soul after abandoning all sensuous objects, his success in Yoga is assured.

24. When the mind is free from sensuous objects as the Yогin is in communion with the supreme Brahman in the course of his ecstatic experience and the mind gets dissolved in the supreme Brahman, he attains the highest place.

25. When the mind of the Yогin is disengaged from every sort of activity after attaining the highest bliss, he attains salvation.

26. By the power of Yoga the Yогin attains the pure Purusottama who is termed the "fourth" and who transcends the three states (viz. wakeful, dreaming and slumbering). There is no doubt in this that he is liberated.

27. A Yогin who is free from desires for any object of lust, who is pleasing to look at in any posture whatsoever (or who sees pleasant things everywhere), and who is aware of transience of everything, shall be liberated and not otherwise.

28. He who is conversant with Yoga shall not indulge in the objects of sense. He shall undoubtedly be liberated by absence of attachment and regular practice of Yoga.

29. Yoga is not achieved merely by resorting to the Lotus posture, nor by concentrating on the tip of the nose. The unison of the mind and the sense organs with the soul is called Yoga.

30. Thus, O excellent sages, the Yoga that bestows liberation, that is the cause of release from worldly bondage, has been recounted by me. What else do you wish to hear?

Lomaharsana said :

31. On hearing his words they said: "Well done, Well done". After praising and honouring Vyasa they began to ask him once again.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYEIGHT

Review of Sāmkhya and Yoga

The sages said :

1. O sage, O excellent brahmin, no satiety is observed by us in imbibing the verbal nectar coming out of the ocean of your mouth.

2. Hence, O sage, describe in detail the Yoga that bestows salvation. O most excellent one among the bipeds, we wish to hear about Sāmkhya too.

3. O brahmin, how does an intelligent brahmin, well versed in the Vedas, one who is the performer of sacrifices, an intelligent devotee devoid of jealousy, one whose mind dwells on truth and virtue, attain Brahman?

4. Does he attain it by performing austerities, or by living a celibate life, or by renouncing everything, or by means of his intellect, or by resorting to thought propounded by Sāmkhya or Yoga? On being asked this, please tell us.

5. By what means does a man attain concentration of mind and control over senses? It behoves you to explain this.

Vyāsa said :

6. No one achieves (spiritual attainment) without knowledge and austerity, without subduing the sense organs or without renouncing everything.

7. All the major elements are the earlier creation of the self-born lord. They are fixed into the bodies of all living beings.

8. The physical body is from the Earth element. The viscosity is due to the Water element. The eyes are from the Fiery element. The Air element is the support of Prāṇa and Apāna (i.e. the organic gases). The Ether element is the inner cavity of the embodied beings such as the bowels etc.

9. The deities presiding over the various parts of the body are: Viṣṇu at the time of departure, Indra over the physical strength, the Fire-god in the bowels, the interstices of quarters over the ears, Sarasvati, goddess of speech, over the ears and the tongue.

10-11. Ears, skin, eyes, tongue, nose together with the five organs of action are the ten indriyas. They are the means of getting food and apprehending sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. One shall always know these sense-objects as separate from the sense-organs.

12. The mind is in unison with the sense organs just as the non-poisonous snake is in conjunction with (animals) beyond its control. The individual soul stationed in the heart is always in unison with the mind.

13. The mind is competent to rule over the sense organs. The individual soul is competent to control and discharge the mind.

14. The following are eternally present in the physical bodies of the embodied beings : sense-organs, objects of senses, intrinsic nature, consciousness, mind, vital airs namely Prāṇa and Apāṇa and Jīva (the individual soul).

15. (?) There is no support unto the Sattva; what is termed by the word Guṇa is not the conscious ones. The splendour creates Sattva and by no means the Guṇas.

16. Thus the physical body consists of seventeen entities and it is enveloped by sixteen qualities. O brahmins, the wise sage sees by means of his mind the soul within the soul.

17. It cannot be perceived by the eye nor by the sense-organs. It is by means of the illuminated mind that the higher soul is revealed.

18. The Ātman is devoid of sound, touch, and colour; it is free from taste and smell; it has neither body nor the sense-organs. One shall see it in one's own body.

19. He who sees that which is unmanifest in all the physical bodies and that which is excessively honoured among mortals is capable of becoming Brahman after his demise.

20. Wise sages view the Ātman equally in a Brahmin richly endowed with learning and humility, in cow, in elephant, dog or in an outcaste.

21. The single soul abides in all living beings, mobile and immobile. The visible worlds are pervaded by it.

22. When one sees the soul in all living beings and all living beings in the soul, the individual soul becomes identical with Brahman.

23. The soul is in the supreme soul to the extent to which the soul sees and understands in the soul. He who knows this is capable of immortality.

24. The soul has no region. Even Devas seeking the region of the soul that is the inner soul of all living beings and is devoted to the welfare of all living beings, become deluded on the way.

25. Just as the movement of birds in the sky or that of the fishes in the water is imperceptible, so also the movement of those who have achieved knowledge.

26. Kāla (Time, God of Death) cooks all living beings in the soul by means of the soul. But nobody knows that wherein Kāla itself is cooked.

27. It is neither above, nor at the sides, neither below, nor in front, nor in the middle. No one seizes it.

28-29. The worlds are stationed in it. There is nothing extraneous to these. Even if one has the speed of the wind and one goes forth ahead like an arrow discharged from the bow-string one shall never reach the end of the ultimate cause.

There is nothing that is subtler than it; there is nothing that is grosser than it.

30. It has hands and feet all around; it has eyes, head and face all around; it has ears all around; it stands up enveloping everything in the world.

31. It is minuter than the minutest atom; it is greater than all great things; though it abides steadfastly within all living beings yet it is not perceived.

32. There are two states of the Ātman, viz. the imperishable and the perishable. The perishable one is in all living beings; the imperishable is divine and immortal.

33. The Hamsa (swan, here the soul) builds for itself a city with nine gates (i.e. the body with nine doors, viz. eyes etc.). He controls it invariably. He is like this in regard to all living beings, whether mobile or immobile.

34. Super-seers say that the swan-like property of the unborn soul comes from the fact that it discards doubtful alternatives and gathers bodies (?)

35. What is termed by the word Hamsa is perishable individual. What is Imperishable is the unchangeable one. He

who knows this attains the Imperishable and discards vital airs and with that his very birth.

Vyāsa said :

36. You had asked me, O brahmins, and so Sāṃkhya which is combined with perfect knowledge has been duly and truthfully recounted by me.

37-39. Henceforth, O brahmins, I shall recount Yoga. The unity of intellect and mind as well as of all the sense-organs (should be understood). This knowledge is the highest one. It is the knowledge of the all-pervading soul.

It should be understood after eradicating the defects of Yoga, which (seers) know to be five in number. It can be understood (only) by one who is tranquil, one who has controlled his senses, one who practises spiritual exercises, one who takes delight in the soul, one who is enlightened and one whose activities are pure.

40-43. The five defects are : lust, anger, greed, fear, and slumber.

One conquers anger by practising mental tranquillity, and lust by avoiding lustful thoughts.

A self-possessed man is fit to eradicate slumber by resorting to Sattva (activities).

By the practice of mental fortitude one shall guard oneself against sexual lust and gluttony.

One shall guard hands and feet by means of the eye.

One shall guard eyes and ears by means of the mind.

One shall guard one's mind and speech by means of good activity.

One shall eschew fear by means of vigilance and attention.

One shall eradicate arrogance by resorting to intelligent men.

One shall be watchfully alert and conquer these defects of Yoga.

He shall bow down to the sacred fires, Brahmins and deities.

44-46. One shall avoid arrogant speech coupled with violence. One shall speak words pleasing and favourable to the mind. He who has splendour consisting of brahmanical brilliance perceives the entire universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings. He has become identical with the living beings.

By means of the following one's splendour increases and sin decreases : meditation, self-study of the Vedas, charitable gifts, truthfulness, shyness, straightforwardness, forgiveness, cleanliness, purity of the soul, and the control of senses.

47-48. The devotee practising Yoga shall be impartial to all living beings. He shall sustain himself with things available; he shall shed his sins; he shall conquer the sense-organs; he shall take limited diet. He shall then become brilliant. After subduing lust and anger he shall resort to the region of Brahman. He shall maintain purity of the body and mind. He shall concentrate his sense-organs and the mind. Early in the night as well as early in the morning he shall fix the mind in the soul.

49-51. A creature has five sense organs. Even if one of them is moistened, his intellect begins to flow out like water from the foot of a mountain.

Just as the killer of fishes takes turtles, so he shall take the essence of the mind at the outset. The devotee who is conversant with Yoga shall then control ear, eye, tongue and nose. Thereafter if he controls them and fixes them in the mind he shall discharge all conceptions (mental fancies) and retain the mind in the soul.

52-54. If and when he fixes the five sense organs in the mind and the heart, when these sense-organs with the mind as the sixth abide in the Ātman and are pleased in that situation—he attains the Brahman then. They see Ātman in the Ātman. It is like the flame that shines free from smoke; it is like the brilliant sun; it is like the fire of lightning in the sky.

55-56. Everything is seen there. Since it is all-pervading it is seen everywhere. Noble-souled brahmins, who are wise, who are bold, who have great intelligence and who are engaged in the welfare of all living beings see it.

The devotee shall practise thus for a limited period. Keen in the practice of the holy rites he shall seat himself in a secluded spot and attain similarity with the Imperishable one.

57-59. (Defective) There are some pitfalls in the achievement of Yogic power. The devotee shall avoid them. They are delusion, error, deliberation; miraculous results in regard to smelling hearing, seeing and touching; ability to bear chilliness and

heat, gaseous shape; presence of mind and obstacles (?) By Yogic practice he should control all these. The devotee who understands reality shall ignore them. By means of his equanimity he shall cause them to recede. The devotee like a sage practising silence, shall practice Yoga with perfect mental purity in all the three worlds.

60-64. He shall practise on the top of a mountain, in a monastery or under a tree.

Just as a merchant who is worried over his articles of trade puts them into a safe, so the aspirant after Yoga shall restrain his sense-organs and concentrate his mind. His mind shall never get fed up with the Yogic practice.

He shall adopt means whereby the unsteady mind can be put under control. He shall never swerve therefrom. He shall steadily resort to the Yogic practice. He shall take up vacant rooms for residence and maintain concentration. Neither mentally nor verbally nor physically should he proceed out of bounds. He shall be indifferent to everything worldly. He shall maintain restrictions on his diet. He shall be impartial to everything whether obtained or not obtained.

Whether anyone congratulates him and wishes him or not he shall be impartial to them. He shall not wish for either welfare or disaster.

65. He shall not be too delighted for a gain nor be worried for a loss. He shall be impartial to all living beings. He shall thus be one having properties similar to those of the wind.

66. Within six months, Brahman approaches that devotee whose soul has become healthy and normal, who views everything impartially, who has become virtuous and perfect and who is perpetually engaged in Yogic practice.

67. (Thus) the Yогin is in a position to view a clod of earth, a piece of rock and an ingot of gold impartially. On seeing others distressed due to pain he shall not be deluded nor shall he swerve from his path.

68. Even a man of very low caste or a woman desirous of virtue shall attain the supreme goal through this path.

69. On seeing this unborn, ancient, unageing, eternal

(Lord) who is imperceptible and who is beyond the ken of sense organs, O Brahmins, intelligent men attain equality with Brahman, a goal from which there is no return.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTYNINE

Review of Sāṃkhya and Yoga

The sages said :

1. Should the Vedic injunction be “Perform rites and renounce them”? Whither do they go by means of Vidyā (learning), and what do they attain by means of holy rites ?
2. We wish to hear this. Your Holiness may be pleased to explain it to us. There is a mutual inconsistency in this (injunction) because both are opposed to each other.

Vyāsa said :

3. Listen, O leading sages, I shall briefly explain the Kṣara (perishable) and Aksara (imperishable) in the form of holy rites and (knowledge) about which you have asked me.
4. Listen now, O brahmins, to the quarter whither they go by means of learning and what they attain by means of holy rites. The reply to this (question) is intricate and complex.
5. It is but proper to say that Dharma (virtue) exists. In the same context if anyone were to say that it does not exist, then this shall be tantamount to saying that this resembles a Yakṣa and that there is no Yakṣa.
6. There are the two paths wherein the Vedas are well-founded. Dharma is characterised by Pravṛtti (Activity, taking active part in worldly life). The other alternative is Nivṛtti (cessation of active participation).
7. A creature is bound by activity. He is liberated by means of Vidyā. Hence ascetics, the wise ones, do not engage themselves in activity.
8. On account of activity (i.e. by performing various rites) one is reborn after death into an embodied form consist-

ing of sixteen constituents, i.e. sense-organs etc. On account of learning one is transformed into the eternal unmanifest Brahman, the Akṣara or Imperishable one.

9. Those possessed of inferior intellect praise Karman (performance of holy rites). Thereby they attain a series of bodies to indulge themselves in. They then perform worship.

10. Those who have acquired the highest intellect, those who perceive the efficiency of Dharma do not praise Karman, like one who drinks the river water and so does not praise the well.

11. One attains happiness and misery, birth and non-birth as a result of Karmans. By learning one attains that after reaching which one never feels sorry.

12. After going there one does not die; after going there one is not reborn, after going there one does not become old; after going there one does not increase.

13. It is the (place) where the supreme Brahman is. It is unmanifest, unmoving and fixed. It is not split and analysed. It has no extension. It is immortal. The devotee who understands the esoteric doctrine the Yoga, (attains it).

14. Those who are impartial to all, those who are friendly to all, those who are engaged in everything conducive to the welfare of all living beings are not affected by mutually opposed pairs nor by mental activities.

15. The Puruṣa possessed of learning is different, Brahmins, from the Puruṣa possessed of Karman. O brahmins, the moon that stands with its full complement of subtle digits is different from the sense of touch it has.

16. This has been mentioned by the sage and it is sung in detail. It cannot be seen or recounted like a piece of thread in a wheel in the sky.

17. The embodied form has the full complement of all digits. It has eleven created things within itself. O brahmins, understand it to be of the nature of Karmans and Guṇas.

18. The splendid ātman that has resorted to the body like the moon in the sky should be known as Kṣetrajña. It is eternal. It has realized Brahman by means of Yoga.

19. Tamas, Rajas and Sattva should be known as the qualities of Jīva (Individual Soul). The Jīva has all the qualities of the supreme soul.

20. They say that consciousness is a quality of the Jīva. It activates the qualities of the Jīva. Thereafter those who allow importance to the physical body say they can create seven worlds.

Vyāsa said :

21. The creatures of Prakṛti are known as (individual soul). They do not comprehend him nor does he know them.

22. The individual soul performs his activities through the sense organs, with the mind as the sixth among them, just as the sober charioteer manages his chariot by means of superb well-controlled horses.

23-24. The sense-objects are greater than the sense-organs; the mind is greater than the sense-objects; the intellect is greater than the mind; the Great principle known as Ātman is greater than intellect; the unmanifest one is greater than all these. The Immortal one is greater than the unmanifest. There is nothing greater than the Immortal. That is the climax. That is the supreme goal.

25. Thus the Ātman that is hidden in all living beings is not easily revealed. It is perceived by persons of subtle vision by means of perfect, subtle intellect.

26-27. (Defective) The Yогin shall cause his sense-organs including the mind to dissolve in the inner soul by means of his intellect. He shall not ponder over the sense-objects through (the activities of) the sense-organs. He shall not think much by means of his mind. He shall train it by means of Vidyā and make it perfect in meditation. He shall attain tranquility of the soul. He shall not have anyone else to rule over him. He shall go to the supreme region.

28-29. One who slavishly submits to his sense organs, one whose faculty of memory is shaken, becomes a victim of death by yielding himself. But one should subdue all (wishful) thoughts and direct the mind towards Sattva. After stabilising the mind in the Sattva one shall become victorious over death.

30. By means of clearness of his mind the ascetic eschews the auspicious and inauspicious. One whose soul is pleased abides in the Ātman and attains everlasting bliss.

31-32. The clearness of the mind has the following characteristics : It is like happiness during slumber. It is like the lamp that shines unflickeringly in a windless place. Similarly one who practises Yoga early in the night or early in the morning by uniting the Ātman (Individual Soul) with the Ātman (Supreme Soul) sees the Ātman in the Ātman. He shall limit his diet and purify his senses.

33-35. This is the secret of the Vedas : it is unparalleled, it is free from ailments : it convinces one about the existence of the Ātman. This sacred doctrine shall be imparted to one's son. The wealth of all virtuous discourses and truthful narratives has been churned for ten thousand years and this nectar has been taken out.

Just as butter is produced out of the curds or fire is produced from the sacrificial twig, so also this knowledge has been acquired for the salvation of wise scholars.

36-39. This knowledge should be imparted to souls who have concluded their religious student-stage. This should never be mentioned to one who is not tranquil, who has no control over his sense-organs, who does not perform austerities, who has not mastered the Vedas, who is not obedient, who is not straightforward, who is jealous, who does not act according to directions, who is given to argumentation or who is a backbiter.

This secret knowledge should be imparted of one who is praiseworthy, who is tranquil, who is austere and who is obedient. It should by no means be imparted to anyone else.

40. Even if the whole of the earth filled with all jewels were offered against this, a man who knows reality shall consider this (knowledge) better than that.

41-42. The Adhyātma (spiritual) doctrine that is super-human contains greater secrets than the Yogic knowledge. It has been perceived by great sages. It is sung about in the Vedāntas.

O good and noble ones, I shall give unto you what you ask me, whatever is in my mind. Whatever doubt you have in your

heart has been cleared by what has been heard by you all. What else shall I tell you ?

The sages said :

43. Describe once again to us the Adhyātma doctrine in detail, O holy one, the most excellent of all sages, so that we can fully understand it.

Vyāsa said :

44. What is recounted as Adhyātma in regard to a person I shall explain to you all. Let its explanation be understood properly.

45. The great elements are the Earth, Water, Fire (light) Air and Ether. He who is the creator of these elements is within all the living beings.

The sages said :

46-47. The Ether etc. have no shape. No one sees anybody in them. How can one then explain their presence in the physical bodies ? There are certain qualities in the sense-organs. How can one comprehend them ?

Vyāsa said :

I shall explain this precisely in accordance with what is seen (in the scriptures). Listen attentively and comprehend them according to reality.

48. Sound, ear, void space—these there are the traits of Ether. Vital airs, movement and touch are the qualities of Vāyu (Air).

49. Colour, eye and gastric action (digestion)—the fiery element is threefold thus. Taste, tongue, sweet—are the qualities of Water.

50. What is smelt, nose and the physical body—are the qualities of Earth. This is the group of sense organs evolved out of the five elements.

51. The quality of touch belongs to the Wind ; the quality of taste to Water ; the quality of colour to Fiery element ; the quality of sound to Ether and the quality of smell is that of the Earth. —

52. The mind, intellect and intrinsic nature—are born of their origins. They transcend Guṇas ; they are greater than Guṇas.

53. Just as the turtle stretches and withdraws the limbs, so also he who has excellent intellect controls his set of sense-organs.

54. The fact that one sees upwards, sideways as well as below the soles of feet indicates that the excellent intellect abides by this duty alone.

55. The intellect is led by the Guṇas. It is the intellect that leads the sense-organs. Should the intellect be absent whence can there be the Guṇas ?

56. There are five sense-organs in man ; the sixth is mind; the seventh is intellect; the soul is the eighth.

57. The eye perceives; the mind entertains doubt; the intellect determines; the soul is the witness.

58. Rajas, Tamas and Sattva are born of their respective causes. They are common to all beings. They are Guṇas.

59. That which one sees within the soul—something which is pleasant and delightful is Sattva. It is something quiescent and calm.

60. That predilection, which is attended by distress either in the body or in the mind is Rajas. One shall see that Rajas has become active.

61. That predilection which is attended by delusion is Tamas. It is vague, incomprehensible and incapable of being explained.

62. They call the following Sāttvika qualities: Extreme delight, pleasure, bliss, mastery over oneself, and normal restful nature of the mind, with or without reasons thereof.

63. The following are the symptoms of Rajas : conceit, untruthfulness, covetousness, delusion and impatience.

64. Similarly, the following are Tāmasa qualities : Deluded state, blunders, languor, slumber, inability to be awake. (The people under their influence) live somehow. They do not live a full useful life.

65. The external prompting for action is threefold. The mind indulges in fanciful creations of conceptions. The intellect is the factor of energetic determination. The heart dwells only on what is endearing.

66. The objects are indeed greater than the sense-organs; the mind is greater than the objects; the intellect is greater than the mind; and the soul is greater than the intellect.

67. The intellect is indeed the soul; the intellect is the leader of the soul. When the intellect undergoes aberration and change in regard to emotion it becomes the mind.

68. Inasmuch as the sense-organs are separate it is the intellect that undergoes aberration. In the act of hearing it becomes the ear and as the organ that touches it is called the sense of touch.

69. In the act of seeing it shall be the eye and in the act of tasting, the tongue; in the act of smelling the nose; the intellect undergoes changes.

70. They call them the sense-organs. The intellect becomes diffused in those forms. Remaining steady in the state of intellect in a man it is called intellect.

71-72. (?) Sometimes it gets pleasure : sometimes it bewails; sometimes it loses sense. (But really it is) not affected by pleasure and pain. Just as the ocean, lord of the rivers, surges towards the great shore with its billows, so also the intellect that is intrinsically emotional surges towards the three emotions (viz. pleasure, pain and delusion).

73. When the intellect yearns for and seeks something it becomes the mind. One shall see them intellectually as separate in their basis.

74. The sense-organs are based on the intellect. They must be collected entirely (?) in the order in which each is evolved.

75. When the mind is undivided it is the intellect. Emotion exists in the mind. When Rajas begins to function it transcends Sattva also.

76. Those that abide emotionally in all these three, function after the objects like the spokes in regard to the rim.

77. (?)One shall make use of the mind for the purpose of illumination even as the sense-organs are perfected by the intellect (either) moving befittingly or remaining indiffernt.

78. If only one understands this as natural one does not become deluded. He does not bewail and he is delighted. He is always free from hostility.

79. Indeed the soul cannot be perceived by the sense-organs that are subject to lust, that function in diverse ways, that cannot be controlled and that are ignorant and foolish.

80. When one holds their reins firmly by means of the mind and controls them, the soul reveals itself like a figure illuminated by a lamp.

81. When darkness is repelled the living beings are brought to light. This should also be considered in the same manner.

82. Just as an aquatic bird is not affected by the water even as it moves through water, so also the Yогin of liberated soul is not affected by the faults of Guṇas.

83. Similarly one who has realized the soul is not affected by the defects (of worldly existence) even when he continues to live in the world. He does not cling to anything. He is by no means contaminated.

84-85. Since he abandons the Karmans done previously he is not affected by them. One who has love towards the great Ātman, one who has become the soul of all living beings but one who gets stuck up due to the contact of Guṇas—in regard to such a one, the soul takes up birth. He gets entangled in the Guṇas. The Guṇas do not understand the soul. But the soul knows the Guṇas.

86. He shall contemplate the Guṇas. He is the seer of everything in the manner it exists. A man shall perceive the difference between Sattva (Guṇa) and the Kṣetrajña (Individual Soul).

87-89. One of them creates the Guṇas and the other does not create. The two are naturally separated and joined together. Just as gold and pebbles are found existing together (though separate), just as the mosquito and Udumbara are found together though separate, just as the Iṣikā (shoot of a grass) exists together with the Muñja grass and is also separate, so also the two remain together and are separate from each other.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY

Review of Sāṃkhya and Yoga

Vyāsa said :

1. Sattva creates Guṇas and the Kṣetrajña presides over them. As though indifferent, the lord presides over them.

2. It is all but natural, that it creates these Guṇas. Just as the spider weaves its web so also it creates Guṇas.

3. Some are of this firm opinion : Those who have started functioning do not stop the same; (the fact is) the functioning is not perceptible. But others accept cessation of activity.

4. One should ponder over these two and come to a decision in accordance with one's intellect. Of course, in this manner a great doubt may occur.

5. Indeed the Ātman has neither birth nor death. A man shall sport about after realizing it. He should never be angry nor too delighted. He shall be free from enmity and jealousy.

6-9. (Defective) Thus everyone should reflect on (the supreme Being) by means of intellect and heart. He should consider that the worldly pleasures are evanescent. He should be free from doubts. He shall cross the earth that has fallen down in the same manner as scholarly men cross the swollen river by diving and swimming in it.

O brahmins, this (earthly existence) is fickle and unsteady. A scholar does not feel distressed. Knowing the reality he walks on firm ground after pondering over the Ātman and the knowledge of Ātman.

After understanding the creation of living beings, their advent as well as departure, and observing (everything) well, a man obtains excellent quiescence and tranquillity.

10-11. This is the entire (aim) of the twice-born and especially of the Brahmin. It is the knowledge of Ātman. It is the ultimate resort. It is confined to impartiality and love towards all. One shall become enlightened after understanding the reality. What else is the characteristic of an enlightened

one ? After comprehending this, learned men become liberated and contented.

12. The enlightened ones do not have to face the great fear that the unenlightened ones have to after death in the other world. No one has a greater status than the eternal one which the enlightened one has.

13. Man is detracted from the inner world. On not seeing the lord there, he bewails. If there is efficiency in that respect, those who comprehend both—the done as well as the undone—do not bewail.

14. If one performs Karmans without yearning for benefit, it burns away sins. If actions are performed with pleasure or hatred as motives the same is the result of his actions.

The sages said :

15. May Your Holiness be pleased to tell us that most excellent virtue than which there is no greater virtue and that which is greater than all valuable things.

Vyāsa said :

16. I shall recount the ancient virtue eulogised by the sages, which is the most excellent of all virtues. Listen to it, O excellent sages.

17-18. The sense-organs agitate us. One shall intelligently control them like a father who controls his sons during their formative childhood years. The concentration of the mind and that of sense-organs is the greatest austerity. That is the most excellent of all virtues. It is mentioned as the greatest virtue.

19. By means of perfect knowledge one shall control those (sense-organs) including the mind as the sixth and shall be self-contented. He shall not ponder over the multifarious objects of thought.

20. When these (sense-organs) refrain from their respective objects and remain in their abodes, you will all see the supreme Ātman, the eternal one, by means of the self.

21. The intelligent Brahmins see the great Ātman, the soul of all like the smokeless fire.

22-23. Just as great tree with many branches having flowers and fruits does not know specifically “Where is my

flower? Where is my fruit?", so also the (individual) soul does not know "Whence have I come? Whither will I go?" It has another inner soul that sees everything.

24. One sees Ātman by Ātman through the mind that is illuminated by perfect knowledge. O brahmins, you all shall be free from passionate attachment on seeing Ātman.

25. Even in this world you will attain great intellect and become liberated from all sins like serpents that shed off their slough. You will be devoid of anxieties and free from ailments.

26-30. The river of worldly existence is terrible. It has currents everywhere. The five sense organs are its crocodiles. The conceptions of the mind are its banks. Greed and delusion are the grasses that cover them up. Lust and anger are the reptiles that are there. Truthfulness constitutes holy waters and falsehood the turbulent eddies. That excellent river of worldly existence has anger for its marshy bed. Its source is the Unmanifest one. It is a rapid river agitated by lust and anger. Those who are not self-possessed cannot cross it. O brahmins, cross that river by means of your intellect. If flows into the ocean of worldly existence. It is impassable as it falls into the nether regions of the vaginal passage. It starts with one's own birth. It is difficult of access due to the whirlpool of tongues. Intelligent persons of great courage and steadfast intellect cross it. One who has crossed it is liberated from everywhere. His soul is purified. He is pure and self-possessed.

31-32. He is capable of becoming Brahman by adopting excellent intellect. He crosses great distresses. He is devoid of sins and his soul is clean and pleasant. From all places he sees all living beings (?) He becomes neither angry nor elated. He is also not wicked in his mind.

33. Thereafter, you will see the birth and annihilation of all living beings. Wise men have considered this as the most excellent of all virtues.

34. O most excellent ones, among persons upholding virtue, the wise sages of truthful speech consider this as the most excellent virtue. O Brahmins, the souls are all-pervading. This principle should be imparted to one's sons.

35. This great secret doctrine of the soul is the highest

of all esoteric doctrines. This should be imparted to a pure and devoted follower.

36-37. What I have recounted is a highly secret doctrine with the soul as witness thereof. The Ātman is neither a female nor a male, nor is it a neuter one. Brahman is devoid of misery and happiness. It is identical with the past, present and future. After realizing this, no man or woman shall have to undergo rebirth.

38. All these facts have been described, O brahmins, by me.

39. (Defective) A person of delighted mind, whose son possesses good qualities and who is compassionate towards good sons will think about the welfare of those sons.

The sages said :

40. It has been said by Brahmā that liberation is to be acquired through a certain means and not without means. O sage, we wish to hear that means.

Vyāsa said :

41. In regard to this, O extremely intelligent ones, a close scrutiny is proper. O sinless ones, always seek all objects through that means.

42. The intellect is the means of finding a pot. But it is not the cause of the pot. The same formula applies to the means of virtue. It is not the cause of other Dharmas.

43. The path that leads to the eastern sea does not go to the western sea. Indeed there is only one path unto liberation. O sinless ones, listen to that.

44. One shall dispel anger by patience and forbearance; lust by avoiding mental conceptions. A bold man (a self-posseſsed one) deserves to dispel slumber by resorting to Sattva quality.

45. One shall guard against fear by avoiding errors. One shall protect (one's soul) and its knowledge. One shall courageously cause wish, hatred and lust to recede.

46. He who knows reality shall win over slumber and intellect by means of knowledge. The Yогin shall subdue

ailments by taking wholesome food in limited quantities after the previous intake has been digested.

47. One shall conquer greed and delusion by contentment; sensual object by means of the vision of reality; the evil by tenderness and compassion; and virtue by indifference (?)

48. The learned man shall conquer hope and ambition by restraining his mind; competence (?) by avoiding close contact. He shall conquer affection by the thought of (?) non-eternity and hunger by Yogic practice.

49. One shall conquer self by means of self by merciful compassion; excessive greed by means of contentment; languor by early rise. One shall conquer fanciful doubt by means of decision.

50. One shall conquer variety of languages by means of silence, fear by heroism. One shall control speech and mind by his intellect. One shall conquer intellect by the eye of knowledge.

51. The great Ātman shall control knowledge. The tranquillity of the Ātman shall control the Ātman. These things shall be understood by a tranquil person of pure activities.

52-54. The seers know that the defects of Yogic practice are five, viz. lust, anger, greed, fear and slumber. The devotee shall dispel these defects and resort to the Yogic means duly. (They are) meditation, self-study of the Vedas, charitable gifts, truthfulness, shyness, straight-forwardness, forbearance, cleanliness, pious conduct and control over the sense-organs. One's splendour increases by means of these. One dispels sin by means of these.

55-57. Everything that he wishes for is achieved. His perfect knowledge begins to function. He shakes off his sins and becomes brilliant. He shall have limited diet. He shall conquer sense-organs. He shall keep lust and anger under his control. He shall thus enter the region of Brahman.

This is the clean, pure and vivid path of liberation : The state of being not deluded, the state of being unattached, avoidance of lust and anger, the state of not being puffed up, absence of excited anxiety and the state of being steady. Similarly the control of speech, body and mind can become imperishable, (in their consequence) as one pleases.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYONE

Review of injunctions regarding Yogic practice

The sages said :

1. O brahmin, O excellent sage, it behoves you to relate to us the respective peculiarity of Sāṃkhya and Yoga, O sage, conversant with virtue, everything is known to you.

Vyāsa said :

2. The followers of Sāṃkhya praise Sāṃkhya. The followers of Yoga praise Yoga. In order to exalt one's side they give cogent reasons.

3. O excellent sages, "How can one who is not competent be liberated?" Thus, saying with good reasons, learned men mention Yoga to be more excellent.

4-5. The brahmins give reasons to justify Sāṃkhya. "He who is unattached to the sensual objects shall be liberated from his body after understanding all movements and goals and not otherwise. Thus men of great intellect state that Sāṃkhya is a philosophy of liberation.

6. A reason competent to justify one's own side, words conducive to one's welfare, should be accepted. The opinion of excellent persons should be accepted by you all who are honoured by good men.

7-8. Yogic austerities are causes of spiritual attainment. The Sāṃkhyas adhere to the decision of scriptural texts. O excellent brahmins, Sāṃkhya and Yoga are based on reality. Both these systems are known to the sages as systems approved by good men. If they are practised in accordance with the scriptural texts they are sure to lead to the supreme goal.

9. O sinless ones, proper means of clealiness has been mentioned in both of them equally. Compassionate mercy to all living beings is also mentioned. The observance of holy rites is also similar, but spiritual vision is not the same in both (?)

The sages said :

10. If the observance of holy rites, purity, and merciful-

ness are similar, O great sage, how is the spiritual vision not equal. Tell us kindly, O excellent brahmin.

Vyāsa said :

11. Defaulters in Yogic practice attain the following five defects mentioned in the Yogic path : passion, delusion, affection, lust and anger.

12. Just as the big fish cut off the net and escape into the water once again, so also the persons devoid of sins attain that region by taking recourse to Yoga.

13-14. Similarly, just as the strong deer break loose, cut the net and attain freedom being liberated from all bondages, so also the brahmins equipped with strength break their bonds of covetousness. After cutting them off by means of Yoga they attain auspicious path devoid of impurities.

15-16. The persons equipped with strength are firm and steadfast. On the other hand, those without the strength of Yoga perish, just as the birds devoid of strength, O leading brahmins, fall into net. Sinless ones do not get involved in bondage. Such are the powers of Yoga.

17-18. Just as on getting entangled in a fine net weaker birds fall into misfortune while stronger ones free themselves, so those who are possessed of strength are liberated, while the feeble ones perish. Similarly, the brahmins who are devoted to Yoga are bound by the fetters arising out of their past Karmans. The weaker ones perish and the strong ones get free.

19. O brahmins, the fire of very little magnitude is very weak and it calms down on being overwhelmed by huge (quantities of) fuel. The Yogic power too is similar.

20. The same fire, O brahmins, becomes stronger once again on being accompanied by the wind. It may then burn the entire earth instantly.

21. The extremely powerful Yогin whose strength is the perfect knowledge of reality and whose splendour is illuminated, is capable of drying up the entire universe like the sun at the time of dissolution.

22. Just as a weak man, O brahmins, is taken away by the force of a current, so also the Yогin, devoid of strength is carried away by the force of sensuous objects.

23. A powerful elephant is capable of obstructing the same water current. Similarly after attaining the Yogic strength no man is led astray by sensuous objects.

24. Those who are endowed with the power of Yoga, become masters of everything and enter the region of Prajāpatis, Manus and Bhūtas.

25. Neither Yama, nor the infuriated Antaka (The annihilator), nor Mṛtyu (i.e. god of Death) of terrible exploits enter, O brahmins, the path of Yoga of unlimited splendour.

26. O excellent brahmins, there are thousands of Ātmans (souls). By means of them one shall practice Yoga and after attaining the Yogic power, wander over the earth.

27. One may indulge in enjoying worldly pleasures and do severe penance thereafter. Again, O brahmins, he shall subdue them like the sun that subdues the qualities of brilliance.

28. O excellent sages, for infusing more strength into the Yoga that is based on strength, one shall undoubtedly resort to Viṣṇu, the source or origin of liberation.

29. These powers of Yoga have been mentioned by me, O excellent brahmins, by way of illustration. Again, O brahmins, I shall mention the subtle ones.

30. Listen to the illustration, O excellent sages, in regard to meditation upon the soul or in regard to concentration of mind.

31. Just as an archer who does not err and who has full concentration, hits his target so also the Yогin of perfect unison, attains salvation undoubtedly.

32-33. A person of good concentration can steadily fix up his mind to a pot filled with oil and climb a flight of stairs. In the same manner the liberated soul can make use of steady Yoga. He makes the soul free from impurities like a mirror in which the sun reflects.

34-35. Just as, O leading brahmins, the helmsmen who have perfect concentration row the ships in the high seas and take them to the port, so also, O brahmins, the knower of Yoga who has concentration on the soul attains the inaccessible region of bliss after leaving off this body.

36-37. Just as the charioteer, O brahmins, who has good concentration and capable horses takes the excellent man

wielding the bow to the desired place immediately, so also, O brahmins, the Yigin with full concentration and Dhāraṇā, quickly attains the greatest region, like an arrow discharged at the target.

38. He who is engrossed and embedded in the soul is steady. He attains the unageing region as though by breaking the noose of the fish.

39-41. The following are the spots in the body where the Yigin should concentrate and meditate : navel, head, stomach, heart, chest, sides, eye, ear and nose. The Yigin of unlimited exploits, who practises great sacred rites with mental purity and concentration, meditates on these spots. O excellent brahmins, he unites his soul to the subtle Ātman (soul supreme). Adopting the excellent Yoga he burns, in a trice, all the Karmans both auspicious and inauspicious and, should he wish so, he is liberated.

The sages said :

42. It behoves you, O excellent one, to explain this. What is the diet of the Yigin ? What things does he conquer and subdue ? How does he gain in strength ?

Vyāsa said :

43. The Yigin who consumes coarse barley for a long time, O excellent brahmins, becomes a purified soul. With this single diet the Yigin attains great strength.

Extra verse

(43a.) O brahmins, the Yigin who is accustomed to eat bits of grain as well as Pinyaka (oil cake), and who avoids oily substances shall attain great strength.

44. Wandering through (and residing) in the caves for many fortnights, months and seasons of diverse incidents, and drinking water with milk added (now and then), the Yigin shall attain great strength.

45. After fasting incessantly for an unbroken period of a month, the Yigin becomes purified in soul and attains great strength.

46-48. Yogins of great intellect and devoid of passions illuminate the great and subtle soul by themselves, O excellent sages, by conquering and subduing lust, anger, chilliness, heat, rain, fear, sorrow, slumber, objects of sensuous pleasures, terrible allergies very difficult to be conquered, the sense of touch, drowsiness and the unconquerable lethargy. Meditation and studious habits are their assets.

49. This path of learned brahmins is very difficult to tread. Only a few pass happily through this path and quickly as well, O excellent sages.

50-52. Only a very few persons can comfortably pass through such a forest path as is terrible and abounds in serpents and reptiles. It contains many deep fissures and crevasses. It is devoid of water. It is impassable. It is full of thorns. It is dense and unbroken with thickly grown jungle trees. (In some places) the trees are burnt down by the forest fire. The whole path is infested by thieves and robbers. (Only a very few can pass through such a path.) In the same manner only a few brahmins can pass through the path of Yoga. It is admitted that a person of many faults shall desist from that path.

53. One should closely adhere to the path of Yoga as though that were as keen as the edge of a razor. This close adherence is the Dhāraṇā. It is difficult for persons devoid of self-possession to tread this path.

54. Dhāraṇā, O brahmins, is complex and complicated. Just as the boats of men devoid of helmsmen do not reach the auspicious goal, so also men devoid of Dhāraṇā do not attain their ends.

55. He who practises Yoga by adhering to Dhāraṇā duly, conquers death and the misery of frequent births. He excels others in happiness.

56. This great path of Yoga has been resorted to by a number of sages. This has been precisely (explained) in various scriptures. This is decisively (nurtured) by the twice-born people.

57-60. The path of Yoga, O leading sages, is in consonance with the path of the Vedas. It is approved of by Brahmā, Śiva and Viṣṇu, the bestower of boons. Bhava and Dharma

(god of death) have attained dignity (due to the path of Yoga). The sons of Brahmā (i.e. Sanaka, Sanandana etc.) have also attained dignity (due to the path of Yoga). The Yогin passes through the various stages of Prakṛti, namely, the pure Sattva, the grand Rajas and Tamas full of pain. He attains divine power, and the goddess who is Varuṇa's consort. He achieves entire splendour and great courage. He attains the status of or identity with the moon in the sky who is pure by nature, Viśvedevas, serpents, Pitṛs (Manes), mountains, terrible oceans, rivers, elephants, along with the mountains, Sādhyas, Yaksas, quarters, Gandharvas, Siddhas, men & women. The noble-souled Yогin then becomes liberated before long.

61. After attaining Yogas and experiencing them, those men attain Nārāyaṇa quickly. The story thereof, O excellent brahmins, is relevant in regard to divine beings as well as a splendid person of great virility and intellect.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYTWO

Review of the principles of Sāṃkhya

The sages said :

1. This practice of Yoga, the path of Yoga, that has been approved of by dignified persons, O leading brahmin, has been well narrated to the pupil by you who wish his welfare.

2. Now please expound in essence the practice of virtue according to Sāṃkhya, for whatever is known in the three worlds has been understood by you.

Vyāsa said :

3. Listen ye, O sages, to the principles of Sāṃkhya, who have realised the souls. These principles have been laid down by the old men of yore, Kapila and others, who were not inferior to lords.

4. In that system, O excellent sages, a few complexities are seen. In it there are many good qualities and no defects.

5. That is achieved by practising the rites mentioned as under. By means of knowledge, O brahmins, all things are realised. All unconquerable human objects of pleasure and the entire objects of evil are also realized.

6. The objects of pleasure of Nāgas, Gandharvas, Pitṛs and lower creatures are known.

7. The objects of pleasure of Suparṇa (Garuḍa), Maruts, sages and royal sages are known.

8. The objects of pleasure of Asuras, Viśvedevas and divine sages are known. The great objects of Yogas are also understood.

9. The objects of pleasure of whatever is being eaten as well as the object of pleasure of Brahmā are known. The maximum period of life is understood in essence by the people.

10. The maximum duration of happiness is clearly understood, O excellent sages. The misery of persons indulging in worldly pleasures, coming at the due time, is understood.

11. The misery, O brahmins, of those souls that take birth among low creatures or fall into hell, is understood. The merits and demerits of heaven, O brahmins, are entirely understood.

12-14. The merits and demerits of the Vedic system are to be understood. The defects and merits of the path of knowledge should be understood. The merits and the demerits, brahmins, of the Sāṃkhya knowledge should be understood. The devotee shall understand Sattva of ten qualities and Rajas of nine qualities, Tamas of eight qualities, Buddhi of seven qualities, Tamas of three qualities, Nabhas of six qualities.

15-16. Rajas that has two qualities and Sattva of a single quality are also be understood. By knowing the path in essence and by seeing annihilation the devotees, richly endowed with perfect knowledge and wisdom, attain splendid salvation even as the subtle ones attain great Ether. Salvation is attained by purified souls.

17-23. The organ of vision is to be understood as combined with the quality of colour; the organ of smell is to be understood as combined with the quality of smell; the organ of

hearing is to be understood through the quality of sound; the tongue is combined with the quality of taste. The quality of touch pertains to the skin. The wind that is dependent upon it can be touched and known. (Delusion) is to be understood as combined with tamas and covetousness is to be understood as combined with delusion. Viṣṇu is to be understood as combined with Krānta (that has taken three steps). Indra is to be understood as combined with power. Fire god is to be understood as attached to the belly. The goddess is to be understood as combined with water. Waters are to be understood as dependent on fiery element. The fiery element is combined with gaseous element. The gaseous element is to be understood as dependent on Ether. The Ether is combined with the principle of Mahat. The Tamas is stationed in Mahas (splendour); Rajas is attached to Sattva and Sattva is attached to the Ātman (soul); the Ātman is attached to Iśa as well as lord Nārāyaṇa. Lord is attached to liberation and liberation is not attached to any. The physical body with Sattva quality should be known as surrounded by sixteen qualities; the nature and imagination should be known as dependent on the physical body; the soul is as though stationed in the middle; there is no sin therein.

24. The Karman of the persons indulging in worldly pleasures, O leading brahmins, should be known as sinful; sense-organs and the objects of senses should be known as stationed in the Ātman.

25. The rarity of salvation should be known by means of the Vedic literature. The (vital airs such as) Prāṇa, Apāna, Samāna, Vyāna and Udāna should be known duly.

26. The primordial wind element should be known and then the resultant wind also should be known. They should be known as divided into seven. The remaining ones should also be known as sevenfold.

27-28. The following persons should be thought upon : Prajāpatis, sages, excellent creations, seven sages, royal sages who scorch the enemies, divine sages, Maruts, brahminical sages resplendent like the sun and persons who have slipped down from their gorgeous splendour in the course of a long period of time.

29. The destruction of the groups of elements, O brahmins, should be heard. The splendid movement of the words should be known. Those who deserve the worship of persons of sinful actions should be seen.

30. The misery of those who have fallen into the abode of Yama (in the river) Vaitarāṇī should be realised. The inauspicious movements of creatures in the variegated wombs should be observed.

31-32. Their residence in the inauspicious belly should be seen and understood, the belly in the city of nine entrances (i.e. the body with nine orifices, viz. two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, urethra and anus), which is the receptacle of blood and water, which is filled with phlegm, urine and faecal matter, which has a strong obnoxious odour, which is a mass of semen and blood, which is fixed up by means of marrow and sinews and which has a tangled web and woof of hundreds of nerves.

33-38. One shall thoroughly understand that the Ātman is conducive to one's own welfare. O brahmins, one shall completely comprehend the different sorts of Yogas. O excellent sages, one shall observe the despicable activities of creatures of Tāmasa quality and those of the creatures of Sāttvika quality with handsome but false Ātmans. (In the same manner) one shall observe the despicable activities of the Sāṃkhyas for the sake of great men despite the fact that the Sāṃkhyas are persons who have comprehended the soul. One shall observe the terrible harassments of the moon (and other) luminaries, the fall of stars and revolutions of other heavenly bodies. One shall observe the miserable separation of couples, O brahmins. One shall observe also the inauspicious tendency of various living beings to devour one another. One shall also realise (people's) delusion during childhood and the inauspicious nature of the wing body (?). In some places, even the Sattva quality depends on passion and delusion. By all these means one man among thousands resorts to salvation-consciousness. The rarity of liberation should be realised. The realisation is only through (Vedic Literature).

39. Respect for things not yet received, neutrality in regard

to what has been acquired and the viciousness of objects of worldly pleasures, shall be fully comprehended again, O brahmins.

40. One shall comprehend residence in the families of creatures intending death as well as the emergence of creatures that are dead after breaking the splendid bodies (?)

41. The misery of even the Sāttvika creatures, O brahmins, must be comprehended. The fate of the persons who had killed brahmins and hence had a downfall, must be comprehended.

42. The evil fate of vicious brahmins addicted to the drinking of liquor, as well as those who indulge in illegitimate union with the wife of the preceptor shall be comprehended.

43-44. By means of perfect knowledge, O excellent brahmins, men behave well towards their mothers. They behave in the same manner towards the people of the world including gods. With the same knowledge one shall comprehend the fate of persons of inauspicious activities. The fates of those beings that are born in the wombs of lower creatures should be comprehended separately.

45-49. One shall comprehend the following: the glorious arguments in the Vedas, the successive orderly changes of the seasons, the passing off of the years, months, fortnights and days. The waxing and waning of the moon shall be observed directly. The ebbing and the flowing of the tides in the seas shall be perceived. Riches are observed to decline and increase. Unions are observed to come to an end and an era too is replaced by another era. The feebleness and bewilderment that one experiences due to egotism shall be duly comprehended. All the defects stationed in the soul and all the inauspicious defects arising out of one's own body shall be perfectly understood.

The sages said :

50. What defects arising out of Utpātas (dangerous portents) do you see, O most excellent one among the knowers of Brahman ? It behoves you to clarify this doubt of ours completely.

Vyāsa said :

51. O brahmins, intelligent scholars speak of five defects in the body, the scholars who are the followers of Kapila and

his Sāṃkhya system. They are conversant with the path. Listen, O excellent sages.

52. Lust, anger, fear, slumber and breath—these defects are seen in the bodies of all embodied beings.

53. By means of patience they cut off anger; by avoiding close intimacy they remove lust; by resorting to Sāttvika substances they remove slumber; and they remove fear by means of avoidance of errors.

54. They cut off and remove breath, O brahmins, by means of reduced diet. Good qualities are known by means of hundreds of good qualities and defects by means of hundreds of defects.

55. Reasons must be known by means of hundreds of reasons; wonderful things should be known by means of wonderful things.

The world is like the foam of waters. It is created by means of hundreds of māyās by Viṣṇu.

56. It resembles the wall painted in a picture. It has as much strength as grass (i.e. it is flimsy and feeble). It is conducive to great harm. It wanders about in darkness. It must be seen as one resembling bubbles (of water) during rain.

57. It is almost ruinous though it appears to be pleasant. It instils fear even after its destruction. Just as an elephant that has got stuck up in mud becomes helpless, so also the world gets stuck up in the slough of Rajas and Tamas.

58-61. The Sāṃkhyas. O brahmins, are highly intelligent. They abandon all attachment towards their progeny by means of knowledge and the object of knowledge that is all-pervasive and great, O brahmins. With the weapon of knowledge of the Ātman, O excellent ones, and with the rod of penance, they sever off the inauspicious Rājasa odours, Tāmasa odours, meritorious Sāttvika odours and those odours based on the body arising due to the physical touch. Thereafter they cross the terrible watery expanse of misery wherein anxiety and grief are great eddies; it is extremely terrible due to sickness and death; great fear acts like great serpents. Tamas is like a tortoise. Rajas is like fish. They cross this terrible expanse by means of their intellect.

62-68. By the path of knowledge, the sinless persons, the sages of great achievement cross the ocean of worldly existence wherein affectionate attachment is mud; old age is the fort, and the sensation of touch is like an island, O excellent brahmins; Karman is the great depth; truth is the bank; holy rites are the places to stand by, O intelligent ones; violence is the quickness and rapidity of the current; it is turbid due to different Rasas; different gestures of love are great jewels; misery and fever are the winds; grief and thirst are the great whirlpools; it has great pain due to sickness; O excellent brahmins, the set of bones is the flight of steps with phlegm for joining them; liberal charity is the mine of pearls; the terrible outpourings of blood are the coral beads; laughter and lamentation are the loud reports; it is very difficult to cross on account of various acts of ignorance; the dirt accumulated by the tears of lamentation is the brine; contact and union are the goals; this world of birth is one that deceives with sons and relatives for their towns; this (ocean of worldly existence) is an ocean unto all living beings with nonviolence and truthfulness for its line of boundary; it is full of surging waves due to the (incessant) contacts of vital airs; milk flows in successive waves (?); the territory here is the rare salvation; it is an ocean with the submarine fire at its mouth. Sinless ascetics cross this ocean (of existence).

69. After crossing (the ocean of) births which is difficult to cross they enter the pure sky and thereafter on seeing them come, the sun carries them with its rays.

70. The rays enter them like fibres of lotus, O brahmins, as it blows over the territories. O sinless ones, the wind Pravaha takes them up there.

71. O brahmins, the subtle, sweet smelling, cool wind Pravaha with gentle touch receives those ascetics who are devoid of passion and the Siddhas whose asset is penance and who are endowed with virility.

72. That wind which is the most excellent of all the seven winds, and which goes to the splendid worlds leads them, O great brahmins, to the most excellent goal from the firmament.

73. The firmament carries the lords of the worlds to the

greatest goal from the Rajas. The Rajas carries, O great brahmins, to the greatest goal of Sattva.

74. The pure soul carries the Sattva to the great and splendid lord Nārāyaṇa. The lord of pure soul carries them to the supreme soul by himself.

75. After attaining the supreme soul they become rid of all defects. They are always free from dirt. They become capable of immortality. O brahmins, they do not come back.

76. That is the greatest goal, O brahmins, of those noble souls who are free from the mutually clashing pairs, who are devotedly engaged in truthfulness and straight-forwardness and who have kindness and sympathy for all living beings.

The sages said:

77. After attaining the most excellent region of the lord, do those persons of steady holy rites sport about there, till their death and rebirth ?

78. It behoves you to describe accurately what exactly is the reality therein. Excepting you we cannot, O excellent one, afford to ask any other mortal.

79-80. This would be a great defect in salvation if other ascetics would also stay in the same place, perfect knowledge leading them to salvation, along with the sages who have attained spiritual achievement. Hence O brahmin, we consider Dharma characterised by Pravṛtti (i.e. life of pious activities as opposed to life of pursuit of knowledge) as the most supreme one. But on the other hand, there is likelihood of another misery in regard to a person completely engaged in the great knowledge.

Vyāsa said:

81. The question has been put most relevantly, O excellent sages. Your dilemma has been enunciated. O excellent sages, there is confusion and delusion even amongst scholars in regard to this problem.

82. Even here listen to my words in regard to the perfect truth where the great intellect of those noble souls, the followers of Kapila, finds a place.

83. The sense-organs too of the embodied beings, O brahmins, are aware of their body. They are Ātman's Karanas (organs

of activity and knowledge); the soul perceives all types of subtle entities through them.

84. (The sense-organs) devoid of Ātman as a result of sinful actions, perish like the waves in a great ocean.

85. While the embodied soul is asleep or agitated the subtle soul wanders about along with the sense-organs like the wind that blows everywhere.

86. It sees duly. O sinless ones, it touches after remembering (?). It becomes aware of all as before, O brahmins.

87. Since they are not masters, the sense-organs merge into their respective places like serpents which are killed.

88. The subtle soul encompasses the movements of sense-organs in their respective places and moves about.

89-91. The individual soul pervades different qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, the qualities of intellect, O excellent ones, the qualities of mind, the qualities of firmament, the qualities of wind, O omniscient ones, the qualities arising from affection, the qualities of waters, O brahmins, and all the qualities of earth. The Kṣetrajña pervades, O excellent brahmins, the qualities in these individual souls and moves about due to auspicious and inauspicious Karmans.

92-97. Sense-organs move along with the soul just as disciples go along with a great saint (preceptor). After going beyond Prakṛti they attain the subtle, Nārāyaṇa of great soul, the great ultimate resort, greater than the greatest and devoid of all aberrations. He is free from all sins. He has entered a state of freedom from all ailments. That supreme soul is devoid of all qualities. He is blissful, excellent ones. There, O brahmins, the excellent mind and the sense-organs come at the proper time taking up the message of the preceptor. It is possible to attain tranquility and good qualities in the course of a brief period by means of the above mentioned Sāṃkhya and Yoga. The highly intelligent Sāṃkhyas attain the highest goal. O great brahmins, there is no other knowledge equal to this one that brings about salvation.

98. May you be in no doubt in this matter. It is knowledge that is the great Sāṃkhya. The primordial and the eternal Brahman is imperishable and Dhruva (everlasting).

99. Persons of tranquility and calmness speak of it as that which has no beginning, middle or end; that which is free from mutually opposed pairs; the Agent, the eternal one and the Kūṭastha (firm and steady like the peak of a mountain).

100. It is from this that all the processes of creation and annihilation issue forth. So say the eloquent great sages in the sacred scriptures.

101-103. The brahmins, Vedas and persons who are conversant with the Sāman verses call him the greatest lord, the endless one, the greatest Acyuta (one who does not slip or swerve) and Brahmanyā (favourable to the Brahman). Brahmīns with their intellect turned towards Guṇas, the followers of Yoga who are united with the great one and the Sāṃkhyas with their vision directed towards the unmeasured one (praise him). He has no manifest form, O great brahmins. The Veda says that knowledge is (his form). O excellent sages, they speak about many means of recognizing it.

104. There are two types of living beings on the earth, O excellent brahmins, the stationary and the Gamyā (the mobile ones). Of these two the mobile ones are better.

105. Jñāna (knowledge) is greater than all great things, O brahmins. O great sages, whatever is seen in the Vedas, in Sāṃkhya, in Yoga and in Purāṇa—everything has come from Sāṃkhya.

106. What is seen in the great Itihāsas (epics), what is particularly seen in truthful scriptures and whatever knowledge is there in the world, O great sages, has come from Sāṃkhya.

107. Everything that is seen in the world, the great strength, knowledge, salvation, penance—all these subtle things have been duly laid down in Sāṃkhya, O brahmins.

108. Sāṃkhyas attain their welfare easily even from the things opposed to it. After realising them they become content. They fall in the abodes of brahmins again.

109. After breaking their bodies they enter salvation. The followers of Yoga and Sāṃkhya reside in heaven. Hence they are more interested in Sāṃkhya, that is very valuable and resorted to by dignified persons, O brahmins.

110. O sages, in the case of those brahmins who are not devoted to this knowledge their oblique movement (i.e. their birth among lower creatures) is seen but not downfall into the abode of those who commit sins. Those brahmins are not important at all.

111. The Sāṁkhya system is vast, great, ancient and free from impurities. It is as vast as the great ocean. It is dignified and splendid. The followers of Sāṁkhya dedicate everything unto Nārāyaṇa.

112. This great truth that the ancient universe originates from Nārāyaṇa has been spoken by me. At the time of creation he creates and at the time of annihilation he annihilates them again.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYTHREE

The perishable and the Imperishable

Sages said :

1-4. What is it that is called Imperishable from which one does not return again. O great sage, we ask you about the distinction between the perishable and the Imperishable in order to understand it correctly, O excellent sage, O leader of sages. Indeed, you are mentioned as the most excellent among those who are endowed with knowledge by sages of great fortune and ascetics of noble souls who have mastered the Vedas. We wish to hear everything regarding this, from you, O sage of great intellect. We are never satiated by hearing the excellent nectar-like speech of yours.

Vyāsa said :

5. In this connection I shall recount unto you the legend of yore, the dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Karāla-Janaka.

6. Vasiṣṭha, the most excellent one among the sages, having the features of the sun, was sitting in his hermitage when king Janaka asked him about the perfect knowledge leading to salvation.

7-8. Formerly king Karāla-Janaka asked the excellent sage Vasiṣṭha who was seated, after paying him obeisance with joined palms. He asked him about those topics with particular relevance to the supreme soul, determining the ways and means of spiritual pursuit. He asked that sage who moved about as he pleased, who performed excellent deeds, who was sweet-tempered and who was never puffed up.

Janaka said :

9-10. O holy one, I wish to hear about the great eternal Brahman from whom men of intellect never return. What is it that is called Kṣara since this universe dissolves therein (i.e. in the Brahman)? What is it that is spoken of as Akṣara which is auspicious, conducive to happiness and free from ailment?

Vasiṣṭha said :

11. Let it be heard, O ruler of the Earth, how this universe dissolves and perishes, where it dissolves at first, and how long does it take.

12. A Yuga consists of twelve thousand years. Know that a Kalpa is made up of four Yugas. A cycle of four hundred Kalpas is called a day of Brahmā.

13-14. O king, the night is also of the same duration at the end of which he wakes up and creates the great element firmament and other creations without end. The self-born lord, devoid of form and benefactor of the world creates the universe that has form. It is in the lord that the universe is rooted and has its origin, O excellent king.

15-16. (The supreme soul) is Iśāna, the never-diminishing flame, with the powers of Aṇimā (minuteness), Laghimā (lightness) and Prāpti (accessibility). It has legs and hands all around. It has eyes, heads and mouths all around. It has ears all around. It stands enveloping everything in the world. He is Lord Hiranyagarbha and is known as Buddhi (Cosmic Intellect).

17. It is called by various names in Sāṃkhya. In the Yoga system it is called Mahat and Viriñci.

18. It has various forms. It is the soul of the universe. It is known as single and Imperishable. All the three worlds have been held by it as though they formed one unit.

19. In the same manner it is known as omniformed because of its multifarious forms undergoing some physical change it creates in itself.

20. Pradhāna is a very great city called so because it is the abode of elements etc. Ahamkāra (Great Ego) has great splendour and it is bowed to by Prajāpati.

21. They call the manifestation from the Unmanifest *Vidyāsarga*. Mahat and Ahamkāra constitute *Avidyāsarga*.

22-28. So also from the *Eka* (single one) the *Acara* (im-mobile) and the *Cara* (mobile) are born. They are known as *Vidyā* and *Avidyā* and proclaimed so by persons who ponder over Vedic passages and scriptures. Know that there is a third type of creation, O king, from Ahamkāra i.e. the creation of elements (*Bhūtasarga*), viz. wind, fire, firmament, water and earth. In Ahamkāra itself, O king, know the fourth creation as *Vaikyta* (i.e. diverse manifestation). The five elements and their five particular qualities, viz. sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, are produced simultaneously. Know the fifth type of creation, O great king, to be *Bhautika Sarga* (the creation of the evolutes of the five elements). They are the organs of sense and action as well as the mind. Ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose—these five are sense organs. Speech, hands, feet, anus and penis—these five are *Karmendriyas* (organs of action). These organs arose simultaneously along with the mind. Thus there are twenty-four principles in action in the creation. By knowing this set of twenty-four principles the brahmins cease to be worried. They see the reality.

29-33. Thus the excellent set of the three worlds is produced. It should be known, O excellent one, among men. In the whole world in all the creations the Ātman that pervades is the same whether it is the ocean of hell, the abode of Yakṣas, Bhūtas and Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Nāgas, Cāraṇas, Piśācas, Devas, sages and demons; whether it is the creation of flies, worms, mosquitoes, worms in the putrid matter, mice, dogs, low caste people who cook dogs, Caṇḍālas, Pulkasas, Eñeyas,

hunters of deer, horses, elephants, donkeys, tigers, wolves and cows. We have already heard that there is the abode of embodied beings in water, land and air. Certainly nowhere else.

34-36. It is the soul of all living beings that is known as Imperishable (*Aksara*). Everyday the entire universe drops off and perishes. It moves off from the *Avyakta* (the unmanifest one). Since the universe perishes it is called (Perishable). They say that the universe is conducive to delusion. It is called *vyakta* (manifest) and it arises from *Avyakta*. The *Aksara* is great and eternal. It avoids *Kṣara* (the perishable). From this no one returns. Thus, O great king, the *Aksara* has been explained unto you.

37. The twenty-fifth-principle is formless. It is eternal and it is real. Intelligent scholars call it *Tattva* because it depends on *Sattva*.

38. That which is devoid of form creates the (manifest) and presides thereupon. The manifest is the twenty-fourth principle and the formless is the twenty-fifth one.

39. It alone abides in the heart of all forms. It is equipped with soul (?). It is conscious and it instils consciousness in all objects. It has no form but it identifies itself with all forms.

40. It assumes forms of creation and annihilation through the peculiar characteristics of creation and annihilation. Although it is devoid of attributes it remains within the view.

41. Although this great soul undergoes certain changes due to millions of creations and annihilations it does not absolutely identify itself with them all (?)

42. Not being enlightened itself and due to the resorting of unenlightened persons it becomes enveloped with Tamas, Sattva and Rajas and is born in different wombs.

43. Due to the residence together it thinks like this—"I am not the other one", "I am this one and hence not the other one". Thus it follows the attributes.

44. Due to Tamas it takes up beings of Tāmasika nature; due to Rajas it takes up beings of Rājasika nature and by devoting to Sattva it takes up Sāttvika beings.

45. The colours are three, viz. white, red and black. Know that all these colours belong to Prakṛti.

46. The persons of Tāmasa nature fall into hell; persons of Rājasa nature become human beings. Persons of Sāttvika nature go to the heavenly world and enjoy happiness.

47. Due to the sins committed in this world one falls into the womb of the lower animals; if sins and merits both are practised one takes birth among men; and if merits alone are practised one takes birth among gods.

48. Thus the wise persons say that salvation is based on Avyakta. It is the twenty-fifth principle which functions due to knowledge.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYFOUR

A dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Janaka

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. Thus due to the state of being unenlightened, the soul devoid of knowledge and enlightenment proceeds from one physical body to thousands of bodies. Therefore it does not differ in the course of its transmigration.

2. On account of its acquisition of penance or decrease of good qualities the soul sometimes takes up bodies among gods or among lower creatures.

3. From human birth it proceeds to heaven and from god it becomes a human being. From the state of man it proceeds to hell.

4. Just as the silk worm wraps itself by its thread-like fibres so also this soul though devoid of Guṇas wraps itself by means of Guṇas.

5-8a. Though the soul is devoid of mutually opposed pairs it is affected by them in different births. At the time when a person suffers from ailments such as headache, eye-pain, tooth-ache, sore throat, dropsy, diarrhoea, Gaṇḍamālā, Vicarcikā, leukoderma, burns, scalds, epileptic fits etc., the characteristic symptoms of diverse types appear in the bodies of these souls. The soul identifies itself with the bodies. As in the case of identification so also in regard to meritorious deeds.

8b-12. The persons perform meritorious deeds of various kinds with a desire for welfare. The various kinds of meritorious rites are as follows: some wear four clothes; some lie down on the ground; some are seated in the Virāsana. After Virāsana some take up the posture of Ākāśa Śayana (lying in the firmament); some lie on bricks and rocks; some on spherical rocks; some lie on ash rocks; some have the ground for their bed as well as unguent. Drinking and cooking are conducted in heroic abodes (?) Lying down is on planks or on beds equipped with fruits and articles of domestic use. A man lies down in gardens attached to barns (?) He wears leather pieces or silken clothes along with the hide of black deer. He may wear fur garments studded with jewels or wear tiger skin garment.

13. He may wear lion hide or silken garment. Plank may be his robe or he may be wearing a mat.

14. Mat alone may be his garment or he may be wearing bark garment. We may take pride in wearing other types of clothes.

15. He may have diverse types of food and different kinds of jewels. He may take food once a day or on different nights with intervals of a night in between.

16. The time for taking meals may be the fourth, sixth or eighth one (i.e. calculating at the rate of two meals per day he may take meals once in two, three or four days).

17. Some men may fast for a month; their diet may be confined to roots; a person may eat fruits or air alone or oil cake, curd and cowdung.

18. Some may take in cow's urine; some the Kāśa flower. Some may take in only water moss. Some may sustain themselves by other things.

19. Some may live upon scattered old leaves or scattered fruits. A devotee resorts to different kinds of very difficult austerities with a desire for spiritual achievement.

20. He may perform different kinds of Cāndrāyana rites. There may be symbols pertaining to the four stages of life or to virtue and evil.

21. He resorts to various shelters. He may indulge in different heresies. He may resort to isolated shadows of rocky cliffs or to mountain streams.

22. He may resort to lonely river banks, different forests, or lonely mountain caves.

23. He may adopt different types of holy rites and observances and various kinds of austerities, sacrifices of various types and different kinds of scholarly arts.

24-25. He may resort to the path of merchants or to the four castes viz. brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. He may distribute charitable gifts of various kinds among the wretched, the blind, the miserable ones. He may identify himself with different attributes, viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, Dharma, Artha and Kāma.

26-28. After honouring the Ātman, the Ātman divides itself into various types of persons. The various items in the holy rites are Svāhākāra, Vaṣatkāra, Svadhākāra and Namas-kāra (obeisance), sacrifice, study, presiding over sacrifices, teaching of Vedas and Sāstras. They say that this is both auspicious and inauspicious due to birth and death or destruction.

29. Divine Prakṛti causes fear and annihilation. At the end of the day, he passes beyond Guṇas and remains single.

30. Just as the sun controls at the proper time the cluster of his rays, so also the soul controls all these and identifies itself with them for the sake of sport.

31-32. It identifies itself with these various features and qualities of the soul pleasing to the heart. Carrying out the function of creation and annihilation it identifies itself with those activities. It is the master of attributes and it possesses the Guṇas. It is interested in the path of activities. It is equipped with the paths of activity as well as inactivity.

33. O great King, this entire universe is blinded by Prakṛti. Everything is pervaded in many ways by Rajas and Tamas.

34-40. The soul thinks like this: "The Dvandvas afflict me continually and pass beyond. They are born of me and they resort to me at the time of annihilation. All these are to be crossed". So thinks the soul, O king, since the intellect is partial (?). Similarly it thinks as follows : "I have to enjoy these merits when I go to the heavenly world. Here too I shall enjoy it even as it gives rise to auspiciousness or inauspiciousness. After I have performed this once it must yield happiness

to me so that there shall be pleasure and happiness in every birth. Let there not be misery at any time. Human birth is miserable unto all and so also is the fall into the hell. From the hell I shall again go to the mortal world. From human birth I shall attain the status of gods and from godliness I shall attain human status again." And in due succession he attains hell from the status of human beings. This is the soul of the twice-born. It is surrounded by Guṇas.

41. Therefore the attainment of hell by gods and human beings is relevant. Being overwhelmed by the sense of "My-ness" it always moves there round and round.

42-53. There are thousands of crores of creations in these forms that end in death.

He who performs the actions the fruit whereof is either auspicious or inauspicious, attains the particular fruit, taking up forms in all the three worlds.

It is Prakṛti that performs actions, the fruit whereof is either auspicious or inauspicious. And it is Prakṛti that can go as it pleases anywhere in all the three worlds and attains results.

One shall know of all these three regions as pertaining to Prakṛti, viz. 1) the birth as one of the low creatures, 2) the birth as a human being, 3) the birth in the heavenly world of gods.

Since it is unmanifest it can be inferred by means of symbols too.

In the same manner he considers the manly symbol only due to inference. Mingling with other symbols it becomes the unerring symbol of Prakṛti.

After presiding over the pores of vital airs the soul considers the actions to be in the Ātman itself.

All the sense organs such as the ear etc. and the five organs of action initiate passion etc. in the Guṇas along with the Guṇas.

The Ātman which is devoid of sense organs and organs of action thinks like this : "I am doing this. These are my organs".

One who is devoid of wounds thinks "I am wounded". One who is without a symbol thinks that it has a symbol. The

Ātman has no Kāla (Time) but he thinks it has a Kāla. Ātman is devoid of Sattva but thinks that it has Sattva. The Ātman is immortal but he thinks that it dies. He thinks that the Ātman is mobile while in reality it is immobile.

Ātman is really devoid of action but he thinks that it has action.

Ātman has no attachment but he thinks it has attachment. Ātman is different from a principle but he thinks it has principles. Ātman is devoid of birth but he thinks that it has birth.

Since he is not enlightened he considers the Ātman that is imperishable to be perishable.

Thus due to the state of not being enlightened and because unenlightened persons are resorted to, the soul attains thousands of crores of births ending with its downfall. It takes up thousands of births ending with its death, among the lower species of creatures or in the region of gods.

54-58. Due to the state of not being enlightened, the person of evil intellect is being taken away in a thousand ways like the moon in the current of water. Do also know that the moon is eternally possessed of sixteen parts but the ignorant one thinks it growing constantly. He is born again and again for ever.

The sixteenth digit is subtle. Let it be considered the real Moon. This digit is not consumed by Devas (gods). It remains for ever.

After destroying my-ness, O excellent king, he is born and joins Devas too. Since Prakṛti has three Guṇas, he is also Triguṇa (with three Guṇas).

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYFIVE

A dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Janaka (contd.)

Janaka said:

1. The relationship between the two viz., the Imperishable and (Perishable) is to be wished for. It is essential that there

should be a relationship between the two. The relationship between a woman and a man (is described here).

2. Without a man no woman conceives. Without a woman no man is able to evolve a form.

3. In all types of living beings the couple (i.e. male and female) evolve a new form by means of mutual contact. The new form evolved will have the features of both—the male and female.

4-6. For the sake of pleasure, the two will have intimate contact during the prescribed period after menstruation and a new form having the characteristics of those two will be evolved. I shall explain what constitute the characteristic features of the man and what of the woman who becomes the mother. O brahmin, we know that the bone, sinews and the marrow are derived from the father. We have heard that the skin, flesh and blood are acquired from the mother. O excellent brahmin, it is thus that the matter is explained in the Vedas and scriptures.

7. What is mentioned in the Vedas is authoritative, so also what is mentioned in the scriptures. The Vedas and scriptures are the two eternal authorities.

8-10. In the same manner (i.e. as in regard to a man and a woman) Prakṛti and Puruṣa have perpetual contact and hence, O holy Sir, the function of salvation does not exist. Or, should salvation be explained as something that is performed later on ? Do mention this to me. You are always sought after by me directly. Desirous of salvation we wish for the soul that is free from ailment, that cannot be conquered, that is free from old age, that is eternal, that is beyond the purview of sense-organs and that has no other overlord.

Vasiṣṭha said :

11. What Your Highness said, quoting the example from the Vedas and scriptures is quite apt. I shall add that you are a person who understands the real principle.

12. The texts of both, viz. the Vedas and other scriptures are held by you, O king. Be the person who understands the essence of the texts correctly.

13. If a person is interested only in holding the texts of the Vedas and other scriptures and he is not conversant with

the real meaning and principles it is in vain that he holds those texts.

14. He who does not understand the meaning of those texts is merely a carrier of a burden. The acquisition of the texts is not in vain in regard to a person who is conversant with the meaning and principles of the texts.

15. On being asked, only a man like me is competent to state the meaning of a text. Due to a true understanding, he alone grasps the correct meaning.

16. If a person of imperfect intellect is not eager to understand the meaning of the texts, how can that person of imperfect knowledge explain the texts with confidence?

17. If a person who has not understood the basic principles of a scriptural text begins to explain it out of greed or arrogance, he is a sinner and he will fall into hell.

18. A person of loopholes (i.e. imperfect knowledge) will never explain the text truthfully and confidently since he is neither self-possessed nor conversant with the meaning and basic principles of the text.

19. Hence listen, O great king, how this is being viewed actually by the noble-souled followers of Sāṃkhya and Yoga systems.

20. Whatever the followers of the Yoga system see (and understand), the Sāṃkhyas too follow. He who sees the identity of the Sāṃkhya and Yoga systems is wise.

21. Skin, flesh, blood, bile, marrow, bone and sinew—O dear one, these can be perceived by the sense-organs, as Your Highness has already told me.

22. A substance is evolved out of another substance and a sense organ is produced from another sense organ. One attains a body from another body and a seed from another seed.

23. How will there be Guṇas in the great Ātman because it is devoid of Guṇas? How can this embodied soul devoid of sense-organs have the Guṇas? How can there be Guṇa in a seed that is not solid?

24. Guṇas are produced from Guṇas and they cease to exist there itself. In the same manner the Guṇas arising out of Prakṛti are produced from Prakṛti but they end therein itself.

25-28. Skin, flesh, blood, fat, bile, bone-marrow and sinew—know them to be eight along with semen that is natural. The symbol of a woman is Prakṛti. It is male as well as female. This is called Vāyu (Wind), Pumān (Man) and Rasa (Juice). Prakṛti is devoid of symbol. It is perceived through the symbols born of itself in the same way as through flowers and fruits; the formless things are perceived among things with form. In the same manner the symbol is perceived through inference. Among the principles the twenty-fifth principle, O dear one, is of fixed nature.

29. It has neither beginning nor end; it is infinite; it observes everything; but it is isolated. It is due to the identification through the guṇas that it is called Guṇa.

30. The Guṇas exist in one with Guṇa. How can there be Guṇas in one without Guṇas? Hence those people who look at Guṇas know thus.

31. When this soul identifies itself with the Guṇas belonging to Prakṛti it is one with Guṇas and it observes the different Guṇas.

32-33. The fact that they call Śāmkhya and Yoga as existing beyond Intellect explains that it is highly intelligent while knowing; and it is unenlightened while avoiding the enlightened. They call Iśvara when it is manifest through its Guṇas. They call Iśvara without Guṇa, the perpetual presiding deity.

34. Scholars who are experts in Śāmkhya and Yoga and who seek the Supreme Soul understand the twenty-five principles constituted by Prakṛti and Guṇas.

35. The persons who are unenlightened, do not understand the enlightened and unmanifest one. They understand the manifest identical with the unmanifest.

36. This principle is perfect but their vision is imperfect. They do not understand the known as separate from the unknown.

37. This principle of perishable and Imperishable has been mentioned to you. They call Ekatva (unity) Aksara (Imperishable) and Nānātva (diversity) is called Kṣara.

38. This is stationed in the twenty-five principles. They say that it is perfect. Its unity is perceived. So also its diversity.

39. There is a separate citation of the principle and one who is conversant with the principle. Learned scholars say that the principles are twenty-five in number.

40. The learned men state that the twenty-fifth principle is devoid of Tattva (? principle). It is the practice that what should be discarded should be discarded. A twenty-fifth is eternal because of its reality.

Janaka said :

41. What has been stated by you, O excellent brahmin, viz. diversity and unity (is not understood by me) even as I observe it. Their example is in doubt.

42. Undoubtedly, with the gross intellect I do not see the reality, O sinless one, of that which is being known through Buddha (that which is understood) and Prabuddha (the enlightened).

43. The explanation too of the perishable and the imperishable, given by you, O sinless one, has been missed by me due to the unsteadiness of intellect.

44. Therefore, I wish to hear this, viz. the philosophy of diversity and unity as well as the mutually opposite pairs that are to be understood essentially and unobstructedly.

45. O holy one, I wish to know separately the distinction between knowledge and ignorance, the Imperishable and the perishable, Śāṃkhya and Yoga entirely, as well as the enlightened and the unenlightened.

Vasiṣṭha said :

46. Oh, I shall narrate unto you what you ask me. O great king, listen separately from me the function of Yoga.

47. To the followers of Yoga, meditation is a great power. The learned ones say that meditation is of two types.

48. (1) The concentration of mind, and (2) the control of breath. Prāṇāyāma is of two types, viz. Saguṇa and Nirguṇa. The Nirguṇa is mental.

49. One should not practise Prāṇāyāma for two units of time, O ruler of men, after passing urine, evacuating bowels and taking food. After that he shall do so with eagerness.

50-53. The devotee observing silence shall mentally turn the sense-organs away from the objects. (The control of breath) may last for ten or twelve (Mātrās). The intelligent devotee shall not induce himself to retain breath for more than twenty-four Mātrās. It is mentioned by scholars that breath control should not be practised while standing. We have heard that the Ātman of the universe should be known always. Indeed yoga can be practised by a person whose mind is not shaky. The person who meditates should be free from all attachments. His diet should be light. He shall control and conquer his senses. He shall fix the mind to the heart either early in the night or in the later half of the night.

54-55. O king of Mithilā, he shall steady the sense-organs by his mind. He shall steady his mind by his intellect. He shall be still like a stone. He should not tremble. He shall be steady like a post and still like a tree. He shall control himself by means of intellect. He shall be conversant with the mode and process of breath control. They call him yukta i.e. one who is in the state of Yoga.

56-57. He does not hear. He does not smell. He does not see anything. He is not aware of touch. His mind does not think or imagine anything. Like a log he does not know anything. The learned scholars call him Yukta and one who has attained Prakṛti or the primordial state.

58. Just as even when the lamp is not seen the light is seen, so also the soul without Linga shall have the movements below, above and sideways.

59. Being equipped with that the soul is stationed in the heart. When it is seen thus, O dear one, it is called by people like me Immanent soul, that which should be known, the knower.

60. Like fire without smoke, like sun with all its rays, like lightning in the sky, he sees the Ātman in the Ātman.

61. It has no source of origin and it is immortal. Only the learned scholars possessing courage and Brahmins adhering to their dharma can see it.

62. They call it minuter than the atom, and greater than the greatest. Though it stands firm everywhere in all living beings it is not perceived.

63. It is the creator of universe by means of intellect that could be observed by the light of the mind. Standing beyond the great Tamas, O dear one, it is (Non-Tāmasa).

64. Persons who are conversant with truth and who are masters of the Vedic lore declare that it is far off from darkness. It has various appellations, viz. Vimala (Devoid of impurities), Vimata (One who is particularly honoured), Nirlinga (That which is beyond symbols) and Alinga (That which has no symbols).

65. Yoga alone is the substance of the worlds. What else can be the characteristic feature of Yoga? One who sees thus perceives the unageing great Ātman.

66. So far the Yogic school of philosophy has been recounted in essence to you by me. I shall now recount the Sāṃkhya school which is an example of Parisāṃkhyā (Enumeration).

67. They call the great Prakṛti of the soul Avyakta (Unmanifest) and Prakhyāna (Proclamation). From it originated the second principle Mahat, O most excellent king.

68. The Principle originating from Mahat is Ahamkāra (Ego). The five elements originated from Ahamkāra.

69. These eight are Prakṛtis. The Vikāras (products) are sixteen in number. Five of them are Viśeṣas and five are the sense-organs.

70. Those who are conversant with the arrangement of the followers of the Sāṃkhya school, those who perpetually abide by the path of the Sāṃkhyas, those who are learned scholars in the Sāṃkhya school say that the number of principles is only this much.

71. Everything gets dissolved in its respective source of origin wherefrom it has been produced. These principles get dissolved in the reverse order and they are apprehended by the immanent soul.

72. The Guṇas (i.e. all evolved things) get dissolved in Guṇas like the waves of ocean. They are produced in the ordinary order and get dissolved in the reverse order.

73. The creation and annihilation of Prakṛti, O excellent king, is this much. In the process of creation it has diversity and unity at the time of annihilation.

74. This is what, O great king, should be understood by the experts. The presiding deity is the unmanifest.

75. It has unity and diversity in the same manner as in the case of Prakṛti. It has unity at the time of annihilation and multiplicity due to activity.

76. The Ātman shall evolve Prakṛti at the time of creation in various ways. The great Ātman, the twenty-fifth principle presides over that group.

77. It is called the presiding deity by ascetics. It is that because it presides over the group.

78. It knows the Kṣetra or the Avyakta. Hence it is called Kṣetrajña. It lies down in the Pura (city) of Avyakta. Therefore it is called Puruṣa.

79. The Kṣetra is separate from Kṣetrajña. The Kṣetra is called Avyakta and Jñātṛ (knower) is Puruṣa.

80. Jñāna (knowledge) is separate from Jñeyā (that which should be known). Jñāna is Avyakta; Jñeyā is Puruṣa.

81. The Avyakta is Kṣetra, Sattva etc. Puruṣa is Anīśvara (having no other master) and Atattva (devoid of Tattva).

82. In the school of Sāṃkhya there is no fixed number. The Sāṃkhyā creates and explains Prakṛti only.

83. The number can be forty or twenty-four. After enumerating factually (the principles are to be understood). The Sāṃkhya has a thousand processes. The twenty-fifth principle is beyond the other principles.

84. The twenty-fifth principle is mentioned in the Vedas as the Enlightened soul and knowing one. When he realises Ātman he becomes Kevala (The single one).

85. Thus the Sāṃkhya school of philosophy has been described to you briefly. Those who know thus attain liberation.

86. What is called perfect knowledge is the perception of Prakṛti. It has been already explained how that which possesses Guṇas could be produced from Nirguṇa (that which is devoid of Guṇas).

87-90. There is no return to this world to those who realize this. Nor do they turn to the state of mortality. Those who are non-intelligent do not perceive the distinction between the

changeable and the unchangeable. In regard to them the vision is not perfect. O king, they are born again and again. The Avyakta is called "Sarva" (the whole). The twenty-fifth principle is the part thereof. People comprehend Sarva not by Sarva. They comprehend Sarva by following Asarva. Those who know thus have no fear.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYSIX

Dialogue between Vasiṣṭha & Janaka (contd.)

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. The Sāṃkhya school of philosophy has so far been recounted unto you, O excellent king. Now listen to me and understand Vidyā and Avidyā in the proper order.

2. They say that Avyakta is non-differentiated during creation and annihilation. Twenty principles are called Vidyā and Avidyā and they are characterized by creation and annihilation.

3. Some principles are Vidyās and some are Avidyās; understand them in their proper order. O dear one, understand the recapitulation of the school of Sāṃkhya, as mentioned by the sages.

4. The sense-organs are Vidyā of the organs of action. Similarly (Tanmātras?) are the Vidyā of the sense-organs.

5. Learned men say that the mind is Vidyā of the objects of pleasure. They say that the five elements are the Vidyā of the mind.

6. Ahamkāra is the Vidyā of five elements. So, O lord of men, Ahamkāra is Vidyā and Buddhi is also Vidyā.

7. Prakṛti is the Vidyā of Buddhi. Avyakta, the Unmanifest, is the Vidyā of principles. O excellent one among men, Vidhi is also Vidyā.

8. They say that Avyakta is Apara (having nothing greater than it). It is the twenty-fifth principle and it is Vidyā. Every-

thing is mentioned as the Vidyā of Jñeya (which should be known) and Jñāna (knowledge).

9. Avyakta is mentioned by the word Jñāna while the Jñeya is the twenty-fifth principle. Similarly, Jñāna is Avyakta and the twenty-fifth principle is Vijñātṛ (knower).

10. Vidyā and Avidyā have been briefly mentioned by me. What is known as Akṣara and Kṣara, understand that from me.

11. Both of these are called Kṣara. Both of these are Anakṣara. I shall mention the reason thereof in relation to knowledge.

12. Both of them are without beginning and without end. Both of them are supreme. Both of them are known as Tattva by persons who think about Jñāna.

13. Due to the function of creation and annihilation they call Avyakta as unchanging. For the creation of Guṇas it undergoes change again and again.

14. The origin of Guṇas and Mahat etc. is mutual. They call Adhiṣṭhāna (basis) the Kṣetra (field). This is the twenty-fifth principle.

15. One shall reduce the cluster of Guṇas within, into the manifest Ātman. Therefore the ego gets dissolved in the twenty-fifth principle along with its Guṇas.

16. Guṇas get dissolved in Guṇas. Therefore, Prakṛti shall be one. Even the Kṣetrajña is made Kṣetrajña (i.e. the individual soul).

17. When Prakṛti characterised by Guṇas gets into the Akṣara there is Nirguṇatva (state of being devoid of Guṇas) in the body because of alteration in Guṇas.

18. It is in this very same way that Kṣetrajña (gets dissolved) by the decrease of the knowledge of Kṣetra. We have heard that it is naturally devoid of Guṇas.

19. When this becomes Kṣara it knows Prakṛti possessed of Guṇas, among Guṇas and also Prakṛti devoid of Guṇas of the Ātman.

20. Moreover, he becomes pure avoiding Prakṛti and realising "I am different from Prakṛti".

21. Then he attains freedom from pain. It does not get

mixed with Prakṛti, O great king. It is quite a different one that is mixed and that is seen by others.

22. When he treats with contempt the Guṇas, pertaining to Prakṛti, he sees the great one.

23-25. "What has been done by me so far ? I have been immersed in the ocean of time. Just as the fish in the sea identifies itself with the water and adapts itself to it, so also I identify myself with the different persons due to delusion. The fish does not understand its difference from water due to ignorance. Since I slight the Ātman I do not understand it or anything else.

26. Fie upon me whose intellect has become vitiated and who have become immersed in this. Due to delusion I have followed it up, I have followed different persons (?)

27-30. This fellow is my relative. He may experience my decline in strength. I have attained similarity and identity with this fellow. I am of the same type as this fellow. I perceive equality here. I am like him. Indeed this fellow is free from impurities. It is clear. I am also like this then. Due to ignorance and delusion I have acted like this along with the ignorant Prakṛti. I have remained all this due to this contact. So I have been captivated by it and I did not become enlightened so far with regard to persons of noble nature, middlings or lowly ones. How can I associate with it ?

31. Due to the state of not being enlightened I had associated with Māyā. Now I have become free.

32-33. Now I shall not associate with it. The fact that I who am free from aberrations have been deceived by Māyā which is an aberration, is not its fault. It is my fault for I had been attached to it and I had been approached by it with face turned away.

34. Therefore, I have been stationed in this in multifarious forms. Though, really I am devoid of form I assume forms. Though devoid of form, though actually unembodied, I have been overwhelmed by my-ness.

35-36. Therefore aberrations have been created by that Prakṛti in the course of different births. Though I am devoid of my-ness (actually) aberrations have been created by the same my-ness. I have been born in various wombs and while

remaining there, my mind had been devoid of consciousness. Equality has not been achieved by me due to Ahamkāra (Ego).

37. After splitting itself into many he joins me once again. Now I am enlightened. I am devoid of my-ness. I am devoid of egoism.

38. The evil quality of my-ness is always generated in the mind and caused by Ego. After abandoning this which has clung to me I shall resort to the state free from ailment.

39. I shall identify myself with this (i.e. the soul) and not with Prakṛti which often misleads. My welfare is with the soul and not with Prakṛti."

40. Thus by addressing the greatest, the twenty-fifth principle is awakened. After abandoning the Kṣara he attains the state of Akṣara devoid of ailment.

41. (He attains the state Akṣara that is Avyakta (unmanifest) and Nirguṇa (devoid of Guṇas) after abandoning the Kṣara that is Vyaktadharma (whose attributes are manifest) and Saguna (possessed of Guṇas). After seeing the Nirguṇa first, O king of Mithilā, he becomes similar to it.

42. Thus the example of Akṣara and Kṣara has been explained to you by me as it has been expounded in the Vedas. It is richly endowed with knowledge.

43. It is free from doubts. It is subtle, pure and free from impurities. I shall explain it once again in the manner heard by me. Understand it.

44. The philosophy of the schools of Sāṃkhya and Yoga has been recounted by me with examples from the two systems. What is stated in the Sāṃkhya is the same which is stated in the Yoga system.

45-48. The Jñāna of the Sāṃkhyas, O ruler of the Earth, is conducive to the awakening (of the soul). It is clearly explained with a desire for the welfare of disciples.

Moreover, scholars say that this system is very comprehensive. In this system, O lord of men, a principle other than the twenty-five, viz. Rebirth is included.

The greatest principle of the Sāṃkhyas has been duly described. That is Buddha (enlightened), Apratibuddha (unenlightened), and Budhyamāna (that is being enlightened).

They say that Budhyamāna Buddhatva (the state of being enlightened that is being understood) is the Yogic principle.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYSEVEN

Dialogue between Vasiṣṭha and Kardla Janaka concluded

Vasiṣṭha said :

1. Prakṛti creates and seizes the unenlightened unmanifest storehouse of Guṇas even as Guṇas hold the Tattvas.

2. In a playful manner, O king, Aja the unborn attains the state of modification; splitting itself into many it is perceived as though it is really multifarious.

3. Budhyamāna that disturbs and stirs this up like this, is not comprehended. It creates, seizes and practices Guṇas.

4. They call this Budhyamāna because it enlightens Avyakta. Avyakta is not comprehended in any other manner whether it is Saguna or Nirguna.

5. It is only sometimes that it is so, so they call it Prati-buddhaka (Enlightened). If the Avyakta is comprehended it is the twenty-fifth principle.

6. The Budhyamāna certainly becomes one with myness for its characteristic feature—so says the Veda. By becoming enlightened due to mutual endeavour it becomes Avyakta that never swerves—They say thus.

7-8. They call this Budhyamāna because it enlightens Avyakta. It is the twenty-fifth principle. It is the great Ātman. It does not comprehend the twenty-sixth principle, the Buddha (enlightened), devoid of impurities, the eternal, one that cannot be perceived. It comprehends the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth principles always.

9. The perceptible and the imperceptible, O king of great lustre, follow its nature. The Avyakta, O dear one, comprehends that Brahman which is non-dual.

10-12. It comprehends the Ātman, the twenty-fifth and the twenty-fourth principle. At the time of comprehending the

Ātman, when he considers “I am another” he becomes one with the Avyakta as his eyes and so endowed with Prakṛti. When he comprehends the pure Buddhi without impurities, O mighty king, he comprehends the twenty-sixth principle. Contented, he proceeds (ahead). Thereafter he abandons Avyakta with creation and annihilation as the characteristic features.

13. It comprehends Prakṛti which is devoid of consciousness and which is endowed with Guṇas. It becomes one with the features of lonely Ātman by virtue of realizing of the Avyakta.

14. After coming into contact with the Kevala it shall attain the liberated soul. They call this Tattva (principle) and (the soul) that is without old age and death, Nistattva (one that is beyond the principles).

15. Only by duly listening to the description of the Tattvas does the soul, O king, become conversant with the principles. Learned scholars speak about twenty-five principles.

16. Never does a person conversant with the Tattvas get immersed in the ocean of worldly existence, O dear one. The Tattvas approach these persons quickly. Now understand their characteristics.

17. Prājña free from old age and death is understood as the twenty-sixth principle. Undoubtedly it attains equality with Śakti, it itself being Śakta.

18. Abuddhimān (that which has no intellect) is being awakened by the Buddha (the enlightened one) that is the twenty-sixth principle. This is called diversity, Nānātva, as explained in the Sāṃkhya scriptures.

19. When it is comprehended by the intellect the twenty-fifth principle, accompanied by conscious one, Cetana, shall have unity.

20. It attains equality, O king of Mithilā, with (the enlightened one) that is being comprehended. Although the Ātman is devoid of attachment, O ruler of men, it has the features and characteristics of what is being attached.

21. They understand that the twenty-sixth principle is evolved out of Karman, after attaining the Ātman that is free from attachment. When this is enlightened the omnipresent soul abandons the Avyakta.

22-24. The twenty-fourth principle is very subtle due to the enlightenment of the twenty-sixth principle. Thus the Aprati-buddha (non-enlightened), Buddha (the enlightened) and the Budhyamāna have been briefly described to you, O sinless one, in the manner explained in the śāstras. The difference between these two is the same as between Maśaka (mosquito) and Udumbara (the fruit of a particular tree). The difference obtained between the two is the same as between fish and water. The unity and diversity of the two should be thought of in this manner.

25-26. What is mentioned as salvation is this much. It is termed Jñāna and Vijñāna. The desire, viz. "This person should be liberated" is suddenly originated in the body of the twenty-fifth principle, they say, within the view of the Avyakta. It is certain that he will be liberted thus and not otherwise.

27-30. The soul acquires the characteristics of another object by associating with it. It becomes pure when associating with the pure one and not with the impure one. It becomes free from attributes while associating with the enlightened, O bull among men. While associating with one with the feeling of detachment the soul becomes liberated. While associating with the liberated it becomes Liberated. One with unlimited intellect becomes pure and of pure activities while associating with one of pure activities. While associating with the soul free from impurities it becomes pure; while associating with the single it becomes single soul. While associating with the independent it becomes independent.

31. O great king, the truth and the truthful reality have been recounted so far. By grasping with your intellect the eternal Brahman, the first pure one, you have become Amatasara, devoid of jealousy.

32. O king, this great truth should not be imparted to a person not abiding by the Vedas. It imparts enlightenment in regard to a person who is desirous of acting according to it. It admonishes one who bows down for enlightenment.

33. This truth should not be imparted to a liar nor to a rogue, nor to an impotent person nor to a person of crooked intellect. It should not be imparted to a person who harasses scholars devoted to knowledge. It should be imparted for the enlightenment of the disciples.

34. This should be imparted to a disciple who is equipped with faith and good qualities, who refrains from slandering others, who possesses pure Yoga and who is a learned one equipped with forbearance and sympathy.

35. This secret should be imparted to a person who has discrimination, who is fond of injunctions, who is devoid of quarrelsome dispute, who has learned much, who has humble dress and demeanour and who has no selfish motive.

36. They say that knowledge of this great Brahman should not be imparted to a person who is devoid of these qualities. The narration of virtue in regard to such person is not conducive to welfare, because it is like charity accorded to a person who does not deserve it.

37. This should not be given to a person who has no sacred rites even if the entire earth full of jewels were given away. O leader of men, this great thing should be imparted to a person who has conquered his sense organs, who observes pure rites and who knows reality.

38. O Karāla, let there be no fear at all in you. This great Brahman has been heard by you today. It has been duly recounted. It is extremely sacred. It is fully free from grief. It has neither beginning nor middle nor end.

39-40. It is unfathomable. It is free from old age and death. It is free from ailment. It is auspicious. It is free from fear. In view of the erroneousness of the argument of others, the eternal Brahmā had been propitiated with great effort. That eternal Brahmā of brilliant splendour had been propitiated and this had been acquired in 'the same manner as this has been acquired by you.

41. I have been asked by you, O leader of men. So this has been recounted to you exclusively as it had been obtained from Brahmā. It is the great knowledge, the utmost resort of those who are conversant with salvation.

Vyāsa said :

42. This great Brahman, the twenty-fifth principle, from which one does not return has now been recounted in the same manner as it had been recounted, O excellent sages, by Vasiṣṭha formerly.

43-44. He who does not completely and accurately understand the great unchanging knowledge, free from death and old age, even after striving for comprehension, returns.

O brahmins, this Jñāna that is conducive to salvation, has been truthfully described by me after listening to it (and understanding it) from the divine sage.

45. This was derived by sage Vasiṣṭha from Brahmā. Nārada the greatest among sages obtained this from Vasiṣṭha.

45. This eternal doctrine has been recounted to me and it has been obtained by me from Nārada. After hearing about this great doctrine, O excellent sages, you will not feel sorry.

47. He has no fear who has understood that Kṣara and Akṣara are different. He has fear certainly who does not know this accurately.

48. Due to the absence of perfect knowledge a person of confounded soul undergoes hardships again and again and attains thousands of births ending with death.

49. Or he may go to the heavenly world or to the realm of low creatures or to the human world. Or perhaps he is released from that ocean of ignorance.

50. In the terrible ocean of ignorance the unmanifest is called the unfathomable one. O brahmins, it is here that the living beings become immersed day by day.

51. Hence due to the destruction of the unfathomable Avyakta, the eternal one, all of you, O brahmins, have become free from Rajas and Tamas.

52. Thus, O excellent sages, the great Liberation, the essence of essences, has been recounted by me. On realising it one does not return.

53. It should not be imparted to an atheist or to a person who is not a devotee. O brahmins, it should not be imparted to an evil-minded person nor to a person who has no faith and who is averse to everything good.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTYEIGHT

In praise of the Purāna

Lomaharṣana said :

1-3. Thus, O brahmins, sage Vyāsa recounted the Purāṇa to the sages formerly in smooth voice. His words were pregnant with meaning. His statements were free from eighteen defects. They were free from impurities. They were pure. The Purāṇa is full of the gist of different scriptures. It is fully endowed with pure words of good quality embellished with the principles of the systems of Sāṃkhya and Yoga. It contains the *prima facie* views of the opponent and the finally established doctrines. The highly intelligent sage Vyāsa stopped after recounting this duly.

4-5. After hearing the first Purāṇa named Brāhma which is on a par with the Vedas and which bestows the desired fruits, they became delighted and pleased as well as surprised again and again. Then they praised sage Vyāsa, Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana Vyāsa.

The sages said :

6-12. O excellent sage, the Purāṇa that is on a par with the Vedas, which bestows all wished-for fruits, which dispels all sins and which contains wonderful words and letters has been recounted by you and heard by us. O holy lord, there is nothing unknown to you in the three worlds. O extremely fortunate one, you are omniscient like Brhaspati among Devas. We shall bow down to you, the great sage of excessive intelligence, closely adhering to Brahman. O great sage, who can recount good qualities since the meanings of the Vedic passages have been explained in the Mahābhārata. After learning the four Vedas with ancillary subjects including Grammar you have composed the sacred book Bhārata. Obeisance to you who have the characteristics of perfect knowledge. Obeisance to you, O Vyāsa, of vast knowledge, of eyes resembling the wide petals of a full-blown lotus. It is by you that the light of knowledge has been made to burn filling it with the oil of Bhārata. By the collyrium-rod of perfect knowledge the eyes of persons blinded by the

darkness of ignorance, going astray due to evil visions, have opened up.

Lomaharṣaṇa said :

13. After saying this they honoured and worshipped Vyāsa and went back in the manner they had come to their respective hermitages. They were contented.

14. In the same manner, O excellent sages, the eternal Purāṇa that is highly meritorious and which destroys all sins has been recounted by me.

15. O excellent brahmins, whatever has been asked by you all, has been expounded by me by the grace of Vyāsa.

16. This should be listened to by householders, ascetics and religious students. It bestows wealth and happiness to men. It destroys all sins.

17. Moreover this must be attentively listened to by brahmins devoted to Brahman as well as brahmins and others who are well-disciplined and who desire welfare.

18. (By doing so) a brahmin acquires learning; a Kṣatriya victory in battle; a Vaiśya everlasting wealth; and a Śūdra happiness.

19. If a person of great purity listens to it meditating upon a particular desire he acquires the same whatever be the desire.

20. This is a Purāṇa belonging to Viṣṇu. It destroys sins. It is more excellent than all other scriptural texts. It is conducive to the fulfilment of all aims of life.

21. This Purāṇa that is on a par with the Vedas has been explained by me to you. When this is listened to the heap of sins arising from all defects, is destroyed.

22. What a man obtains after fasting at Prayāga, Puṣkara, Kurukṣetra and Arbuda, he obtains the same by listening to this.

23. The great merit that a man obtains by performing Agnihotra extremely well for a whole year, O brahmins, is obtained by listening to this once.

24-25. The benefit that a man derives by taking bath in the waters of Yamunā on the Dvādaśī day in the month of Proṣṭhapada, or by visiting Hari at Mathurā is obtained if the

devotee dedicates his mind to Keśava and recites this Purāṇa with great concentration, O brahmins.

26. He who reads or listens to this Purāṇa obtains that benefit which a person derives by visiting ŚRĪ.

27. The man who reads and listens faithfully to this Purāṇa which is on a par with the Vedas goes to the abode of Hari.

28. A brahmin with mental control who recounts this on holy Parvan days and on eleventh and twelfth days of the lunar fortnight goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

29. This is conducive to fame and long life. It bestows happiness. It increases fame. O brahmins, it bestows strength and nourishment. It is conducive to wealth. It destroys bad dreams.

30. A scholar who reads this excellent narrative during the three joints (i.e. dawn, noon and sunset) with faith and great concentration shall obtain all desired things.

31. He who is distressed due to sickness is liberated from sickness. He who is in bondage is liberated from bondage. He who is frightened is released from fear and he who is caught in adversity is liberated from adversity.

32. He obtains ability to remember births, learning, sons, intelligence, animals, courage, virtue, wealth, love and salvation.

33. If a man reads this with pure mind he obtains all those desired things which he must have kept in his mind.

34. He who listens to this Purāṇa which bestows heavenly pleasures and salvation after bowing to Viṣṇu the preceptor of the worlds, with great devotion in the mind and purity in mind and body, becomes free from sins. After enjoying happiness here and divine happiness in heaven he goes to Hari's region without impurity afterwards. He is freed from the Guṇas of Prakṛti.

35. This excellent Purāṇa that yields much benefit and bestows virtue, wealth and salvation should be listened to everyday by excellent brahmins who are devoutly engaged in their own pious activity and who are desirous of attaining the sole path of salvation, by leading Kṣatriyas of self-control and discipline who always seek welfare, by Vaiśyas born of pure family, and by virtuous Śūdras.

36. You are all excellent men. Let your mind be diverted to virtue, that alone is favourable to one who has gone to the other world, like a relative. Riches and women though resorted to by clever persons do not attain power and stability.

37. A man acquires a kingdom through virtue. A man acquires longevity, renown, austerity, piety and salvation through virtue.

38. Dharma is both mother and father. Dharma is friend and companion to a man both in this world and in the other. Dharma is a saviour here. It is the bestower of salvation. There is nothing (of consequence) except Dharma.

39. This secret and excellent Purāṇa that is on a par with the Vedas should not be imparted to an evil mind, and particularly to an atheist.

40. This excellent Purāṇa has been narrated by me and listened to by you. It dispels sins and increases virtue. It is extremely secret. O sages, permit me I shall go.

CONTENTS

GAUTAMI-MĀHĀTMYA [THE GLORIFICATION OF GAUTAMI]

CHAPTERS

1. Holy Centres	759
2. Śiva's Marriage	762
3. Gift of a Water Vessel to Brahmā	766
4. How Gaṅgā Entered the Matted Hair of Śiva	770
5. Vināyaka and Gautama	776
6. Descent of Gautamī	784
7. Glory of the Holy River	789
8. The Descent of Bhāgirathī	793
9. The Holy Centre Varāha	799
10. Kapotatīrtha	801
11. Kumāratīrtha	809
12. Krittikā Tīrtha	811
13. Daśāśvamedha Tīrtha	812
14. Paiśāca Tīrtha	815
15. Kṣudhā Tīrtha	816
16. Indra Tīrtha : Ahalyāsaṅgama Tīrtha	819
17. Janasthāna Tīrtha	825
18. Cakratīrtha	827
19. Aśvabhānu Tīrtha	832
20. Garuḍa Tīrtha	835
21. Govardhana Tīrtha	839
22. Pāpapraṇāśana Tīrtha	840
23. Viśvāmitra Tīrtha	844
24. Śveta and other Tīrthas	847
25. Śukratīrtha and Mṛtasañjivani Tīrtha	851

Contents

26. Seven Thousand Holy Centres	854
27. Paulastyā Tīrtha	856
28. Agnitīrtha	859
29. R̄namocana Tīrtha	861
30. Kadrū-Suparnā-Saṅgama Tīrtha	863
31. Sarasvatīsaṅgama	866
32. Review of the Greatness of Five Tīrthas	868
33. Śamī and other Holy Centres	869
34. Twentytwo Thousand Holy Centres	870
35. The Twentyfive Confluences of Various Rivers	878
36. Amṛtāsaṅgama and other Holy Centres	881
37. Description of Seventeen Holy Centres	885
38. Sixteen Thousand Holy Centres	893
39. Cakra Tīrtha	905
40. Cakreśvara and other Holy Centres	910
41. Nāgatīrtha a Holy Centre	932
42. Mātṛtīrtha	940
43. Brahmatīrtha and other Holy Centres	943
44. Avighnatīrtha	945
45. Śeṣatīrtha and other Holy Centres	947
46. Vaḍavā and other Holy Centres	949
47. Ātmatīrtha	952
48. Aśvatha and other Tīrthas	954
49. Somatīrtha	957
50. Dhānyatīrtha	959
51. Vidarbhaśaṅgama and other Holy Centres	961
52. Pūrṇatīrtha and other Holy Centres	963
53. Rāmatīrtha and other Holy Centres	973
54. Putratīrtha and other Holy Centres	991
55. Holy Centres Yamatīrtha etc.	1004
56. The Holy Centre Tapastīrtha and Others	1010
57. Holy Centre Ārṣīṣenatīrtha etc.	1014
58. Holy Centre Tapovanatīrtha etc.	1020
59. Holy Centres Indratīrtha etc.	1027
60. Āpastambatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1038
61. Holy Centres Yamatīrtha and Others	1042
62. Holy Centres Yakṣīśaṅgama etc.	1047
63. Śuklatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1048
64. Cakratīrtha and other Holy Centres	1050

Contents

65.	Vāṇīsaṅgama and other Holy Centres	1051
66.	Viṣṇutīrtha and other Holy Centres	1054
67.	Lakṣmītīrtha and other Holy Centres	1057
68.	Bhānutīrtha and other Holy Centres	1061
69.	Khaḍgatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1065
70.	Anvindratiṛtha and other Holy Centres	1067
71.	Kapilasaṅgama and other Holy Centres	1071
72.	Devasthāna and other Holy Centres	1074
73.	Siddhatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1076
74.	Paruṣṇisaṅgama and other Holy Centres	1077
75.	Mārkaṇḍeyatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1080
76.	Yāyātatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1081
77.	Apsaroyugasāṅgama Tīrtha and other Holy Centres	1086
78.	Koṭitīrtha and other Holy Centres	1088
79.	Narasimhatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1090
80.	Paiśācatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1091
81.	Nimnabheda and other Holy Centres	1094
82.	Nandītaṭa and other Holy Centres	1096
83.	Bhāvatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1100
84.	Sahasrakuṇḍa and other Holy Centres	1101
85.	Kapilatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1104
86.	Śaṅkhahrada and other Holy Centres	1105
87.	Kiṣkindhā—A Holy Centre	1106
88.	Vyāsatīrtha—A Holy Centre	1109
89.	Vañjāraśāṅgama and other Holy Centres	1113
90.	The Holy Centre Devāgamatīrtha	1118
91.	The Description of Kuśatarpaṇa and other Holy Centres	1120
92.	The Holy Centre Manyu	1126
93.	Sārasvata and other Holy Centres	1129
94.	Ciñcikatīrtha and other Holy Centres	1134
95.	Bhadratīrtha	1138
96.	Pata <tr>trītīrtha</tr>	1142
97.	Vipratīrtha also known as Nārāyaṇatīrtha	1143
98.	Bhānutīrtha and other Holy Centres	1146
99.	The Holy Centre Bhilla	1150
100.	Cakṣustīrtha and other Holy Centres	1154
101.	Urvāśi and other Holy Centres	1162

Contents

102. Meeting of Godāvarī and the Sea in Seven Branches	1167
103. R̄ṣisatra and Bhīmeśvaratīrtha	1169
104. The Confluence of Gaṅgā with Sea	1172
105. The Benefits of Listening to the Purāṇa	1175
INDEX	1185

GAUTAMI-MĀHĀTMYA
[THE GLORIFICATION OF GAUTAMI]

CHAPTER ONE
Holy Centres

The sages said :

1. Listening to the description of holy centres in detail, we never feel satiated. We ask you to narrate the great secret once again, the great grandeur of the holy centre, the most excellent of all excellent holy centres.

Brahmā said :

2. Formerly, O excellent brahmins, I was asked this very same question by Nārada. Then I told him that with great effort.

Nārada said :

3. This has been heard by me from you, O lord of the universe, O source of origin of the Universe, viz. that the resorting to the holy centres is better than austerities, sacrifices and charitable gifts.

4. O lord of the Devas, how many varieties of holy centres are there? What are their benefits? Which is more excellent than all the other holy centres for ever?

Brahmā said :

5-7. There are four varieties of holy centres, O most venerable sage, viz. Daiva, Āsura, Ārsa and Mānuṣa. They are well-known in heaven, on Earth, nether regions—nay, in all the three worlds and resorted to by gods etc. The holy centre Ārsa is more desirable than the holy centres pertaining to human beings. The holy centre belonging to Asuras bestows more benefit than the holy centres belonging to sages. O son, the holy centre belonging to gods is more desirable than the holy centres belonging to Asuras.

8. The holy centre created by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa and others is called Daiva (Divine). They do not know anything greater than this because one is produced from the three.

9. The holy centre of the three worlds is cited as human. There also, the holy centre in the Jambū island is highly excellent with many qualities.

10. Among the holy centres of Jambū¹ island Bhārata Varsa is the holy centre well known in the Vedas. Among the holy centres of Bhārata Dāṇḍaka² forest is the most excellent of all holy centres. O son, it is called a holy centre because it is a sphere of holy rites.

11. The holy centres mentioned by me to you are there itself. Listen to their names mentioned by me briefly.

12-13. The different types of holy centres are Daiva, Āsura, Ārṣa and Mānuṣa i.e. divine, demoniac, saintly and human.

Between Himavān and Vindhya there are six rivers of divine origin. Similarly, O brahmin, there are six rivers of divine origin between Vindhya and the Southern Sea. These twelve rivers are glorified as the most important of all.

14. Since Bhārata bestows much merit it is highly honoured. Hence that sub-continent is called the sphere of holy rites by Devas.

15-19. In some places the holy centres of mountains are Divine ones.

That which is surrounded by demons is called Āsura.

In the divine regions great sages perform penances and create holy centres due to the divine power or the power of their penance. They create these centres for their own welfare, prosperity, worship and salvation. They are called Ārṣa (Saintly holy centres).

O Nārada, they call the holy centres created by men as the human holy centres. These centres are created by men for their own benefit and prosperity or for the acquisition of fame.

1. One of the seven continents of the earth having nine divisions or *varsas* including Bhārata or India, the remaining six being Plakṣa, Sālmali, Kuśa, Krauñca, Śāka and Puṣkara (Vide Agni P. 108. 1-3)

2. A forest tract lying between the Godāvāri and Narmadā rivers in the South and a scene of many episodes in the Rāmāyaṇa.

Thus O excellent sage, there are four different types of holy centres.

No one, even the Yogin, knows the different types. O Nārada, it behoves you to hear about them attentively.

Many persons who profess to be scholars hear and recount. But some meritorious person knows how to speak and hear by virtue of his own good qualities.

Nārada said :

20-22. I wish to hear factually their difference and features, on hearing which one attains perpetual liberation from all sins. O Brahmā, in the beginning of the Kṛta age¹ there is no other means except resorting to holy centres which bestows the desired results with least amount of strain. O Creator, there is no other speaker or knower equal to you. You are born in the navel lotus of Viṣṇu. You are born ahead of all.

Brahmā said :

23. These six rivers in the south of the Vindhya are glorified, viz. Godāvari, Bhīmarathī, Tuṅgabhadrā, Venikā, Tāpi and Payoṣṇī.

24. Bhāgirathī, Narmadā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Viśokā and Vitastā are dependent on the Himālayan ridges.

25-33. These are the holiest rivers. They are cited as the holy centres.

The holy centres surrounded by the following Asuras are the Āsura holy centres: Gaya, Kolāsura, Vṛtra, Tripura, Andhaka, Hayamūrdhan, Lavaṇa, Namuci, Śringaka, Yama, Pātālaketu, Madhu and Puṣkara. They are auspicious.

O Nārada, the saintly holy centres are those holy centres frequented by the following sages: Prabhāsa, Bhārgava, Agasti, Nara, Nārāyaṇa, Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvāja, Gautama, Kaśyapa, Manu and others.

The human holy centres are those created by the following human beings: Ambariṣa, Hariścandra, Nahuṣa, Rāma, Kuru, Kanakhala, Bharata, Sagara, Aśvayūpa, Nāciketā and

1. The first of the four ages of the world during which righteousness has a complete sway.

Vṛṣākapi the suppressor of foes. O brahmin, they are holy centres created by them for their own fame, benefit, prosperity etc.

Wherever there are holy centres that have sprung up themselves anywhere in the three worlds they are called Daiva holy centres. They call them Punyatirthas.

The different holy centres have been mentioned by me.

What is not dug up by anyone is called Devakhāta (dug up by gods). O sage, the different holy centres have been briefly recounted by me to you. Merely by knowing them man is released from all sins.

CHAPTER TWO

Sīva's Marriage

Nārada said :

1. The holy centre that is presided over by three deities is the most excellent of all holy centres. Kindly recount to me its form and different types in detail.

Brahmā said :

2. The other holy centres or sacred regions and sacrifice or other holy rites are effective only as long as the holy centre presided over by three deities, is not visited.

3-5. Resorting to Gaṅgā yields greater benefit than holy rites, fasts and Kṛcchra rites. Kṛcchra¹ rites should be performed in holy centres. O sage, holy centres purify all objects, oneself, mother, father etc. Except in holy centre presided over by the three deities there cannot be any remission in sins. Remembered, seen or touched it yields all desired objects. This Gaṅgā is the most excellent of all rivers. It bestows all desired things. It is presided over by three deities, O excellent sage. Listen to its origin.

1. A common word for several types of austerities involving bathing, fasting, worship and other prescribed religious observances.

6. Ten thousand years before, when Devas were ascendant Tāraka¹ became very powerful. He became very arrogant due to the boons granted by me.

7-8. The great glory as well as wealth of Devas was taken away by that powerful demon. Thereafter, Devas along with their leader Indra sought shelter in the lord of the worlds, the great grandfather of the Universe, who was lying in the milk-ocean. With their palms joined in reverence Devas who had none else to approach said to Viṣṇu:

Devas said :

9. O lord, you are the saviour of the worlds. You increase the fame of Devas. O lord of all, O source of origin of the Universe, O lord with the three Vedas for your form, obeisance to you.

10. You alone are the creator of the world, destroyer of Asuras and lord of the worlds. O Jaganmaya (who are identical with the Universe), you are the cause of creation, sustenance, and destruction.

11. In the whole of the three worlds, there is no other saviour to the embodied beings under the storm and stress of adversities. O lotus-eyed one, excepting you there is none to quell the three kinds of distress.²

12. You are the father and mother of the universe. O lord, you are easily accessible through service. Be pleased, O lord, save us from great dangers. Say, who is the destroyer of our distress excepting you ?

13. You are the primordial maker. You are the Boar, Fish and Tortoise.³ When fear overwhelms us you protect us by assuming different forms.

14. O lord Hari, we have no other refuge. Our lordship has been taken away. Our women have been disgraced. We have been rendered homeless. O lord, why don't you protect us ?

1. A demon who after propitiating Śiva by his penance became a great terror to the world and was ultimately killed by Skanda.

2. The three kinds are ādhyātmika, ādhidaivika and ādhibhautika or those due to diseases and other bodily causes, those due to super-natural agencies and those caused by natural calamities.

3. Three well known incarnations of god Viṣṇu.

Brahmā said :

15. Then the lord of Lakṣmī, who lies on the serpent Śeṣa, said to them: “Whence has this danger and fear come over to you? Please speak out without any tension.” Then they said to the lord of Lakṣmī in regard to the Asura Tāraka.

Devas said :

16-17. A terrible danger from Tāraka has overwhelmed us. It causes hairs to stand on end. We are not capable of killing him in battles or by curses or austerities. He will meet death from a child who is not yet ten days old. Hence, O lord, let action be taken with regard to him.

Brahmā said :

18-20. Again Nārāyaṇa said : “O Devas, I am not very powerful. He cannot be killed by me or by my child or by Devas. Tāraka, the scorcher of the worlds, will meet death from that extremely powerful child who may be born of lord Śiva. Hence, let us all go, O Devas, along with sages in order to strive for the marriage of lord Śiva. This is the first attempt that should be made by us who are powerful enough for that.”

21-22. After saying “So be it” Devas went to the excellent mountain Himavān full of jewels and to Menā the beloved wife of Himavān. All of them said this to Himavān and his wife:

23-25. “Dakṣa’s daughter who is the mother of the worlds, who is Śiva stationed as Śakti, who has various forms in the world such as Buddhi (intellect), Prajñā (intelligence), Dhṛti (courage), Medhā (faculty of comprehension), Lajjā (bashfulness), Puṣṭi (nourishment) and Sarasvatī (Speech) and who sanctifies the worlds shall enter Menā’s womb in order to achieve success in the affairs of Devas. On being born that mother of the Universe will become Śiva’s wife. She will protect all of us as well as you.”

Brahmā said :

26. Himavān approved of the scheme of Devas. Menā became extremely enthusiastic and said “Let it be so”.

27. Then the mother of the Universe was born as Gaurī in the abode of Himavān. She was engaged in meditation of

Śiva. She was his beloved. She considered him as her ultimate resort.

28. Devas said to her: "Enter penance for Iśa". Then Gaurī performed penance on the ridge of the mountain Himālaya.

29-30. Again Devas took counsel with one another. They said: "How can Iśa meditate on her? Does he meditate on the Ātman or anything else ? We do not know. How can the lord of Devas be made to fix his mind on the daughter of Menā ? Some means should be employed in regard to this. Thence you will derive excellence."

Then the highly intelligent Brhaspati of liberal intellect said:
Brhaspati said :

31. The intelligent Cupid who wields the flowery bow and excites people must hit the quiescent Śiva by means of splendid flowery arrows.

32. Pierced by the arrows the three-eyed lord may fix his mind on her. Then the lord will certainly marry her.

33. The arrows of the victorious Cupid have never been ineffective anywhere. So when the mother of the Universe gets married a son will be born to her.

34-35. That son born to the three-eyed lord will kill Tāraka. Give unto Kāma, Vasanta the storehouse of flowers as an assistant. He delights the minds of everyone.

Brahmā said :

36. Saying "So be it" Devas, the suppressors of their enemies felt relieved. They sent Cupid and Spring to Śiva.

37. Holding his bow and accompanied by Spring and his consort Rati, Cupid hurried to perform that very difficult task.

38-39. Holding the bow and arrows he stood in front of Śiva and began to think "Shall the lord Śiva, the preceptor of the worlds, be pierced ? I am the conqueror of universe. But are my arrows firm in regard to him ?"

He was reduced to ashes by Śiva by his fiery eyes.

40-44. In order to watch the same activity steadily Devas came there. Listen to the surprising event that happened then. Devas looked at Śiva. Even as they glanced at Cupid, they saw him reduced to ashes and they were frightened. With the palms joined together Devas eulogised the lord.

Devas said :

Great fear of Tāraka has overwhelmed us. Make the daughter of Himavān your wife.

Brahmā said :

Lord Śiva whose mind had been pierced, immediately acted according to the entreaties of Devas. It is the nature of noble souls that they do not consider their own welfare while they make sacrifices for the sake of others.

Devas sent Arundhatī, Vasiṣṭha, the discus-bearing Viṣṇu and me for the arrangement of the wedding.

In this manner the alliance between Himavān and Śiva, the lord of the Universe, was effected.

CHAPTER THREE

Gift of a Water Vessel to Brahmā

Brahmā said :

1-4. The wedding took place on the excellent Himālaya mountain which is wonderfully bedecked in different kinds of jewels, which is full of various sorts of trees and creepers, which is frequented by different birds, which is encompassed by rivers, lakes, tanks, wells, which is frequented by Devas, Gandharvas,¹ Siddhas,² Cāraṇas,³ Yakṣas⁴ and others, which is richly endowed with splendid wind, which was the sole cause of excessive merriment, which is surrounded by Meru,⁵ Mandara,⁶ Kailāsa,⁷ Maināka⁸ and other mountains and which is

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1. Semi-divine beings skilled in singing and music.
 2. A group of semi-divine beings of great purity and holiness.
 3. The panegyrists of gods.
 4. A class of semi-divine beings who attend on Kubera, the god of wealth.
 5. A mythical mountain and abode of celestial beings.
 6. Another mythical mountain used by gods and demous as a rod for churning the ocean.
 7. A Himalayan peak on which resides god Śiva.
 8. Another mountain which escaped when Indra planned to cut off wings which all mountains are supposed to have previously.

encircled by Vasiṣṭha,¹ Agastya,² Paulastya³, Lomaśa⁴ and other sages while great festivities were being celebrated.

5. There on a raised divine platform was an altar beautifully studded with jewels and bedecked in gold well arranged by Viśvakarman.⁵ It was rendered beautiful by a row of columns of diamonds, rubies and sapphires.

6. It was surrounded by the deities Jayā,⁶ Lakṣmī,⁷ Śubhā,⁸ Kṣanti,⁹ Kirti,¹⁰ Puṣṭi¹¹ etc. It was also surrounded by the splendid mountains Meru, Mandara, Kailāsa and Raivata.¹²

7. It was honoured by the powerful Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe. Golden coloured Maināka, the most excellent among mountains, shone there.

8. The sages, the guardians of the quarters and the Ādityas¹³ accompanied by Maruts¹⁴ constructed the altar for the wedding ceremony of the trident-bearing lord, the chief of Devas.

9-12. Viśvakarman, Tvaṣṭṛ¹⁵ himself made the altar with festoons. The wedding ceremony took place when the place was rendered beautiful by the divine cows such as Surabhi,¹⁶ Nandinī¹⁷, Nandā¹⁸ and Sunandā¹⁹ that yield everything desired.

1. An ancient sage and priest of Ikṣvāku kings.

2. Another sage said to have been born out of a waterjar and to have drunk up the ocean.

3. Probably the sage Pulastya is meant who was a mind-born son of Brahmā and the father of Viśravas and grandfather of Kubera and Rāvaṇa.

4. A sage and great story-teller.

5. A great architect and artificer of gods.

6. 7, 10, 11. Daughters of Dakṣa Prajāpati.

8. Two Śubhās are known, one being Dhruva's mother and the other wife of Aṅgiras.

9. Probably Śānti or Kṣamā both also daughters of Dakṣa Prajāpati.

12. A mountain Raivata or Raivataka, is known to exist in Gujarat.

13. A group of Vedic gods originally numbering six which later increased to twelve.

14. Another group of Vedic gods associated with storms, lightning, thunder etc.

15. A Rgvedic deity said to be the ideal artist, divine artisan; mentioned in Viṣṇupurāṇa as a son of Viśvakarmā.

16. Another name of Kāmadhenu the divine cow; also a cow born from the hūkāra of Brahmā.

17. The cow of plenty belonging to sage Vasiṣṭha, said to be born of Surabhi.

18. & 19. Names not traceable elsewhere.

All these were present there, viz. the oceans, rivers, serpents, mothers of the worlds etc. along with vegetable kingdom and seeds.

Ilā [Earth] carried out the function of productivity, the herbs performed the work of growth, Varuṇa performed the work of drink, Kubera performed the work of charitable gifts; Agni performed whatever was desired by the lord of worlds.

13. The eternal Viṣṇu performed worship separately in different places. The Vedas accompanied by their secret principles gave charming instructions.

14. The celestial damsels danced. The Gandharvas and Kinnaras¹ sang. O excellent sage, Maināka held fried grains (for the sacrifice).

15. The invocation of holy water was performed inside the house, O Nārada. The couple, the most excellent among Devas sat on the altar.

16. After setting the holy fire ablaze duly and performing the sacrifice with fried grains, O son, the couple went round the rocky slab duly.

17. During the course of touching the slab, Śiva urged by Viṣṇu, touched the toe of the right foot of the goddess with his hand.

18. Performing the sacrifice there near Śiva, I saw her. My semen got ejaculated due to my evil mind on seeing the toe.

19. In the entire three worlds, who is not deceived by Cupid? Defiled and ashamed, I scattered the ejaculated semen in small droplets.

20. From the minute particles of my semen the Vālakhilyas² were born. Then there was a great commotion caused by Devas. Overwhelmed by shame, I stood up from my seat and started.

21. Even as Devas watched silently, O Nārada, I went ahead. On seeing me go, Mahādeva spoke to Nandin:

Śiva said :

22. Call Brahmā here. I shall make him free from sin.

1. Horse-headed celestial musicians dwelling in Kubera's city.

2. Pigmy sages no bigger than half a thumb, numbering 6000 and residing in the solar region.

Even if other people commit offences good people take pity on them. They have sympathy for them in their minds. This is the nature of worldly objects. They delude even great scholars.

Brahmā said :

23-25. After saying this, Lord Śiva accompanied by Umā began operations. The lord of the worlds did this due to his sympathy for me and desire for the welfare of the worlds. Listen to it attentively, O Nārada.

"The Earth and Waters shall become the means of redemption of sinners from their sins. I shall extract their ultimate essence that is holy." After declaring this the lord extracted their essence.

26-27. He made the Earth into a water-jar and poured water into it. With great effort he chanted *Pāvamānya*¹ and other hymns and consecrated them. The lord who dispels sins remembered Śakti who sanctifies the universe and invoked her there. Then the lord of the worlds said to me, "Take this water-jar.

28. Indeed the waters are goddesses and mothers. The Earth is another mother. So both of them are the causes of existence, creation and destruction.

29. It is here that Dharma is established. It is here that the eternal sacrifice is established. It is here that enjoyment and salvation, mobile and immobile beings are established.

30. By remembering it the mental sin perishes. By bowing to it the verbal sin perishes. By bathing, drinking and performing the holy ablution, the physical sin perishes.

31. This alone is nectar in the world. There is nothing greater in sanctity than this. O Brahmā, take this water-jar consecrated by me with holy Mantras.

32. Whoever remembers or drinks the water herein attains all desired things. Take this water-jar.

33. Of all the five elements, water is the element of great effect. This water is the best among all those waters. Take this water-jar.

34. O Brahmā, by touching, remembering and seeing the

1. The verses in the ninth *Mandala* of the *Rgveda* relating to Soma Pavamāna; also known as 'Pāvamāni'.

water herein, which is very splendid, holy and sacred, one is liberated from sin."

35-36. After saying this the supreme lord gave me the water-jar. Then Devas joyously spoke to their lord. There was great exhilaration there. Cries of victory rang the sky.

During the wedding festival of the lord I saw the tip of the foot of the mother. Due to this sin I attained the state of a fallen fellow. The merciful father gave me Gaṅgā water kept in the holy jar. It is holy and sanctifying even by remembering.

CHAPTER FOUR

How Gaṅgā Entered the Matted Hair of Śiva

Nārada said :

1. Goddess Gaṅgā stationed in your water-jar increased your merit. O lord, tell me in detail how it came to the mortal world.

Brahmā said :

2-3. There was a great asura named Bali. This enemy of gods was invincible. He was incomparable in regard to virtue, fame, protection of subjects, devotion to elders and preceptors, truthfulness, virility, power, renunciation and forbearance in the three worlds.

4. On seeing his prosperity increased Devas became worried. They spoke to one another, "How will we conquer Bali?"

5. While he was ruling over the kingdom of the three worlds dispelling thorns, there were no enemies, no ailments, no anxieties in any way.

6. While Bali was ruling over the kingdom, none of these was seen even in dream, viz., famine, evil, denial of God, wickedness.

7. Devas did not have place or happiness because they were pierced by the arrows of his prosperity: they were severed by the sword of his renown, their limbs were cut by the spear of his command.

8. Keeping their jealousy in front they talked to one another. With their body set ablaze by the fire of his fame they were agitated. They approached Viṣṇu.

Devas said :

9. O lord of the worlds, O lord holding conch, discus and club, we are distressed. Your lordship always holds weapons for our sake.

10-17. Our misery is this much even when you are our lord, O lord of the Universe. How can the head of those who bow down to you, bow down to asuras ?

Mentally, physically and verbally, we have sought refuge in you alone. Having your feet alone as our shelter how can we bow down to Asura?

We worship you by means of great sacrifices. We eulogise you, O Acyuta, by means of words of praise. Having you alone as our shelter, how can we bow down to Asura?

Devas with Indra as their leader always depend upon your vigour and power. Having acquired our status bestowed by you, how can we bow down to Asura ?

Through the form of Brahmā you are the creator. You protect us as Viṣṇu. You are the annihilator through your power of Rudra. How can we bow down to Asura ?

Lordship and glory is the cause of everything in the world. Without it (life) is useless. O lord of Devas, with our prosperity dispelled how can we bow down to Asura ?

You are one without a beginning. You are the creator of the universe. You are one without an end. You are the preceptor of the universe. How can we bow down to this Asura ?

Our limbs have been nourished by your lordship and glory. After conquering the three worlds with our strength we shall become stable, O lord of Devas. How can we bow down to Asura ?

Brahma said :

18. On hearing these words, the slayer of the asuras spoke with reference to the tasks of the Devas.

Vāsudeva said :

19-20. This asura Bali is my devotee. He cannot be conquered by Devas or Asuras. Just as you all are persons to be

nourished by me so also Bali is to be nourished by me. Without a battle, O Devas, I shall take away his kingdom which extends to the three worlds. I shall bind him by means of words with miraculous power and give the kingdom unto you all.

Brahmā said :

21. After saying "so be it" Devas went to heaven. The holy lord, the lord of Devas entered the womb of Aditi.¹

22. When he was born there were great festivities. The lord of sacrifices was born, O brahmin, as Vāmana.²

23-27. In the meantime, O brahmin, Bali the most excellent of all strong men made preparations for the horse sacrifice. He was accompanied by his priest Śukra who was conversant with the Vedas and Vedāngas.³ He was sanctified by important sages. While the sacrifice was going on, while Bali went on with the performance of sacrifice, while chief of the sages performed the duties of a Ṛtvij,⁴ while Śukra functioned as the chief priest, while Devas, Gandharvas and Nāgas were seated in order to receive their respective share in the sacrificial offerings, while these words were being exchanged, viz. "Let it be given", "Let it be partaken of", "Let the worship be performed separately", "It is complete", "Again it is filled up" etc., Vāmana who was singing Sāman verses came slowly to that place. Vāmana who was wearing ear-rings and holding an umbrella came to the sacrificial hall.

28-31. He began to praise the sacrifice. Vāmana had assumed the form of a brahmin. He was the lord Daityasūdana (the slayer of Daityas). He was the bestower of benefits of sacrifice and austerities. He was the slayer of asuras. Bhārgava (a descendant of Bhṛgu, i.e. Śukra) recognised him and then in a hurry spoke to the king, the king who had great splendour, who was a conqueror with the duties of Kṣatriya, who was a donor of riches with devotion, who was the most excellent of all powerful men, who was initiated in the sacrifice

1. The mother of gods.

2. The dwarf incarnation of Viṣṇu.

3. Subjects necessary for the study and proper understanding of the Vedas, e.g. Śikṣā (Phonetics), Nirukta (Etymology) etc.

4. A priest officiating at a Vedic sacrifice. There are usually four such priests, viz. Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Brahman and Udgātṛ.

along with his wife, who was meditating on Viṣṇu, and who was pouring oblations separately. Śukra who was the most powerful in the family of Bhṛgu and who was extremely intelligent spoke to the king:

Śukra said :

32-33. This brahmin who has the size of a dwarf and who has come to your sacrifice, O Bali, is not really a brahmin. It is true that he is the lord of sacrifices, the sanctifier of sacrifices. He who is greater than the greatest, who is the great Man, has come here to request you. Only after taking counsel from me should it be given by you, O lord.

Brahmā said :

34-35. Bali the suppressor of enemies said to his preceptor, Bhārgava thus.

Bali said :

Blessed am I because the lord of sacrifices is coming to my house so unexpectedly. If he requests me anything after coming here, of what avail is my cogitation ?

Brahma said :

36. So addressed by Śukra, his priest, Bali, accompanied by his wife, went to that place where the leading brahmin Vāmana, the son of Aditi, was present.

37-40. With palms joined in reverence he said, "Why have you come ? Tell me that". Then Vāmana said : "A piece of ground measured by three steps should be given to me for staying. I do not wish for anything else."

After saying "So be it" he poured a stream of water from the pot embellished with different jewels. Thereafter, he gave the Earth to Vāmana even as the chief sages were watching, even as the priest Śukra was watching. While the illustrious Devas were watching he gave the Earth to Vāmana. While the asuras were watching cries of "Victory" rose up, in the sky.

41. Vāmana said slowly : "Hail to you, O king, Be happy. Grant me the measured ground, the three steps that have been promised."

42-44. "So be it", said the lord of asuras, "Let it be taken". Even as these words were uttered, even as he was watching

Vāmana, something wonderful happened. The lord of sacrifices increased in size so much that the moon and the sun came up to the breast and the Devas over the head. In exploit and size he increased, lord Acyuta, who has no end, who is the maker of the worlds and who identifies himself with the universe. On seeing him, the king of asuras who was humble and who was accompanied by his wife, said to the lord:

Bali said :

45. O Viṣṇu, O lord of worlds identifying with the Universe, take the steps as many as you can. O lord of Devas, O creator of the Universe, it is I who have conquered in every respect.

46. At the very same time when he was saying this Śukra too said this very earnestly : "O lord of kings, due to my intelligence you have already been propitiated before." As he spoke thus, Viṣṇu of great sacrifice said:

Viṣṇu said :

47. O lord of Daityas, of great arms, O king of Daityas, I shall take steps. See.

As he said so, he (ie. Bali) said again and again, "O Viṣṇu, take the steps."

Brahmā said :

48. After standing firmly on the back of the tortoise he placed a step in the sacrificial hall of Bali. He, the eternal lord, placed the second step over the whole world.

49. Then he said to Bali: "O lord of Asuras, there is no place for the third step. Where shall I place the third step ? Give me the ground."

Laughingly Bali said with palms joined in reverence. He was accompanied by his wife.

Bali said :

50-52. The entire universe has been created by you, O lord of Devas. I am not a creator. Due to your fault it has become too small, O lord of cosmic identity.

Still, I have never uttered a lie, nor will I ever utter a lie proving me to be a man of truthful, statement. Step on my back.

Then, the lord who is worshipped by Devas, whose form is evolved by the three Vedas, became pleased.

He said, "Choose a boon. Welfare unto you, O lord of Daityas, I am pleased with your devotion."

Brahmā said :

53-54. He said to the lord of the Universe—"O Trivikrama (one who took three steps), I do not beg anything of you."

Viṣṇu who was pleased granted him whatever was desired by his pure mind viz., the lordship of the nether worlds, the future status of Indra, the overlordship of Indra and a great deal of imperishable fame.

55-57. After granting all this to Bali, Lord Vāmana placed Bali, the enemy of Devas in nether worlds along with his son and wife. He gave the kingdom of Devas to Indra as at the time of its origin.

In the meantime he went back to his region honoured by Devas.

O highly intelligent one, that second step of Viṣṇu, my father, became my abode. On seeing my abode I thought:

58. "What is that work which shall be auspicious in this second step of Viṣṇu whereby my water-jar shall become excellent?"

59-63. The water bestowed by the enemy of Tripuras is highly meritorious. It is excellent. It bestows boons. It is calm. It is highly conducive to tranquillity. It is splendid. It bestows splendour. It is eternal. It yields worldly enjoyment and salvation. It is in the form of the mother of the worlds. It is nectar. It is pure panacea (for all ills). It is holy. It is sacred. It is worthy of worship. It is the greatest and the most excellent. It is conducive to splendour. By remembering it sanctifies the worlds. What if it is seen? Remaining pure, I shall utilize that water as the libation to my father.

Thinking that, I took that water and used it for *argha* (offering).

The water for *Argha*, that was consecrated by the recitation of *Mantras* fell on Viṣṇu's foot. That water fell on the Meru and flowed to the Earth in four ways.

64-68. The waters flowed in four directions, viz. East, South, West and North.

By means of his matted hair, Śaṅkara caught hold of the water that flowed towards the South.

The water that flowed towards the West went back to the water-jar.

Viṣṇu caught hold of the water that flowed towards the North.

The sages, Devas, manes and the guardians of quarters caught hold of the auspicious water that flowed towards the East. Hence it is called the most excellent.

The waters that reached the Southern quarter are the mothers of the worlds. The waters that flowed from the foot of Viṣṇu are conducive to the welfare of brahmins and the mothers of worlds. Thus they became cause of prosperity by remaining within the matted hair of Maheśvara. By remembering their power one would attain all desired things.

CHAPTER FIVE

Vināyaka and Gautama

Nārada said :

1. How the River Gaṅgā stationed in the water-jar reached the matted hair of Lord Śiva, has been heard. Kindly tell me how it reached the mortal world.

Brahma said :

2. O highly intelligent one, there are two divisions in the waters stationed in the matted hair of Maheśvara, because of two persons who took them away.

3. One part that is well known in the world was brought by the brahmin Gautama who used to perform holy rites, donate charitable gifts and practise meditation after worshipping Śiva.

- 4-5. The other part was taken away, O extremely intelligent one, by the powerful Kṣatriya monarch Bhagiratha after propitiating Śaṅkara by means of penances and holy rites. Thus O excellent sage, the Gaṅgā had two different forms.

Nārada said :

6. For what reason was Gautama the conveyor of the water stationed in the matted hair of Maheśvara? Tell me, by which Kṣatriya was it brought.

Brahmā said :

7. For your pleasure, O dear one, I shall recount in detail how the river was brought by the brahmin or the other one.

8. O sage of great lustre, Gaṅgā became the beloved of Śambhu at the very time when Umā became the beloved of the lord of Devas.

9-10. Śiva was thinking about the means of dispelling my sin. Accompanied by Umā the glorious lord observed the goddess particularly. Since he was indulgent in pleasant activities he created the excellent juice. It was excellent because he was fond of its beauty and sweetness, feminine qualities as well as holy nature, and

11. Gaṅgā was the most beloved of all, O excellent brahmin. He kept her on his head (as a token of honour). Since Umā knew this, Maheśvara was always worried over it.

12. Gaṅgā alone came out of the matted hair for some other reason. Śiva had concealed Gaṅgā in his matted hair.

13-14. On knowing that she (Gaṅgā) was held by him in his head, Umā was not able to bear it. On seeing her stationed in the matted hair, again and again Gaurī spoke to her lord in anger thus: "Send her away, O lord of aesthetic taste." However, the lord declined to send her away.

15. On account of that misery Umā said "Oh, I am helpless."

On reflecting that the lord was concealing Gaṅgā in his matted hair, she spoke these words in secret to Vināyaka, Skanda and Jayā.¹

16-17. "This lover, the lord of Devas will never forsake Gaṅgā. Now she too is the beloved of my lord. How will my lord abandon her, his beloved?" After reflecting thus many times, Umā spoke to Vināyaka.

Pārvatī said :

18. The lord will never abandon Gaṅgā even if attempted

1. Wife of Puṣpadanta, a gaṇa (attendant of Śiva).

by Devas, Asuras, Yakṣas, Siddhas, including yourself, kings or others.

19-20. Either I shall go to Himavān and perform penance once again or I shall entrust the job to holy brahmins who have dispelled their sins by practising austerities. Requested by them Gaṅgā may go to the Earth.

Brahmā said :

21-23. On hearing these words of his mother Gaṇeśa, the lord of obstacles said to his mother:

"It is proper to consult my brother Skanda and Jayā (and do everything). We shall do that whereby my father will cast off Gaṅgā from his head."

O brahmin, in the meantime there was a drought lasting for twenty four years. It caused great fright to all living beings in the mortal world. Then the whole universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings perished.

24-27. (There was great disaster everywhere) except the sacred hermitage of Gautama that bestowed all desired things.

Formerly, I desired to create the mobile and immobile beings, O dear son. A sacrifice was performed by me on the mountain Devayajana. Thereafter that mountain became well known as Brahmagiri associated with my name.

That Gautama has resorted to that excellent mountain and is staying there ever since. Neither mental worries nor physical ailments, neither famine nor absence of rain, neither fear nor grief, neither poverty nor misfortune are ever heard of in his excellent and highly meritorious hermitage on the auspicious Brahmagiri.

28. Excepting his hermitage in no other place the offering was made to Devas or manes. O dear son, there was neither a donor nor a Hotṛ¹ nor a person performing sacrifices.

29. The propitiation of Devas in heaven was accomplished only when the brahmin Gautama made offering or performed a sacrifice.

30. Sage Gautama became well known in the world of Devas and in the mortal world. People knew that he alone was the donor and the enjoyer of pleasant things.

1. An officiating priest reciting Rgvedic hymns during a sacrifice.

31. On hearing about this the sages of different hermitages enquired about the hermitage of Gautama and went there.

32. Sage Gautama devoutly nourished all those sages as if they were his disciples, sons or fathers.

33. Whatever was desired by them was provided by him. The sage rendered service to all of them in the proper order, in accordance with their ability and in a manner befitting them.

34-35. At the bidding of Gautama, the herbs and other vegetables became the mothers of worlds. Again Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara were propitiated by him. Then the herbs and other vegetables grew up and were used by the people then and there. They were thought of and sowed by the power of penance of Gautama.

36-38. Whatever was thought of by Gautama was realised. All prosperities were achieved. Everyday Gautama addressed the sages like sons, disciples or fathers. He asked them, "What shall I do for you?". He nurtured them for many years as a father would do his sons. Thus, O dear son, Gautama acquired great renown.

Then Vināyaka spoke to his mother, brother and Jayā.

Vināyaka said :

39-42. Mother, the brahmin Gautama is being sung about in the abode of Devas: "Gautama has done that which can be achieved by Devas only with effort." O goddess, thus the power of penance of the brahmin has been heard by me. Dear mother, that brahmin may be able to dislodge Gaṅgā stationed in the matted hair after worshipping the three-eyed lord by means of penance. He alone can plead to the beloved of my father, who is stationed in the matted hair of my father. Some means should be employed so that the brahmin may plead to her. Due to his power the excellent Gaṅgā will descend from his head.

Brahmā said :

43. After saying this to his mother, the lord of obstacles¹ went to the place where the lean Gautama who was wearing

1. Lord Ganeśa who is supposed to be the creator as well as the remover of obstacles is propitiated at the commencement of all important undertakings.

the holy thread was present. He was accompanied by his brother and Jayā.

44-46. After staying for a few days within the precincts of Gautama's hermitage, the lord of obstacles said to the brahmans: "We must not stay there. Let us go to our own abodes, clean and pure hermitages. We have been nourished by Gautama's food. Let us ask sage Gautama". After discussing among themselves thus the excellent sages took leave of the sage. Due to his fond feelings he prevented the sages severally.

Gautama said :

47. Gautama said humbly with palms joined in reverence: Stay here alone ye all. O leading sages, I shall serve your feet.

48. While I stand by here, ready to serve you all, it is not proper for you, Devas on the Earth to resort to another hermitage.

49. In my opinion this hermitage alone is the holy penance grove for all. O sages, please do not go to any other hermitage.

Brahmā said :

50. On hearing these words of the sage, Vināyaka remembered his duty of causing obstacles (in secret). With palms joined in reverence he said to the brahmans.

Ganādhipa said :

51. We have all been bought over by the food offered to us. Why then should Gautama not forbid us? We are not allowed to go to our own abodes by peaceful means.

52. Nor does this excellent brahmin who has helped us deserve any punishment. Hence I shall endeavour in an intelligent manner. Let that be approved of by you all.

Brahmā said :

53-56. Then the brahmans replied: "Let it be done for helping this brahmin with a desire for the welfare of the world. Do anything which will do good to all the brahmans."

On hearing the words of the brahmans Ganādhipa (Lord of ganas or attendants of Śiva) approved of them and said.

Vindyaka said :

What is particularly good for Gautama is being done.

Brahmā said :

Vināyaka of liberal mind coaxed and cajoled the brahmins again and again. He bowed unto them. He took the guise of a brahmin himself. Gaṇeśvara who sided with his mother habitually, said to Jayā.

Vināyaka said :

57. O Lady of splendid face, do everything in such a manner as no one else comes to know. Assume the form of a cow and go to the place where Gautama is present.

58. Consume the paddy. O beautiful lady, destroy them and distort them. If you are beaten, or shouted at or even looked at do something (by way of retaliation). Bellowing loudly remain in a struggle between life and death.

Brahmā said :

59-60. Vijayā (Jayā) who sided with Vighneśvara did so. Jayā assumed the form of a cow and went to the place where Gautama was present, eating the paddy plants (on the way). Gautama saw her. On seeing the cow in a state of aberration, the brahmin prevented her by a blade of grass.

61. On being forbidden by him, the cow cried aloud and fell down. When the cow fell down there was a great hue and cry.

62. On hearing the cry and on seeing the action of Gautama the brahmins became distressed. Keeping Vighnarāja at the head the brahmins said.

The Brahmans said :

63. All of us are going away from here. We should not stay in your hermitage. We all had been nurtured by you like a son. O leading sage, we are taking leave of you.

Brahmā said :

64. On hearing these words of the brahmins who were determined to go from there, he was as though struck down by the thunderbolt. He fell down in front of the brahmins.

65. The brahmins said to him: "See this goddess mother of the Rudras, the beloved deity of the worlds sanctifying them, fallen on the ground.

66. When due to the power of fate, this cow whose form and features are like those of gods and holy centres has fallen down O excellent sage, what remains for us to do is to go away.

67. If we continue to reside in your hermitage (the merit of) the holy rites performed by us will dwindle down and waste away. O brahmin, we do not have any other asset. We are only ascetics whose only assets are their penance.

Brahmā said :

68-72. Standing humbly in front of the brahmins, Gautama said.

Gautama said :

Your holinesses alone are my refuge. It behoves you to make me pure.

Brahmā said :

Then Lord Vighnakṛt (Ganeśa, the creator of obstacles) surrounded by the brahmins, said.

Vighnarāja said :

This cow neither dies nor lives. In this extremely doubtful situation we shall mention the expiation and the goal.

Gautama said :

This cow will never gain sense. She will certainly die. How will this cow get up? It behoves you to tell me the way of expiation. Undoubtedly I shall do everything.

The Brahmans said :

73. This intelligent (brahmin) will speak in accordance with the opinion of all of us. His statement is (as good as) our statement. It should be considered authoritative by you, O Gautama.

Brahmā said :

74. Induced by the brahmins as well as the powerful Gautama, Vighnakṛt (i.e. Lord Ganeśa) in the guise of a brahmin spoke these words to all.

Vighnarāja said :

75. I shall speak truthfully on behalf of all. Let the sages as well as Gautama accept my suggestion.

76. We have heard that the water that had been in the jar of Brahmā born of the unmanifest one, is now staying within the matted hair of Lord Śiva.

77. Bring it quickly by means of austerities and holy rites. O holy sage, pour that water over this cow that has fallen on the ground. After that all of us shall stay in your house as before.

Brahmā said :

78. When that leading brahmin said thus in the assembly of the brahmins, there was a shower of flowers there. Cries of "Victory" rose up. Then the humble Gautama spoke these words with palms joined in reverence.

Gautama said :

79. Let the desire in my mind be fulfilled due to my power of penance, by the grace of Fire god, by the grace of gods and Brahmā as well as by your grace.

Brahmā said :

80. After saying "Let it be so," the brahmins took leave of the leading sage and went to their abodes that were now rich in food and water.

81. When those brahmins had gone, Gaṇeśvara returned accompanied by his brother and Jayā. After fulfilling his task he was extremely delighted.

82-83. After the brahmins had returned, after Gaṇeśa had gone, the excellent sage Gautama whose sins had been dispelled by his penance, began to ponder over the same incident. "What is this that has befallen me?" After a great deal of reflection the brahmin understood it by his powerful intuition.

84-88. He came to the firm conclusion that the affair was made-up for the task of the gods. "I consider everything conducive to welfare. It is a help unto the worlds. It is (a task) most pleasing to Śambhu and Pārvatī. It is the task of bringing, Gaṅgā on the Earth. There is no sin in me at all". Thinking thus in his mind, the excellent brahmin became extremely delighted. After consulting his wife the excellent brahmin said: "After propitiating the bull-bannered three-eyed lord of the worlds, I shall bring the excellent river. I shall delight Pārvatī,

the consort of Śiva. The co-wife of the mother of the Universe is stationed within the matted hair of Maheśvara.” After determining thus in his mind the excellent sage Gautama departed from Brahmagiri with a desire to please Śambhu who was staying in Kailāsa, who is worshipped by the mighty Devas and whose power is most terrible.

CHAPTER SIX

Descent of Gautami

Nārada said :

1. After going to the peak of Kailāsa what did the holy lord, Sage Gautama do? Did he perform any penance? What excellent method did he adopt for attaining the goal?

Brahmā said :

2-3. After going to that mountain, O dear son, Sage Gautama controlled his speech. On the excellent mountain Kailāsa he spread Kuśa grass and sat thereon with purity of mind and body. Then he sang this hymn. While Maheśvara was being eulogized there was a shower of flowers.

Gautama said :

4. (Lord Śiva) accompanied by Umā assumes eight cosmic bodies that are always beneficial to the people. It is to bestow the desired enjoyment of worldly pleasures to those who seek it that the lord assumes these bodies. Hence the people eulogize the lord as the Great God.

5. Iṣvara assumes the body of the Earth for this purpose viz. in order to create happiness by means of its own objects of pleasure and to sustain the entire (universe consisting of) mobile and immobile beings. It is conducive to the prosperity of the universe and its increase.

6. The form of waters (of Śiva with eight cosmic bodies) is for creation, sustenance and annihilation of the Earth and also in order to provide for support to the Earth. For granting happiness and piety to the people, Śiva of tranquil body assumed the form of waters that is well established in the universe.

7. Śiva's cosmic bodies of Sun, Moon and Fire caused the following viz., the demarcation of the units of time, the oozing current of nectar, sustenance, creation and destruction of living beings and joy, happiness and progress of the subjects.

8. The form of Iśa viz. Vāyu is evolved for the following purpose. It is for creating prosperity, movement, power, imperishable things, the proper arrangement of the living beings and for the accomplishment of their joys. Certainly, O holy lord, you alone are responsible for this.

9. Without mutual differences there cannot be action and piety, a thing that is one's own and not one's own, neither directions nor atmosphere, neither heaven nor Earth, neither worldly pleasures nor salvation. Hence, O Iśa, this ethereal body of yours.

10. (This ethereal body) assumes the form of word. In order to establish virtue the Vedas are divided into Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman. In the world (i.e. among non-Vedic sacred literature) the Gāthās (songs), Smṛtis, Purāṇas etc. (also flourish).

11. The various ancillary objects pertaining to sacrifice constitute the sacrificial body of Śiva. The sacrifice and the instruments of sacrifice, the form of the Rtvik, time, space and result, O Śambhu, you are all these things. They say that your sacrificial body is the ultimately real entity.

12. You are everything. You are the maker, donor, surety, charitable offering, the omniscient witness, the great Puruṣa, the supreme soul and the ultimate reality. You are everything. Of what avail are the verbal outpourings?

13. You are not pointed out by the Vedas and other sacred literature or preceptors. Nor are you accessible by means of intellect etc. You alone are unborn, unmeasurable and the lord expressed by the word Śiva. You alone are the Truth. O holy lord, obeisance unto you.

14. (Defective Text) Once Śiva saw his Prakṛti in unison with the Ātman as "This is my asset." At that same time, the Prakṛti that cannot be imagined or argued upon stood separate. The lord of cosmic form is one of unimaginable power.

15. The eternal Śiva whether possessed of all excellent virtues or devoid of any trait is the power of the creator of the

Universe. At every creation she becomes increased in purity. It has occupied the reason, its own reason.

16. Production, sustenance, increase and destruction of food—these are the eternal laws of nature. There is nothing which the beloved of Śiva cannot accomplish.

17. It is the Mother, the mother of the universe, the beloved of Śiva accompanied by Umā of grand and excellent renown for whose sake the living beings give food and wealth and perform penances and virtuous rites.

18. Even Indra yearns for her benign glance. One shall acquire auspiciousness from her names. Pervading the Universe she makes it free from impurities. That Umā has always a form similar to the form of the Moon.

19. It is due to her grace that the pleasures of intellect, eyes, consciousness and mind of all living beings beginning with Brahmā, whether mobile or immobile, become fruitful. The beautiful wife of the preceptor of the world is the goddess of speech.

20. "The mind of even the four-faced lord (Brahmā) has become defiled. Why not that of other creatures?" Thinking thus, the goddess should perform the descent of Gaṅgā by means of different methods in order to sanctify the universe.

21. By means of all testimonies and by going through the Vedic passages, people came to believe in the lordship of Śiva. They performed all pious rites and enjoyed all worldly pleasures. This is the perpetual power and glory of Śiva.

22. The things to be accomplished, the most excellent and pleasing to be evolved, the rite, the performer of the rite and the instruments of the rite are expressed in the Vedas and found in the world—those are said to be the achievements of the primordial lord.

23. It is the Lord of Umā who must be meditated upon. After attaining him the good Yogins are not reborn. They are liberated. After meditating upon the excellent Brahman and the great Pradhāna¹ it is lord Śiva who is the essence.

1. The primordial matter, the inert stuff of the universe as opposed to spirit, more usually known as Prakṛti.

24. As and when Śambhu assumes the forms of the immeasurable Māyā¹ for the welfare of the universe, you too assume forms befitting contact with him. O Mother, that is your chastity.

Brahma said :

25-26. As he was eulogising thus the bull-bannered lord, accompanied by Umā, appeared in front of him. The glorious lord Śambhu accompanied by Gaṇesa and his retinue went in front of him and spoke these words in delight.

Siva said :

27. What shall I give you, O Gautama? I am delighted at your devotion, eulogy and splendid holy rites. You may ask anything, even for those things that are not easily accessible to the gods.

Brahmā said :

28. On hearing these words of Siva having the universe for his body, Gautama was overwhelmed by the tears of delight. Expert in making statements, Gautama thought thus.

29. O fate ! O piety ! O the worship of brahmins, O the wonderful way of the world ! O creator, obeisance to you.

Gautama said :

30. O lord of Devas honoured by the gods, if you are pleased with me give me the splendid Gaṅgā stationed within your matted hair. O lord with the Vedas for abode, obeisance be to you.

The Lord said :

31. What has been requested for by you is for helping the three worlds. Rid of fear from every quarter you may request for something that will be helpful to yourself.'

Gautama said :

32. Indeed it is this that I choose. Let those devotees who eulogise you and the goddess by means of this hymn be prosperously endowed with all desired things.

Brahma said :

33. "So, be it", said the lord of Devas who was delighted, "Free from all ailments you may request for other boons from me."

1. The cosmic power which creates illusory appearances.

34-45. Thus urged by the lord, Gautama said to Śaṅkara with joy:

“O Śaṅkara, let brahmin slaughter and other sins perpetrated mentally, verbally or physically be destroyed by mere ablution in this river in any place upto the sea where it flows. It shall be the holiest of all holy rivers.

“O Hara, merely by remembering thus let there be that merit which is acquired in other holy rivers during the lunar and solar eclipses, during vernal and equinoctial transit of the sun or during his northern and southern transit or during the holy occasion of Vaidhṛti.¹

“In Kṛta² Yuga penance was praiseworthy, in Tretā it was the sacrificial rite, in Dvāpara, sacrifice and charitable gifts, and charitable gifts alone in Kali age.

“Yugadharmas (the virtues peculiar to certain Yugas or eras) and Deśadharmas (the virtues peculiar to certain countries) are honoured in accordance with the contact of the particular country or time unit.

“O Hara, merely by remembering this, let there be that merit which is acquired elsewhere by means of ablutions, charitable gifts and other observances.

“Wherever this river flows till the time it reaches the sea you must also be there. Let this be my most excellent boon.

“O Śiva, let these persons realize salvation, viz. those who come within ten Yojanas (i.e. 120 Kms) of this river even if they are great sinners, the manes who come here for bathing and other people who take bath.

“On one side stand all holy rivers whether in heaven or mortal world or nether world and on the other side stands this river. Still this river shall be the better one.

“Enough of this, O Sambhu, obeisance to you.”

Brahma said :

46-47. On hearing those words of Gautama Śiva said: “So be it. A holy centre greater than this has never been, nor will there ever be. It is truth. It is truth. It is truth. It is well

1. A particular position of the sun and moon.

2. The first of the four cosmic ages having a duration of 1728000, 1296000, 864000 and 432000 human years equivalent respectively to 4800, 3600, 2400 and 1200 divine years.

established in the Veda. Gautamī is the holiest of all rivers." After saying this the lord vanished there itself.

48. Then after the lord who is honoured by the worlds, had gone, Gautama became full of power. He grew matted hair. Leading the Gaṅgā, the most excellent of all rivers, he entered Brahmagiri surrounded by Devas.

49-50. Then, when Gautama came there, O Nārada, with matted hair, there was a shower of flowers. The leading Devas, the highly fortunate sages, brahmins and kṣatriyas came there, honouring that brahmin with cries of "Victory". They were joyous.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Glory of the Holy River

Nārada said :

1. After leading the Gaṅgā from the matted hair of Maheśvara and coming to the holy mountain Brahmagiri, what did Gautama do?

Brahmā said :

2-3. The pure Gautama of wholly controlled mind, led Gaṅgā. He was honoured by Devas and Gandharvas, the residents of the mountains. He placed his matted hair on the top of the mountain. Remembering the three-eyed lord, that excellent brahmin said to Gaṅgā with palms joined in reverence.

Gautama said :

4. O mother born of the matted hair of the three-eyed lord, O goddess bestowing all desired things, forgive. You are calm. Go happily, carry out what is conducive to the welfare of all.

Brahmā said :

5. On being spoken to thus by Gautama, the Gaṅgā who assumed a divine form and wore a divine garland and unguent, said to Gautama.

Gangā said :

6. Where shall I go? To the abode of Devas, or to the water-jar or to the nether worlds? It is known that you are truthful of speech.

Gautama said :

7. O goddess, you have been requested by me for helping the three worlds. You have been given to me by Śambhu. O goddess, let it not be otherwise.

Brahmā said :

8-9. On hearing the words of Gautama, Gangā accepted the suggestion offered by the brahmin. It divided itself into three for flowing in heaven, Earth and the nether worlds. In heaven it flowed in four channels, in the mortal world it flowed in seven channels and in the nether worlds it flowed in four channels. Thus it had fifteen different channels.

10. Everywhere it has the power of everyone of the channels. It destroys all sins. It bestows all desired things always. It is thus alone that she is sung about in the Vedas.

11. Human beings see only the part of Gangā that flows over the mortal world and not that which flows over the nether worlds. Nor do the human beings of ignorant intellect see Gangā flowing in heaven.

12. Till Gangā reaches the Sea, it is one of divine nature. On being bid farewell by Gautama, it went towards the Eastern Sea.

13. Then Gautama the great among the sages circumambulated Gangā, the splendid mother of the Universe frequented by Devas and Sages.

14-16. At the outset Gautama worshipped the three-eyed lord of Devas and then determined in his mind, "I shall take bath near the banks" Immediately after being remembered, the lord who is an ocean of mercy appeared in front of him. With palms joined in reverence and being humble due to devotion he asked the three-eyed lord Śiva how the holy ablution should be performed.

Gautama said :

17. O Maheśāna, lord of Devas, with a desire for the

welfare of the worlds tell me about the rules and injunctions regarding ablution in the holy centres.

Siva said :

18-20. O great sage, listen to all injunctions regarding Godāvarī. At the outset, Nandi (a holy rite) and other rites should be performed after cleaning the body. The brahmins should be fed and their permission obtained. Maintaining celibacy they should go to the river, avoiding conversation with fallen persons.

He whose hands and feet and mind are well controlled, he who has learning, penance and renown enjoys the benefit of holy centre (and ablution therein).

21. The devotee should abandon vicious nature. He should closely abide by his own duty. He should massage the limbs of the tired people. He should give them food in the proper manner.

22-23. He should give garments and blankets to good people who may happen to be poor. He should be listening to divine stories of Hari as well as those connected with Gaṅgā. A person who goes on pilgrimage abiding by these injunctions, will obtain the benefit of holy centre duly.

The three-eyed lord said another thing to Gautama surrounded by the sages.

24. The holy centres are within distances of two hands of one another. O Gautama, I am present everywhere and I am the bestower of all desired things.

25. Gaṅgā is the bestower of merits and salvation of men at Gaṅgādvāra, the place where Gaṅgā rises, Prayāga and at the place where it falls into the ocean.

26-29. Narmadā, the excellent river, is in the mountain Amarakaṇṭaka. Yamunā joins Gaṅgā at Prayāga and Sarasvatī joins it at Prabhāsa.

O Nārada, the following holy centre is the bestower of salvation. It is the place of meeting of three rivers viz., Kṛṣṇā, Bhīmarathī and Tuṅgabhadrā.

The river is the bestower of liberation at the place where Payoṣṇī joins it. But this Gautamī, O dear one, is the bestower

of liberation everywhere at my bidding. It will give salvation to all men always through the holy ablution.

Some holy centres are extremely meritorious on certain occasions when there is the advent of Devas. But Gautamī is a holy centre unto everyone on every occasion.

30. Plunging into and performing ablution in the Gaṅgā for sixty thousand years is on a par with taking bath once when Br̥haspati (Jupiter) is in the Leo (zodiac).

31. It is rare that men are able to take bath in Gautamī when the Jupiter is in the zodiac Leo (i.e. it is highly meritorious then). (It is holy because) Rāma stepped into it and particularly so because he resorted to this holy centre.

32. When the sun is in the Leo zodiac the rivers Gaṅgā, Narmadā, Yamunā, Sarasvatī, Bhīmarathī and others come (to the river Gautamī) for taking bath.

33. When the sun is in the Leo zodiac if foolish persons avoid Gautamī Gaṅgā and go to other rivers for ablution they are sure to fall into hell.

34-36. Within a distance of two hundred Yojanas, O most venerable among sages, there will be three and a half crores of holy centres. O Gautama, this Gaṅgā belonging to Maheśvara, is called Gautamī, Vaiṣṇavī, Brāhmī, Godāvarī, Nandā and Sunandā. It is the bestower of desired objects. It is brought by the force of splendour of a brahmin. By mere remembrance it destroys all sins. It is always dear to me. Of all the five elements it is the water that has attained most excellence.

37-38. The waters in the holy centres are said to be the holiest. Among those holy rivers Bhāgirathī is the most excellent. Among different channels of Bhāgirathī, Gautamī Gaṅgā accompanied by matted hair which was brought by you is the most excellent. There is no holy centre which is more auspicious than this either in heaven or on Earth or in the nether worlds. O sage, this holy centre is the bestower of all riches.

Brahmā said :

39-40. O dear son, what has been recounted thus to the noble Gautama, by the delighted lord himself has been narrated to you.

Thus that Gautamī Gaṅgā is considered greater than the other rivers. The form of that river has been mentioned to you. Have you any desire to hear about anything else?

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Descent of Bhāgirathi

Nārada said :

1-2. O lord, most excellent one among Devas, two types of channels of Gaṅgā have been mentioned. One of them that has been brought by the brahmin has been narrated. The other type is stationed in the matted hair itself, of the lord of Devas. Tell me how it was brought down to the earth.

Brahmā said :

3. There was a king born of the family of Vaivasvata Manu¹ and in the family of Ikṣvāku. O sage, his name was Sagara and the ocean takes its name Sāagara from him.

4. He was a performer of sacrifices. He was devoted to distribution of charitable gifts. He always thought about piety and good conduct. He had two wives devoutly attached to their husband.

5-6. He had no progeny. So he was anxious. He invited Vasiṣṭha (the family priest) to his abode and worshipped him. The king asked him as to how he could have progeny. On hearing his words, Vasiṣṭha meditated and spoke to the king.

Vasiṣṭha said :

7-9. O king, be devoted to the worship of sages together with your wives.

Brahmā said :

After saying this, O brahmin, the sage went back to his abode.

Once a great ascetic came to the abode of that saintly king. He worshipped that sage. The sage who was extremely pleased

1. The seventh Manu who was the son of Sūrya and father of Ikṣvāku, the founder of the Solar Race of Kings.

said to him. "O extremely fortunate one, tell me the boon you wish to have." On being told thus he chose sons.

10. That sage said to the king, "To one of your wives a son will be born and he will sustain the family. To the other wife there will be born sixty thousand sons."

11. When the sage went away after bestowing the boon, thousands of sons were born. The king performed horse and other sacrifices and distributed plenty of gifts to the deserving.

12. In one horse sacrifice the king got himself duly initiated. He employed his sons along with their armies in the work of protecting the horse.

13. Getting a loophole somewhere Indra took away the horse. Those sons searched for the horse but could not find it.

14-15. The sons of Sagara were sixty thousand and they were experts in different tactics of warfare. Even as they were watching, the asuras took away the anointed horse and went to the nether region. The sons of Sagara could not see the asura who had employed black magic.

16. Not being able to see the horse, the powerful sons of Sagara wandered here and there. Even then they did not find the horse.

17. They went to the world of gods then. Searching the mountains, lakes and forests, they did not see the horse then.

18. The holy rite for the safe journey and other similar auspicious rites were performed by the officiating priests on behalf of the king. Unable to see that beautiful creature, the king became worried.

19. Wandering (here and there) the sons of Sagara went to the world of Devas in their search for the horse. The horse was not there.

20. Thereafter the sons of the king came to the Earth and searched the mountains and forests. There also they did not see the horse then.

21. In the meantime a divine voice was heard there saying, "O sons of Sagara, the horse is kept bound in the nether world and not anywhere else."

22. On hearing this the sons of Sagara became desirous of going to the nether world. They dug up the Earth all round.

23. Distressed by hunger they went on eating dry soil day and night. They dug up hurriedly and rushed to the nether world.

24. On hearing that the powerful princes, the sons of Sagara who had accomplished their tasks had come (to the nether world) the asuras became frightened and they went near Kapila.¹

25. Kapila the extremely intelligent sage was sleeping in the nether world. Formerly, a most important task of Devas had been accomplished by him.

26. He had achieved that success by continuous work without any sleep. Therefore he was tired. When the task had been accomplished the glorious Kapila said to Devas, "Give me a place for sleeping."

27-29. They gave him the nether world. Again, the sage said to Devas : "If a fool wakes me up he will be immediately reduced to ashes; then only, will I lie down in the nether world; if not I won't sleep at all."

When Devas said "So be it" he began to lie down there.

The asuras who knew his power and who were endowed with Māyā (witchcraft) planned to slay Sagara.

30-31. The asuras were afraid even without being fought. They hurried to the place where the extremely furious sage Kapila was lying. They hurriedly tethered the horse near his head. They stood watching silently a little away from the place eager to see what would happen.

32. Then the sons of Sagara entered the nether regions. They saw the tethered horse and the man lying down.

33-35. They considered him the person who took the horse by force and spoiled the sacrifice.

Some of them said then, "Let us kill this fellow and take the horse back".

Some said, "Let us take away this tethered sacrificial animal. Of what avail is this fellow !"

Then other heroic persons said—"We are kings. We are administrators. Let us waken this fellow who has committed the crime and kill him with our heroic power."

1. A celebrated sage and propounder of the Sāmkhya system of philosophy. He is said to be the son of Karandama-Prajāpati and Devahūti. The Brahmapurāṇa (ch. 93) mentions him as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Uttering these harsh words they kicked the sage with their feet.

36. Then Kapila the excellent sage stared at the sons of Sagara with great fury. With his anger he reduced them to ashes.

37. Then all the sons of Sagara were burnt up. But the king Sagara who was initiated to the sacrifice did not know these things.

38-39. It was Nārada who informed noble Sagara about the abode of Kapila, the situation of the horse, the aberration of asuras and the annihilation of the sons of Sagara. But the anxious king did not know what he should do in the circumstances.

40-42. This king had another son who was well known as Asamañjas. Due to his foolishness, he used to hurl down boys and citizens into water. Having been informed by the citizens collectively the king understood his wickedness. He became furious and told his ministers, "Let this Asamañjas, who has forsaken the duty of a Kṣatriya and killed children be banished from the kingdom."

43. On hearing those words of Sagara, the ministers hurriedly abandoned the son of the king. Asamañjas went to the forest.

44-45. (The King thought thus) "All my sixty thousand sons are destroyed by the curse of the brahmin in the nether world. One (who remained) has gone to the forest. Now what shall I do?"

Asamañjas had a son who was well known as Amśumān. The king called that boy and told him the task on hand.

46. Propitiating Kapila, the boy Amśumān gave the horse to Sagara. Thus was the sacrifice completed.

47. His son was a brilliant and virtuous king named Dilipa. His intelligent son was well known as Bhagiratha.

48. On hearing about the sad end of all of his grandfathers he became very distressed. The humble prince asked the great king,

49. "How shall I accomplish the expiation of the Sagaras?" The king said to Bhagiratha, "Dear son, Kapila knows it".

50. On hearing his words the boy went to the nether world. After bowing down to the sage, he intimated everything to him.

51-52. That sage meditated for a long time and said to Bhagiratha, "Propitiate Śaṅkara by penance, O excellent king, and splash your ancestors with the water stationed in the matted hair of Śiva. Then you as well as your ancestors will become satisfied."

"I shall do so", said he to the sage. After bowing down to him he said again.

53-54. "Where shall I go ? O excellent sage, tell me everything what I should do".

Kapila said :

Go to the excellent mountain Kailāsa and eulogize Maheśvara. Perform penance according to your capacity. Then you will attain your desired object.

Brahmā said :

55. On hearing the words of the sage that boy whose activities were those of children bowed down to the sage and went to the mountain Kailāsa. Becoming pure (in mind and body) he decided to perform penance. (Then) Bhagiratha said :

Bhagiratha said :

56. O lord, wearing crescent moon, I am a boy and my intellect too is puerile. I do not know anything. Even then, be pleased, O lord.

57. I bow down to Śiva who is worthy of being worshipped, O lord of the immortals, for the welfare of those who are devoted to my welfare and who help me mentally, physically and verbally (even for) once.

58. May Śiva bring about things desired by those by whom I have been begot and nurtured, those whose Gotra (lineage) is the same as mine and those whose duties are also the same. I bow down to lord Śiva with the crescent moon on his head.

Brahmā said :

59. Even as he was eulogising thus Śiva appeared in front of him. Urging him to choose a boon as he pleased, he said to Bhagiratha.

Śiva said :

60. O Bhagiratha of great intellect, what cannot be given by

Sādhyas¹ and Devas will certainly be given by me to you. Tell me without fear.

Brahmā said :

61-63. The delighted Bhagiratha bowed down to lord Śiva and said.

Bhagiratha said :

In order to sanctify my ancestors, O lord of Devas, give me the excellent river stationed within your matted hair. Everything will be complete thereby.

Brahmā said :

Maheśa smiled and said to Bhagiratha.

Śiva said :

64-68. O son, she is given unto you by me. O dear, of good vow, eulogize her once more.

Brahmā said :

On hearing the words of the lord, Bhagiratha of pure mind performed penance for that purpose. With devotion he eulogized Gaṅgā.

He attained her grace too, like a mature man although he was only a boy. Leading Gaṅgā derived from Maheśvara he went to the nether world. He intimated everything to the noble sage Kapila.

After establishing Gaṅgā in the manner mentioned before and strenuously circumambulating her he spoke with palms joined in reverence.

Bhagiratha said :

69. O goddess, my ancestors have fallen as a result of the curse of sage Kapila. O mother, it behoves you to save them therefrom.

Brahmā said :

70-73. "So be it", said the divine river who helps everyone. In order to help the worlds and to sanctify the ancestors, parti-

1. A class of inferior deities who, according to Viṣṇupurāṇa, were the grandchildren of Dakṣa-Prajāpati.

cularly in order to fill up the sea drunk up by Agastya¹, in order to destroy sins merely by being remembered, the divine river did what she was told by Bhagiratha. She splashed the princes, the sons of Sagara who had been reduced to ashes by the curse of brahmin, in the nether region. She filled up the holes dug up by the Sagaras, the river flooded the mountain Meru and stopped. The young king spoke to her thus:

74-77. “You must remain in the land of holy rites.”

Saying “So be it” she came to Himalaya. From that holy mountain, she came to the subcontinent Bharata. From its middle the holy river flowed towards the eastern sea. Thus this river Gaṅgā brought by a Kṣatriya, O great sage, has been mentioned to you.

This same river belongs to Maheśvara, Viṣṇu and Brahmā. It is sacred. Bhagirathi the divine river is stationed on the peak of Himavān.

Thus, the water stationed within the matted hair of Maheśvara attained two forms. To the south of the Vindhya, Gaṅgā is called Gautamī. In the north of the Vindhya, she is called Bhagirathi.

CHAPTER NINE

The Holy Centre Vardha

Nārada said :

1. My mind is not satiated by listening to the stories mentioned by you. The predilection of my mind is to listen to the benefit of the holy centres separately.

2. At the outset recount to me in proper sequence how Gaṅgā was brought by the brahmin. Tell me the holy benefit of the holy centres separately in the proper sequence together with its legends.

1. The sage Agastya drank up the ocean because, according to Mahābhārata, the latter was hiding demons who could be killed by the gods only after this act of Agastya.

Brahmā said :

3. I am not able to recount entirely the benefit, greatness and the individual importance of the holy centres. Nor are you capable of listening to it.

4-6. Still I shall recount something. Listen to it attentively, O Nārada.

After bowing down to the three-eyed lord, I shall briefly speak about the holy centres mentioned by sages and the words of the Vedas.

O sage, the place where the three-eyed lord revealed himself is the holy centre named Tryambaka. It is the bestower of worldly pleasures and salvation. Another holy centre is “Varāha” which is well known in the three worlds.

7-8. I shall describe its features as well as how Viṣṇu’s name came to be associated with it.

Formerly a Rākṣasa well known by the name of Sindhusena, harassed and defeated Devas. Taking away sacrifice he reached the nether region.

When sacrifice went over to the nether world the Earth became devoid of sacrifice.

9. When sacrifice perishes one shall have neither this world nor the other. At that time, the situation was thus.

Following the enemy Devas entered the nether region.

10-12. With Indra as their leader they were not able to conquer him. Approaching Viṣṇu the Purāṇa Puruṣa (lit. the primeval male) they intimated to him the evil action of the Rākṣasa viz., the entire destruction of sacrifice.

The Lord said :

Assuming the physical body of a Boar along with the conch, discus and mace in hands I shall go to the nether region and bring the holy sacrifice after killing the leading demons.

13-16. May Devas go to heaven. May your mental fever disappear.

Brahmā said :

It was by that path whereby Gaṅgā reached the nether regions, O dear son, that the discus-bearing lord hurried to Rasā-tala (nether world) after breaking through the Earth.

The glorious lord in the guise of a Boar killed the Rākṣasas

and Dānavas residing in Rasātala. He held the great sacrifice in his mouth. The lord in the form of a Boar, the enjoyer of sacrifices, the conqueror of enemies, came out of Rasātala by the same path whereby Viṣṇu had entered it.

17-18. There, on the mountain Brahmagiri, Devas waited for Hari. Coming out by that path he came to the Gaṅgāsravaṇa (the current of the river Gaṅgā). He washed his blood-stained limbs, O Nārada, with the water of Gaṅgā. Therefore it became (well known as) Varāhakuṇḍa.

19-22. Hari, the most excellent one among Devas, placed in front of Devas the sacrifice he had kept in his mouth. It was thus that the sacrifice was born of his mouth.

Thereafter the sacred ladle is called the most important part of sacrifice. Its form became that of a Boar for another reason.

Hence the holy centre Varāha is the holiest Tīrtha. It bestows all desired things. Performing the holy ablution and charity at that place bestows the benefits of all sacrifices.

If anyone stands there and remembers his ancestors or does any meritorious deed, his manes will be free from all sins. They shall attain Heaven.

CHAPTER TEN

Kapotatīrtha

1. I am not competent to recount to you the greatness of Kusāvarta. Merely by remembering it one's purpose is accomplished.

2. The holy centre well known as Kuśāvarta is the bestower of all desired things unto men. It has been stirred up by Kuśa¹ by the noble Gautama.

3. The sage brought the river after stirring it with Kuśa. Performing ablution and offering charitable gifts there bestows satisfaction to the manes.

1. A sacred grass used in religious rites; also known as darbha in older texts.

4-7. Nilagangā which is the most excellent of all rivers comes out of the Nilaparvata (Blue mountain).

If a man of mental and physical purity performs ablution etc., whatever holy rite he performs, know that all those are everlasting. They bestow satisfaction to the ancestors.

The excellent holy centre Kapotatirtha is well known in the three worlds.

O sage, listen. I shall tell you about its form and features, which will do you great good.

On Brahmagiri there was an extremely terrible hunter.

He used to harass brahmins, ascetics and other decent men as well as cows, birds and animals. That sinning soul of this nature was inclined to become furious and was a speaker of untruth.

8-10. He was of a terrible shape and size. He was very fierce. His eyes were blue. His arms were short. He had deformed teeth. He had lost his nose and eyes. His legs were short but his belly was huge in girth and he was short in height. His arms were small. He was utterly deformed and his voice resembled the braying of a donkey. He had a noose in his hand. He was evil-minded and sinful. He wielded the bow ever and anon.

O Nārada, his wife and children too were like him. Urged by his wife, he entered the dense forest.

11. That sinner killed animals and birds of many forms. Some of them, both living and dead, he put inside a cage.

12. He returned home scorched and distressed due to hunger and thirst after wandering through many places.

13-14. After the months of spring season on an afternoon, the sky was suddenly overcast with clouds. There was a rumbling sound of thunder. A violent gust of wind blew, showering hailstones. It was extremely terrible due to heavy downpour. As he went ahead, the tired hunter could not even know his path.

15. As the sinful fellow was too tired, he could not know, where it was water and where it was land, where was a deep pit and where the path was right, where to take shelter and in which direction he should move.

16-17. He thought thus: "Where am I going? Where should I stay? What shall I do? Like the god of death I am the extractor of vital airs of all living beings. The spirit that causes even my

death has come, viz. the shower of hailstones. I do not see anyone who can save me. No rock, no tree nearby."

18-20. After thinking thus in diverse ways the hunter saw a tree nearby in the forest. It was like the lord of the forest, like the moon among the stars, like a lion among animals, like a householder among the persons of various stages and like mind among sense-organs. It was the saviour of living beings. The tree was splendid and excellent, embellished with branches and tender sprouts and leaves. With his clothes drenched in water, that hunter resorted to that tree and sat beneath it.

21. He thought of his wife and children wondering whether they were alive or not. In the meantime the sun also set.

22. There was a pigeon on that excellent tree. He was surrounded by his wife, sons and grandsons. He had resorted to the same tree.

23. He lived there happily well-contented, delighted and free from fear. Many years passed by since that bird began to live there.

24-28. His wife who was chaste was highly pleased with him. His hollow cavity in that excellent tree was not at all affected by water or wind. That pigeon lived there along with his wife and children. On that particular day both of them, the he-pigeon and the she-pigeon had, by chance gone out in search of prey. The he-pigeon returned to the tree. As ill luck would have it, dear son, the she-pigeon was caught alive by the hunter. The he-pigeon looked at the children separated from their mother. On observing that a terrible downpour was going on, that the sun had set and that his hollow was a void he began to lament.

29. The king of pigeons was not aware that the she-pigeon was bound and kept in the cage. The he-pigeon began to sing in praise of his beloved.

30. "Even now my beloved wife, the source of my welfare, who increases my joy, the mother of my virtue and the controlling mistress of my body, has not come back.

31. It is she alone who assists me in the acquisition of virtue, wealth, love and liberation. When I am pleased she laughs; when I am angry she tries to wipe off my misery.

32. She is a comrade unto me; she helps me by her counsels. She abides by my words and suggestions. Even after the sun has

set, my beloved wife, the source of my welfare, has not come back.

33. She does not know any holy rite, mantra, god, virtue or asset other than me, her husband. Her husband is her holy rite; her husband is her life; her husband is her Mantra. She is fond of her husband.

34. Even now my beloved, the source of my welfare has not come back. What shall I do? Where shall I go? Is this my house? Without her it appears to be a forest.

35. In her company my house is full of splendour and glory. Even if it is terrible, it is splendid. Even now she does not come back. By her presence alone this place is a home.

36-37. Without her I cannot remain alive. For her I shall even forsake my body. But what will my children do? I will be deprived of my religious rites now."

Even as he was lamenting thus, the she-pigeon who was in the cage heard his lamentation. On hearing it she spoke thus to her husband from within the cage.

The she-pigeon said :

38. O bird of great intellect, I am here imprisoned (and) helpless. I have been brought here by the hunter bound by ropes and nooses.

39-40. I am gratified and blessed. My husband recounts my qualities. Undoubtedly I am contented.

When my husband is satisfied the deities are pleased with me. They are extremely pleased. Otherwise I would perish.

41. You are my deity. You are my lord. You are my friend. You are my ultimate resort. You are my holy rite. You are the great Brahman. You are my heaven. You are my salvation.

42. O my beloved husband, the cause of my welfare, do not be worried. Make your intellect steady and stable in virtue and piety. It is by your favour that different kinds of worldly pleasures have been enjoyed by me.

43. Do not have any grief or worry due to me. Keep your intellect steady and stable in virtue and piety.

Brahma said :

44. On hearing these words of his beloved the he-pigeon got

down from the tree and went hurriedly to the place where the she-pigeon was in her cage.

45. On approaching, he saw his beloved, and the hunter as though dead. He said, "Now the hunter is motionless. I shall release you."

The she-pigeon said :

46-49. O extremely fortunate one, do not release me. Know that (the worldly) relationship is unstable. (The birds) that move about constitute the food of the hunters. One living being is the prey of another. I do not think that this hunter is guilty in any manner. Keep your consciousness of virtue steady.

To the twice-born, the fire-god is a preceptor. The brahmin is a preceptor unto all castes. Husband alone is the preceptor of women. The guest is a preceptor unto all. Certainly the goddess of speech becomes pleased with the people who propitiate the guest by means of delightful words. If food is given to him Indra will be pleased.

50. If his feet are washed the manes are pleased. If he is given food to eat, Prajāpati is pleased. By rendering service to him Lakṣmī can be propitiated along with Viṣṇu.

51-55. If he is offered a bed, the gods are pleased. Hence, let my guest be worshipped. If a guest is scorched by the glare of the sun and is tired and if he comes to one's house one should view him like a god. Indeed he is the bestower of benefits of all sacrifices.

Gods, manes and fires follow the exhausted guest. If he is pleased they also rejoice. If he is disappointed they are also disappointed.

Hence, O beloved husband, forsake misery in every respect and attain calmness. Keep your intellect auspicious and practise virtuous activities.

It is considered by all that rendering help or harassing persons is of great consequence. People render help to those who help them. But he who befriends those who harass him is a virtuous person.

The he-pigeon said :

56. O lady of excellent face, what has been said by you is

befitting us both. What you think is excellent. But I have something to be said. Listen to it.

57. There are some who fill their belly with thousands; others with hundreds and still others with tens. Some fill themselves with happiness. But we fill our belly with great difficulty.

58. Some hoard their wealth and grain in deep pits. Others hoard their wealth in big barns. Some keep their wealth in pots. But we keep our wealth in our beaks.

59. O splendid lady, how shall I honour and propitiate this exhausted guest?

The she-pigeon said :

60. Fire, water, splendid speech etc., can be offered to the guest. Grass, wood etc. should also be given to the suppliant. This hunter is distressed due to chillness.

Brahmā said :

61. On hearing these words of his beloved the king of birds ascended the tree and saw a fire burning far off.

62. He went to the place where the fire was burning and brought a burning splinter in his beak. He lit a fire in front of the hunter.

63. During the mid-night he dropped dry twigs, leaves and grass into that fire.

64. On seeing the fire blazing, that hunter who was distressed by cold warmed his exhausted limbs and attained happiness.

65. On seeing the hunter consumed by the fire of hunger, the she-pigeon said to her husband, "O highly fortunate one, release me.

66. I shall propitiate the distressed hunter with my own body. O dear one of good holy rites, attain the worlds belonging to those who have worshipped their guests".

The he-pigeon said :

67. O splendid lady, when I stand (i.e. when I am alive) this duty is not laid down for you. I shall be the one who propitiates the guest. permit me to be so.

Brahmā said :

68-69. After saying these words he circumambulated the fire three times remembering the four-armed lord Mahāviṣṇu

who is the soul of the Universe, who is worthy of being sought refuge in and who is favourably disposed to his devotees. Saying "Eat as you please" he entered the fire. On seeing him cast off his life in the fire the hunter spoke these words.

The hunter said :

70. Fie upon this life of mine with a human body, for, this daring act has been undertaken for my sake by this king of birds.

Brahmā said :

71-72. The she-bird spoke to the hunter who said thus.

The she-pigeon said :

O highly fortunate one, release me. This, my husband is going far off.

Brahmā said :

73. On hearing her words the hunter released the she-pigeon from the cage hurriedly as though he was afraid.

74-78. After circumambulating the fire she sang to her dead husband.

The she-pigeon said :

Dying immediately after the husband is the greatest duty of women. This is the path laid down in the Vedas. It is honoured in the world.

Just as the snake-charmer forcibly takes out the snake from its hole, so also the woman who is accompanied by her husband shall go to heaven.

The woman who follows her husband shall stay in heaven for as many years as there are hairs in a man's body, viz. three and a half crores of years.

After bowing down to the Earth, gods, Gaṅgā, and trees and after consoling her children, she said to the hunter:

The she-pigeon said :

79. The woman who follows her husband shall stay in heaven for as many years as there are hairs on a man's body, viz. three and a half crores of years.

80. O highly fortunate one, it is due to your grace that such a thing has happened to me. Pardon my guilt for leaving my children. I shall go to heaven along with my husband.

Brahmā said :

81. After saying thus, the good mannered she-bird entered the fire. As soon as she entered the fire there was a cry of victory.

82. Then the pair were seen in the sky seated on an aerial chariot resembling the sun and extremely splendid. They were like gods themselves.

83-85. With great delight both of them spoke to the hunter who was surprised much.

The Couple said :

We are going to the abode of gods. We are taking leave of you, O highly intelligent one. The staircase leading to heaven for both of us is the guest in you. Obeisance to you.

Brahmā said :

On seeing them seated on the excellent aerial chariot, the hunter cast away his cage along with his bow. With palms joined in reverence he spoke.

The hunter said :

86. O highly fortunate ones, I am not to be abandoned by you. Something should be given to me who do not know anything. I am your guest here and thus should be honoured. It behoves you to recount to me the manner of my expiation.

The Couple said :

87. Go to Gautamī river, welfare be to you. Taking bath there for a fortnight you will be liberated from your sins.

88. After being liberated from your sins if you plunge into Gaṅgā again you will acquire the merit of a horse-sacrifice. You will become sanctified.

89-90. If you take a holy ablution in the excellent river Gautamī, you will abandon this defiled body. Mounting on an excellent aerial chariot, you will go to heaven.

Brahmā said :

91-94. On hearing their words the hunter did so. He became seated on an extellent aerial chariot. He assumed a divine form. He wore divine garlands and garments. He was eulogized by celestial damsels. The he-pigeon, the she-pigeon and the hunter proceeded to heaven. Such is the power of Gaṅgā.

Thenceforward that holy centre is well known by the name *Kapota* (pigeon). All the holy rites performed there, viz. bathing, distributing charitable gifts, worshipping the manes and all other holy rites such as Japa, Yajña, etc. are capable of giving everlasting benefit.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Kumāratirtha

Brahmā said :

1. Another holy centre is Kārttikeya pertaining to Lord Subrahmaṇya, well known as Kaumāra. Merely by listening to its name one shall attain nobility of birth and exquisite beauty.

2. When the asura Tāraka was killed and the three worlds became quiet and normal, Pārvatī spoke to her eldest son Kārttikeya with great pleasure:

3. “By my consent and the grace of your father, be delighted in your mind. Enjoy as you please the worldly pleasures in the three worlds, which are dear to your mind.”

4. Thus addressed by his mother, Viśākha (Kārttikeya) the beloved of gods, sported about as he pleased with the wives of gods. The wives of gods also sported about.

5. While the wives of gods were being enjoyed, O Nārada, the heaven-dwellers were not able to prevent Kārttikeya.

6-7. Then Devas intimated to Pārvatī that act of her son. Though he was frequently prevented by his mother and Devas, the spear-bearing lord did not act according to their suggestions. The six-faced lord was so much attached to the women. Afraid of his curse, Pārvatī thought over the matter.

8-10. Again and again the goddess thought about this due to her affection for her son. In order to achieve the task of Devas she decided that the wives of Devas should be protected. If Skanda (Kārttikeya) attempted to sport with any lady Pārvatī made her look like herself. When the six-faced lord called the

wife of Indra or Varuṇa and stared at her he saw the form of his mother in her.

11. He set her aside after a bow. Again he called another lady. Seeing his mother's form in her too he became ashamed.

12. Thus he saw in all women the form of his own mother. He saw the entire universe full of the forms of his mother. Thinking thus, he became free from all attachments.

13-14. He knew that it was his mother who started dissuading him from his actions. He thought thus: "If I am to be dissuaded from enjoyment of pleasures why was I persuaded to act so at the first instance? Whatever my mother did was only to make me a laughing stock." Hence, he was extremely ashamed and went to Gautamī.

15. (He then said) "Let this river whose form is also like that of my mother, hear my statement. Hereafter whatever has a feminine name will be considered by me like my mother."

16-17. On coming to know of this, Śaṅkara, the lord of the worlds, accompanied by Pārvatī stopped him. Then Subrahmaṇya said, "It has already taken place." Then the delighted lord began to think: "What shall I give?"

With palms joined in reverence Skanda said to his father again.

18-22. "I am commander-in-chief and the leader of gods and I am your son. O lord of Devas and the one who is worshipped by Devas, this much is enough. Why should there be other boons?

Or, if you are desirous of granting me a boon, I shall ask for the welfare of worlds and not of myself. O lord, it behoves you to permit me. Let the great sinners such as the defilers of preceptors' bed, be rid of their sins merely by plunging into this river. O lord of Devas, let even the low creatures attain excellent birth; let the ugly and the deformed be richly endowed with beauty by taking their bath here."

Brahmā said :

Saying "Let is be so" Śambhu approved of what was suggested by his son. Thenceforward that holy centre became known as "Kārtikeya". Taking bath and distributing charitable gifts there yields the benefit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Kṛttikā Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre next to Kārttikeya is known as Kṛttikā-Tirtha. Merely by hearing about it one will acquire the benefit of drinking Soma juice.

2-3. Formerly, for quelling Tāraka, Fire god drank the semen of Śiva. On seeing him with the Semen within, O sage, the wives of sages desired for the same. Of the seven sages Vasiṣṭha's wife Arundhatī had her menstrual bath. Excepting her, the other six women became pregnant through the Fire god.

4-6. They had scorching experience in their menstrual bath. They shone splendidly. They consulted mutually: "What shall we do? Where shall we go? How can we attain merit?" After saying thus mutually they went to Gaṅgā and pressed themselves hard. The foetuses coming out of them floated in the water in the form of foam. Through water and wind they joined together. Thus the six-faced lord with a single body was born.

7. After causing the abortion of the foetuses the wives of sages went home. On seeing their deformed bodies the sages said :

8. "You may go. You may go quickly. It is not proper for women to be licentious." After saying this their husbands cast them off.

9-10. On being forsaken by their husbands, those six women became very miserable. On seeing them thus Nārada said: "By the names of Kārttikeya, Gāngeya (son of Gaṅgā), Agni-bhava (born of Fire god) and Tārakāntaka (slayer of Tāraka) Śiva's son is well known. Go to him. Ere long he will become pleased and grant you worldly pleasures."

11. At the instance of the divine sage the Kṛttikās approached the six-faced lord and themselves intimated to him everything in the manner it had taken place.

12-16. Kārttikeya approved of them and said to them "All of you go to Gautamī. Take your bath and worship Maheśvara. I shall come there itself, and lead you to the abode of Devas". Saying "So be it" the Kṛttikās took their bath in Gaṅgā and

Gautamī. They worshipped the lord of Devas at the bidding of Kārttikeya. By the grace of the lord they went to their abode and were accepted by the sages.

Thenceforward that holy centre is called Kṛttikātīrtha. He who takes bath on the full moon day in the month of Kārttika, in conjunction with the Kṛttikā stars, acquires the benefit of all sacrifices. He becomes a virtuous king. He who remembers that holy centre or hears about it becomes rid of all sins and acquires long life.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Daśāśvamedha Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. O great sage, listen to the description of the holy centre of Daśāśvamedha¹. Merely by listening to its name one shall acquire the merit of a horse-sacrifice.

2. The glorious Viśvarūpa of great strength was the son of Viśvakarman. Pramati was his son. His son was lordly Bhauvana.

3. His chief priest was Kaśyapa who was an expert in all wise lores. The brawny-armed Bhauvana, the ruler of the whole world asked him:

4. “O sage, I wish to perform a horse sacrifice simultaneously with ten horses.”

He then asked his preceptor the brahmin: “Where shall I perform the sacrifice?”

5. He said : “O excellent king, there are Devayajanas (places for the worship of Devas) at different places where excellent brahmins performed great sacrifices.”

6. Ten sacrifices were simultaneously performed by the priest. In that sacrifice in a group, a number of sages were employed as Rtviks.

7-8. Avoiding Devayajana, the priest had initiated the sacrifices in another place. Hence defects and obstacles over-

1. A sacred place in Kurukṣetra (MBh, Vanaparva, 9.14)

whelmed him. The sacrifices could not be completed. On seeing them the king was extremely worried. On observing the sacrifice incomplete the king spoke to the preceptor.

The king said :

9. Is it because of the defect of place, or of the defect of time, or my defect or your defect that the ten horse sacrifices have not become complete?

rahmā said :

10. The grief-stricken king accompanied by his preceptor Kaśyapa went to Saṁvarta the elder brother of Bṛhaspati. They spoke to him.

Kaśyapa and Bhauvana said :

11. O holy sage, the bestower of honour, ten horse-sacrifices have to be performed simultaneously. Tell us about the place and the preceptor thereof so that all the ten will be completed.

Brahmā said :

12. The excellent sage Saṁvarta meditated for a while and spoke to Bhauvana: "Go to Brahmā. He will tell you about the preceptor and the place of sacrifice."

13. Bhauvana of great intellect came to me accompanied by the noble Kaśyapa. They asked me about the preceptor, place of sacrifice and other things.

14. Then O dear son, I spoke to Bhauvana and Kaśyapa: "O leading king, go to Gautamī. That place is highly meritorious for sacrifices.

15-16. This Kaśyapa alone is your excellent preceptor. He is a master of Vedas. By the grace of this preceptor as well as of Gautamī, with a single horse sacrifice and the holy ablution therein, O king, you will achieve the benefit of ten horse sacrifices."

17. On hearing it the king Bhauvana went to the banks of Gautamī with Kaśyapa to assist him. He got himself initiated for the horse sacrifice.

18-19. Then the horse sacrifice, the lord of Yajñas was begun. When it was completed, the king became ready to offer the

whole of the Earth. Then an ethereal voice addressed the excellent king who was standing by after worshipping the brahmins, the Rtviks and Sadaspatis¹ (types of priests).

The Ethereal Voice said :

20-22. O king, everything has been given by you who are desirous of giving the whole Earth with mountains, forests and parks to Kaśyapa, your priest.

Eschew your desire to give the Earth as gift. Offer food that yields great results. There is no meritorious thing like the gift of food in all the three worlds particularly on the bank of Gaṅgā if it is given with great faith, O sage.

This horse sacrifice with many monetary gifts has been performed by you. You are satisfied, welfare unto thee. No worry need be felt.

Brahmā said :

23-25. Still Bhauvana wanted to give the Earth away as gift. The Earth said to him then again and again:

The Earth said :

O son of Viśvakarman, do not give me away. If a person goes to the banks of Gautami and gives a morsel of food it is as good as though I have been given wholly. Why do you give me then, O Bhauvana? I shall sink into water. It behoves you not to give me.

Brahmā said :

26. Then Bhauvana became afraid. He asked, "What then, should be given?" Again the Earth addressed Bhauvana surrounded by the brahmins.

The Earth said :

27-28. Gingelly seeds, cows, money, grains—whatever is given on the banks of Gautami is everlasting in its benefit. Why then, do you give me, Bhauvana? If a person goes to the banks of Gaṅgā and gives a morsel of food, it is as good as though I have been given wholly. Why do you give me then, O Bhauvana?

Brahmā said :

29-30. On hearing the words of the Earth Bhauvana, the ruler of the whole world, considered that it should be so. He

1. Lit. lord of the seat or sacrificial assembly.

then gave food to the brahmins on a big scale. Ever since then, people know it to be Daśāśvamedhika Tīrtha. By taking bath there, the fruit of ten horse sacrifices is acquired.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Paiśāca Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1-4 Another holy centre is the Paiśāca Tīrtha. It is honoured by persons who expound the doctrine of Brahman. I shall recount to you its form and features. On the southern bank of Gautamī, at the side of Brahmagiri, O Nārada, there is a mountain Añjana. On that mountain, O excellent sage, there was an excellent celestial damsel Añjanā. She had a downfall due to a curse. Her face resembled that of a monkey. Her husband's names was Kesari. Adrikā was another wife of Kesari. She too was a celestial damsel who had a downfall due to a curse. Her face and head resembled those of a cat. She too stayed on the Añjana mountain.

5. Once Kesari who was well known in the world went to the southern sea. In the meantime sage Agastya came to that Añjana mountain.

6. Both of them, viz. Añjanā and Adrikā worshipped the excellent sage Agastya duly and pleasingly.

7. Then the delighted holy sage said to them, "Let a boon be chosen". They said to Agastya, "O lord of sages, give us two sons.

8. They should be stronger than all others and more excellent too. They should be persons who render help to the whole world".

Saying "So be it", that sage went to the southern quarter.

9-12. Once Añjanā and Adrikā were singing, dancing and laughing on the top of the mountain.

The two Devas, Vāyu and Nirṛti saw them and smiled. They were overwhelmed by lust and they rushed to those ladies. They said, "We are Devas, the bestowers of boons. Be our wives".

They too replied, "Let it be so". They then sported about on the top of the mountain. Hanūmān was born of Añjanā and Vāyu. The king of Piśācas (evil spirits) named Adri was born of Adrikā and Nirṛti.

13-14. Then the ladies said, "Due to the boon of the sage sons are born to us. Our form is ugly and distorted. It is defiled at the head and face due to the curse of Indra. It behoves you to know about this." Then Lord Vāyu and Nirṛti spoke:

15. "By taking bath in Gautami you will be released from the curse". After saying this the two delighted Devas vanished there itself.

16. Then, for the sake of pleasing his brother Hanūmān, Adri who had the form and features of a Piśāca took Añjanā, his mother and made her take her bath.

17-20. In the same manner Hanūmān took Adri whose form was that of a cat, to Gaṅgā and rushed to the banks of Gautami.

Thenceforward that holy centre was well known as Paiśāca and Añjana. (Being) near the mountain of Brahmā that is auspicious. It yields all desired things. The holy centre Mārjāra extended to fiftythree Yojanas to the east. Away from the holy centre Mārjāra is the holy centre Hanūmanta and Vṛṣākapi. The confluence of Phenā is the bestower of all desired things. Its form, nature and situation is recounted there itself.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Kṣudhā Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. Listen attentively, O Nārada. The holy centre well known as Kṣudhā Tirtha is being recounted. It is highly meritorious and it bestows all desired things to men.

2. Formerly, there was a sage Kaṇva. He performed penance and he was the most excellent among those who were conversant with the Vedas. Once wandering among penance-groves he was afflicted by hunger.

3-7 Gautama's holy hermitage was richly endowed with food and water. He saw himself hungry and Gautama prosperous. He noticed this incongruity and became detached. He thought, "Gautama is an excellent brahmin. I too am a person well-established in penance. Begging of a person equal to one in status is not proper. Even though I am overcome by hunger, even when my body is afflicted, I am not going to take food in the abode of Gautama. I shall go to Gautamī Gaṅgā and earn wealth". After deciding like this the intelligent sage went to the sacred Gaṅgā. After taking bath he sat on the Kuśa grass with controlled mind. He eulogized Gautamī Gaṅgā and Kṣudhā (hunger), the greatest distressing thing.

Kaṇva said :

8. Gaṅgā, obeisance be to you, the destroyer of agony and distress, and to you, O Hunger, the cause of agony and distress to all the people.

Obeisance O splendid one, born of the matted hair of Maheśāna.

Obeisance O Kṣudhā coming out of the mouth of great Death.

9. O Gautami assuming a calm form in regard to meritorious souls and furious form in regard to the wicked souls ! O destroyer of the distress and sins of all, in the form of a river !

10. Obeisance be to you, the bestower of agony, distress and sin, to all in the form of hunger.

Obeisance O goddess, the cause of welfare and the suppressor of sins.

Obeisance O goddess, the cause of peace. Obeisance, O destroyer of poverty.

Brahmā said :

11. As he eulogized thus two forms appeared in front of him, one the charming form of Gaṅgā and the other the terrible form of Kṣudhā. After bowing down with palms joined in reverence, the excellent brahmin said.

Kaṇva said :

12. Obeisance be to you O Godāvari, the cause of all auspicious things, O Brāhma (belonging to Brahma), O Māheś-

vari (belonging to Maheśvara), O splendid Vaiṣṇavī (belonging to Viṣṇu), O three-eyed goddess !

13. Obeisance be to you, O Godāvarī, born of the matted hair of the three-eyed lord, the destroyer of sins of Gautama, O river that flows into the sea in seven channels !

14. O goddess Hunger obeisance, obeisance to you, O sinner unto all sinful persons, O destroyer of virtue, love and wealth, full of misery and greed !

Brahmā said :

15-17 On hearing the words of Kaṇva both of them were delighted and they spoke to the brahmin.

Gaṅgā & Kṣudhā said :

O (sage) of good holy rites, O cause of welfare, mention your desire. Choose boons.

Brahmā said :

Kaṇva bowed down to Gaṅgā and Kṣudhā in due order and said:

Kaṇva said :

18. O Gaṅgā, O goddess, give unto me wealth and all charming and cherished desires, long life, enjoyment of worldly pleasures and salvation.

Brahmā said :

19-23 After saying this to Gautamī Gaṅgā, the excellent brahmin said to Hunger.

Kaṇva said :

O hunger, O thirst, O wretched one, never be in me or in anyone born of my family. O extremely sinful and harsh one, go away.

This is another boon I wish for. If persons afflicted by hunger were to eulogize you with this hymn let them not have miseries of poverty.

Let those men who devoutly perform such sacred rites as holy ablution, charitable gifts, chanting of Japas etc. in this holy centre of great merit become rich. Another boon I wish for is this—If a person reads this hymn whether in the holy centre

or in the house, let him not have the fear from poverty and miseries.

Brahmā said :

24. After saying "So be it" to Kaṇva both of them went to their respective abodes. Thenceforward that holy centre was called Kaṇva, Gaṅgā and Kṣudhā. O dear one, it dispels all sins and increases the delight of manes.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Indra-Tirtha: Ahalyā-Saṅgama-Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre named Ahalyā-Saṅgama is one that sanctifies the three worlds. O excellent sage, listen to what happened and how it happened.

2. Out of great curiosity, O lord of sages, many types of beautiful girls possessing good qualities had been formerly created by me.

3-6. Among them I created a girl of exquisitely splendid features. On seeing that most excellent girl of great beauty in every limb, I thought thus, "Who is capable of nurturing this girl? Neither among the Asuras nor Devas is there anyone who has the ability to nurture her". This was my thought. Then I gave that highly intelligent girl to Gautama for bringing her up—to Gautama who was an intelligent brahmin superior to all in good qualities, who possessed the power of penance, who had all characteristics and who was conversant with the Vedas and Vedāngas.¹

7-9. "Protect and bring up (this girl), O excellent sage, till she attains the age of youth. When she attains youth, bring her back to me". After saying this I gave that girl of slender waist to Gautama. The excellent sage whose sins had been dispelled by penance took her and nurtured her duly. The ex-

1. Disciplines auxiliary to the study of the Vedas.

cellent sage without any aberration brought Ahalyā near me after bedecking her duly.

10. On seeing her, Indra, Agni, Varuṇa and other Devas told me severally, "O lord of Devas, she should be given to me."

11-15. In the same manner the sages, Sādhyas, Dānavas, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas also approached me. On seeing all of them gathered together for the sake of that girl Indra became all the more enamoured in particular.

I remembered the greatness, majesty, and courage of Gautama and was surprised. Then this good thought occurred to me, "This lady of splendid face should be given to Gautama alone. She is not suitable for anyone. I shall give her to him alone." I thought in this way also, "The mind and courage of everyone has been stirred up by this girl."

Then Devas and sages uttered "Ahalyā". I too said so. Looking at Devas and sages I said loudly again and again:

16. This lady of beautiful eyebrows will be given to that person who circumambulates the Earth and thereafter approaches me sooner than others and not to anyone else.

17. On hearing the words uttered by me, Devas proceeded ahead in their circumambulation of the Earth.

18. After Devas had gone Gautama, the lord of sages, too made some effort like this for the sake of Ahalyā.

19. In the meantime, O brahmin, the divine cow Kāmadhenu¹ had partially delivered her calf. Gautama saw her thus.

20. Remembering "This is the Earth" he circumambulated her. Then he circumambulated the Linga² of the lord of Devas.

21-22. After circumambulating both of them Gautama the excellent sage decided thus—"Devas have not completed even one round of the Earth. I have completed two rounds." After deciding thus, that sage came near me.

23. After bowing down to me Gautama of great intelligence said to me, "O lotus-seated lord, the soul of the universe, obeisance be to you again and again.

1. The wish-fulfilling cow born at the churning of the ocean by the gods and antigods.

2. The phallic symbol of Lord Śiva worshipped in the form of a stone column.

24. O Brahmā, the entire Earth has been circumambulated by me. What is proper in this connection? O lord of Devas, you know it better yourself".

25. By meditation I understood it and said to Gautama: "The lady of beautiful eyebrows will be given to you alone. The circumambulation has been completed.

26-29. O brahminical sage, Dharma (Virtue) is inscrutable even to the Vedas. The divine cow having partially delivered her calf is (identical with) the Earth consisting of seven continents. If that divine cow is circumambulated, the Earth too has been circumambulated. By circumambulating the Linga one shall obtain the same benefit. Hence, O sage Gautama of good holy rites, I am pleased with your effort, courage, knowledge and penance. O great sage, this girl, the most excellent one in the world is given to you." After saying this, O sage, I gave Ahalyā to Gautama.

30-31. After the wedding had been celebrated, Devas came there slowly. They had completed their circumambulation of the Earth. They saw Gautama, Ahalyā and their union that increased their pleasure. On seeing this after their arrival, Devas were surprised.

32. When the rites connected with the wedding were over Devas returned to heaven. The jealous husband of Śaci (wife of Indra) glanced at her (longingly) and went to heaven.

33. Delighted in my mind, I gave the sacred Brahmagiri which is splended and which bestows all cherished desires, to the noble Gautama.

34-35. The excellent sage Gautama indulged in dalliance there along with Ahalyā. Indra heard about this gift of Brahmā to Gautama in the heaven itself. In order to see that hermitage, sage Gautama and his uncensured wife, Indra assumed the guise of a brahmin and came there.

36. On seeing the sage's splendid beautiful wife and wealth Indra felt jealous and an evil thought entered his mind.

37. O dear one, Indra who was full of lust did not realize the risk; he was not aware of the time and place or even the danger of curse from sage Gautama.

38-41. Arrogant due to his overlordship of the kingdom of the Devas, he was meditating upon her alone continuously. He

felt his limbs scorched by the pangs of passion. He was always thinking thus, "How shall I make myself content? How shall I enter this hermitage?"

Though he stayed there in the guise of a brahmin he did not succeed in getting an opportunity to go inside.

Once the highly intelligent sage Gautama performed his morning rituals and went out of the hermitage along with his disciples. The excellent sage went out to visit the penance grove on the Gautamī river, the brahmins and different kinds of cultivated grains. Indra saw him going out saying (to himself) "This is the opportunity". He did what was pleasing to his mind.

42. Indra who was desirous of attaining pleasures assumed the form of Gautama. Looking at Ahalyā who was beautiful in every respect he spoke to her.

Indra said :

43. "I am attracted by your good qualities. Remembering your beauty I have begun to falter in my steps." Saying this and grasping her hand he went inside the hermitage.

44. Ahalyā did not know that he was a paramour. She believed him to be Gautama and indulged in sexual dalliance with him as she pleased. Meanwhile Gautama came there along with his disciples.

45. Everyday it was the custom of Ahalyā to welcome him as he returned speaking pleasing words to him and satisfying him by her graceful qualities.

46. On this occasion he was unable to see her. The highly intelligent sage Gautama considered it a highly surprising mystery. O Nārada, the people looked at the excellent sage standing at the door.

47. The watchman and the domestic servants at the hall of Agnihotra sacrifice were awestruck and surprised. They spoke to the excellent sage Gautama.

The Watchman said :

48. "What a mystery is this, O holy sage, you are seen both inside and outside. You entered the house accompanied by your beloved. You are outside also. Oh the power of your penance is wonderful ! You can assume different forms at your will."

Brahmā said :

49-50. On hearing it, the sage was surprised. "Who has entered inside? Who is standing there? O dear Ahalyā, why don't you reply?" On hearing these words of the sage Ahalyā spoke to the paramour.

Ahalyā said :

51-53. "Who are you? In the guise of the sage you have committed a sin". Saying this she hurriedly got up from her bed in great fear. Indra the sinner became a cat due to the fear of the sage.

On seeing his beloved Ahalyā outraged and defiled the sage said furiously, "What is this rash act? Why has it been committed?"

Although her husband said this, she did not say anything in reply because she was too much ashamed.

54. The sage saw a cat distressed by fear and moving about surreptitiously. He said to him, "Who are you? If you utter a lie I will reduce you to ashes."

55-58. With palms joined together in reverence, Indra said thus.

Indra said :

"O ascetic, I am the husband of Śaci, the breaker of towns, one who has been eulogized much. This sin has been committed by me. O sinless one, I have spoken the truth. O sage, I have committed an excessively despicable act. What is it that those whose hearts are pierced by the arrows of cupid do not do? O brahmin, O storehouse of compassion, forgive me, a great sinner. Good men are never harsh towards a person even if he has committed a guilt."

On hearing his words the brahmin said to Indra in great anger.

Gautama said :

59. "Sin has been committed by you due to your passion for the vagina. Hence become a person with a thousand vaginas in your body".

He said to Ahalyā also in anger, "Be a dry river".

60-63. (Defective text). Narrating her wrong action she tried to pacify him.

Ahalyā said :

"If women were to love other men even mentally they will be eternally doomed. They should treat all persons as their brothers. Be pleased, O holy sage, and listen to my words. He approached me assuming your form. These persons are my witnesses."

"It is so", said the watchmen, "Ahalyā speaks the truth".

The sage knew the truth by means of meditation too. Becoming calm he said to the chaste lady:

Gautama said :

64. "O fair lady, when you come into contact with the Gautami, the chief of rivers, you will become a river and thereafter will regain your own form that is pleasing to me".

65-66. On hearing these words of the sage the chaste lady did so. Ahalyā the beloved wife of Gautama came into contact with the divine river. Thereafter she attained that form which had been created by me formerly.

Then, with his palms joined in reverence the king of Devas said to Gautama.

Indra said :

67-68. "O mighty among the sages, save me. Save me. A sinner (no doubt) but I have come to your house as a guest."

On seeing him fallen at his feet Gautama said mercifully: "I have been pacified by Devas, wishing to free you from my curse." Gautama the most excellent sage said:

Gautama said :

69-71. "By taking bath in the sacred holy centre Ahalyā Saṅgama, O husband of Śacī, you will be rid of your sins instantly and will become one with a thousand eyes".

I have witnessed both these surprising events, O Nārada, viz., the resurgence of Ahalyā and the transformation of Indra into a person with a thousand eyes.

Thenceforward that pure holy centre became well known as Ahalyā-Saṅgama and Indra-Tīrtha. It bestows all cherished desires on men.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Janasthāna Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1-4. There is still another holy centre well known as Janasthāna. It extends to four Yojanas. It bestows salvation on men even by remembering it.

Formerly, there was a king Janaka born in the solar dynasty. He married Guṇārṇavā (ocean of virtue), the daughter of the lord of waters (i.e. Varuṇa).

King Janaka married Guṇārṇavā, the generator of virtue, wealth, love and liberation. In view of her befitting good qualities she was really Guṇārṇavā (ocean of virtue).

Yājñavalkya the leading brahmin was the priest of that king. The excellent king asked his priest Yājñavalkya:

Janaka said :

5-7. Enjoyment of worldly pleasures as well as salvation—these two are the most excellent as declared by the greatest of sages. Enjoyment of worldly pleasures is excellent through men, maidservants, elephants, horses, chariots etc. But in the end all is sapless. It is salvation alone that bestows immortality and therefore salvation is more excellent than enjoyment. How can one attain salvation through enjoyment?

The attainment of salvation by eschewal of attachment is a strenuous task. Hence, tell me, O greatest of sages, how can salvation be easily achieved?

Yājñavalkya said :

8-9. O king, the lord of waters (Varuṇa) is your father-in-law and well-wisher. Hence, he can be your preceptor. Go to him and ask. He will instruct you in what is conducive to your welfare.

Yājñavalkya and Janaka went to king Varuṇa and unper-turbed they asked him about the path of liberation in the proper order.

Varuṇa said :

10. Salvation is effected in two ways: (i)through Karmans (holy rites) and (ii) through Akarman (refraining from work').

The path decided in the Veda is this. Karman is more conducive to welfare than Akarman.

11. Everything including the four aims of life, is bound with Karman. It is not true that the path of salvation is obtained by Akarman alone.

12. All grains are obtained, O excellent king, through Karman. Hence Vaidic Karmans should be wholeheartedly performed by men.

13-15. Men obtain (enjoyment of pleasures) and salvation through that Karman. Karman is based on birth in the various stages in life.

O leading king, conversant with piety and bestower of honour, the four stages are realized through Karmans.

Among the four stages that of the householder is remembered as the bestower of merit. It is my opinion that enjoyment and salvation are possible in the householder's life.

Brahmā said :

16. On hearing this, King Janaka and Sage Yājñavalkya honoured Varuṇa and spoke these words again:

17. "What is that place, what is that holy centre, which bestows worldly pleasures and liberation? Tell us, O excellent Deva, you are omniscient. Obeisance be to you."

Varuṇa said :

18. In the whole of the Earth the sub-continent of Bhārata is the most meritorious. In the continent of Bhārata, Daṇḍaka is the most meritorious. Karman performed in that region is the bestower of worldly pleasures and salvation to men.

19. Among holy centres, Gautamī Gaṅgā is the most excellent. It bestows salvation. By means of sacrifice and charitable gifts performed there, one shall obtain worldly pleasures and salvation.

Brahmā said :

20. On hearing the words of the lord of waters, Yājñavalkya and Janaka went to their city after being permitted by Varuṇa.

21. King Janaka performed horse sacrifice and other holy rites. Yājñavalkya the leading brahmin made that king perform the sacrifice.

22-26. Resorting to the bank of Gaṅgā, king Janaka attained liberation through sacrifice. So also, many kings attained liberation by the grace of Gautamī. Thenceforward that holy centre is known as Janasthāna. Since it was the seat of many sacrifices, it is glorified as Janasthāna. It extends to four Yojanas. On being remembered, it dispels all sins.

One shall obtain all cherished desires. One shall even obtain salvation by taking bath or offering charitable gifts or by performing oblations to the manes or by remembering the holy centre or by approaching it or by resorting to it devoutly.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Cakratīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. O Brahmin, there is a great holy centre well known as Cakratīrtha. By taking holy ablution there with devotion a man shall obtain the world of Viṣṇu.

2. O King, if one fasts on the eleventh day of the bright lunar fortnight and takes bath in the Ganikā Sangama one shall attain the everlasting region.

3. Even as I recount what had happened there formerly, listen to it.

There was a Vaiśya of plenty of wealth. His name was Viśvadhara.

4. When he was much advanced in age, O sage, an excellent son was born to him. He possessed all good qualities. He was very handsome. He was indulgent in sports. He was splendid in appearance.

5. The son who was dear to them more than their life passed away untimely. On seeing him dead the parents were afflicted by misery.

6-7. They became inclined to die along with him. They lamented: "O son, you were in the prime of youth. You were an ocean of virtue. Still you have been taken away by the sinful and

evil-minded god of death. You are dearer to us than even our life breath".

8-10. On hearing their lamentation thus Yama's mind became overwhelmed by sympathy. On hearing the piteous cry of the couple, Yama abandoned his city and went to Godāvāri. Seated on its banks he began to meditate on Janārdana. Within a short while everywhere, all round, the subjects became old, very old. The whole Earth was filled with old people so much so that they began to say: "My ground extends this much. Let it be said. By whom was it filled?" No living creature died. The Earth was over-burdened.

11. Thereupon, O excellent sage, the goddess of Earth went to the place where Indra, the conqueror of enemies' cities, was seated along with the Devas. On seeing the Earth Indra bowed to her and said this.

Indra said :

12. O Earth, What is the purpose of your arrival here? May it be said.

Earth said :

13. O Indra, I am afflicted by a heavy burden, in the absence of death. I have come here to enquire about the cause thereof. May it be mentioned to me.

Brahmā said :

14-18. On hearing these words of the Earth Indra spoke these words.

Indra said :

If there is any cause, O Earth, it will be known by me. I am the lord of all Devas.

Brahmā said :

Then, on hearing his words the Earth said to Indra:

Then, let Yama be ordered so that he would annihilate the subjects.

On hearing these words of the Earth Siddhas and Kinnaras were ordered to bring Yama quickly, O great sage, by Mahendra. Thereafter all of them, Sidhas along with Kinnaras, immediately

went to the city of Yama. There they did not see Yama. After returning hurriedly they made a report to Indra.

Siddhas and Kinnaras said :

19. O lord, although he was searched for all round strenuously, Yama was not seen by us in the city of Yama.

Brahmā said :

20. On hearing these words of Siddhas and Kinnaras, Savitṛ (the sun) who was his father was asked by Indra, "Where is Yama?"

The Sun said :

21. O Indra, Yama is now on the banks of Godāvari performing a very severe penance. I do not know what the reason is.

Brahmā said :

22-23. On hearing these words of the Sun Indra became suspicious.

Indra said :

Alas ! Woeful ! O woeful ! My lordship of Devas has come to an end. Yama of evil activities performing penance at Godāvari ! It is my opinion that he is surely desirous of seizing my position, O Devas.

Brahmā said :

24-25. After saying this, the celestial damsels were immediately summoned by Indra.

Indra said :

May this be quickly mentioned to me, who among you is capable of spoiling the penance of my enemy Yama who is performing austerities on the banks of the Gautami river?

Brahmā said :

26. Even on hearing these words of Indra, O great sage, no one said anything. Then in great rage Indra said to celestial damsels.

Indra said :

27. No one has replied to me. Therefore we ourselves shall go. Let all Devas be ready. Let them, without any delay, come with their armies. We shall slay our enemy who is desirous of ruling over heaven by means of his penance.

Brahmā said :

28-30. When this was said, the army of Devas appeared there.

On coming to know about the motive of Indra, the discus-bearing lord Hari, the preserver of worlds, sent his discus for the protection of Yama. Where the discus appeared is the excellent holy centre Cakratīrtha.

Then Menakā who was suspicious about the outcome said to Indra:

31-32. "O lord of Devas, no one among us is capable of even looking at Yama. It is better to die at your hands than at Yama's. Amongst us, that harlot Kṣamā is proud of her beauty and youth. Request her and send her to dissuade Yama, if you, O lord, consider it necessary."

Brahmā said :

33. On hearing her words, Indra the lord of Devas, ordered Kṣamā after duly honouring her.

Indra said :

34. O harlot, go. Carry out my task, beautiful woman. If you fulfil it and return, you shall be as dear to me as Śacī.

Brahmā said :

35. On hearing the words of Indra, Kṣamā flew over the quarters. The beautiful lady came near Yama in a moment.

36. Brightening the ten quarters the lady came near Yama. She sang the sweet Hindolaka song in an exquisitely graceful style.

37-40. Then the delicate tremulous mind of Yama was moved. He opened his eyes filled (as though) with the fire of passion, O great sage, and stared at her although she was a hindrance to his welfare. Thereafter the lady immediately became melted and attained the state of a river. This harlot joined the river Gautamī. Her songs of praise were sung by the Gaṇas

and Kinkaras. Due to the power of the holy centre she ascended to heaven. On seeing the harlot going to heaven seated in an aerial chariot, Yama of tremulous eyes was surprised very much.

Then the Sun came there and said to Yama:

The Sun said :

41. Carry out, dear Son, your duty of annihilating the subjects. See the wind that blows always, Brahmā who creates subjects, Earth that carries them and me who wander over the three worlds.

Brahmā said :

42-43. On hearing the words of his father, Yama said:

Yama said :

Surely I shall not carry on this despicable work. It does not behove you to command me to do this extremely cruel task.

44-46. On hearing the words of Yama the Sun spoke thus: "O Yama, how is your duty despicable? It is proper for you to do (this work). Did you not see that that harlot on having plunged into the waters of Gautamī went to heaven immediately, even as the Ganas and Kinkaras were singing songs of her praise.

Oh son, severe penance has been performed by you. It is very difficult to do. I do not see its end. Hence go to your city."

47-49. On saying these words lord Sun took his bath and went to heaven. Yama too had his bath at the confluence and went to his city.

The slayer of the living beings cast off his doubts, O great sage. On seeing Yama go, the discus too went away to the place where Govinda embellished with the garlands of sylvan flowers, was present. The man who reads this or listens to this narrative shall obtain long life. All his adversities shall perish.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

*Aśvabhānu Tīrtha**Brahma said :*

1-3. The two rivers Arunā and Varuṇā are very auspicious. Their confluence with Gaṅgā is also very holy, O excellent sage.

They bestow merit more than the lake Mānasa, the holy centre Prayāga and the river Mandākinī. Listen now to its origin which destroys all sins.

The eldest son of Kaśyapa, Āditya, is well known in the worlds. He is the eye of the three worlds. He has hot and powerful rays. He has seven horses to draw his chariot. He is honoured by the people of the world. Uṣā, the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ, was well known as the most beautiful woman in the three worlds.

4. Unable to endure the severity of the heat of her husband, the beautiful woman of good waistline thought, "What should be done by me?"

5. The extremely intelligent Manu and Yama were her sons born of Vivasvān (Sun). The holy river Yamunā (too was her daughter). Listen to that incident which caused surprise.

6-8. She created her own shadow strenuously in the form of herself. Uṣā then said to her:

"Be like me. At my bidding, look after my husband and children. Till I come back, be the beloved of my husband. Neither to my children nor to my husband should you reveal this fact".

"So be it", said the shadow.

Uṣā went out of her abode.

9. After saying this she went ahead, desirous of peaceful form. After going home Uṣā mentioned everything to her father. Tvaṣṭṛ was surprised. Being fond of his daughter he said to her:

Tvaṣṭṛ said :

10. It is not proper on the part of a married woman to do as she pleases. How do your children and husband do? O gentle lady, I am afraid I may be considered uncultured. Go back to your husband's abode once again.

Brahmā said :

11. Thus urged by her father she said "No, No" again and again. She went to the Northern Kuru country for performing penance.

12. There she assumed the form of a mare and performed a severe penance. Uṣā steadily meditated upon her husband who was too fierce to be looked at.

13. In the meantime, O dear one, the shadow Chāyā who had assumed the form of Uṣā, cohabited with her husband. Children were born to her.

14-17. (The sons were) Manu Sāvarṇi and Śani. Viṣṭi, a wicked daughter, was also born. Chāyā behaved differently to her own children and the children of Uṣā. Yama therefore became angry. Yama the lord of southern quarter kicked his step-mother Chāyā who was behaving differently. In her excitement due to the wickedness of her step-son Chāyā cursed Yama, son of the Sun god.

"O sinner, may your foot become putrefied at my bidding." With his foot putrefied he went to his father crying. He informed Savitṛ of the entire episode.

Yama said :

18-21. O excellent Deva, she is not my mother because I have been cursed by her thus. A (true) mother never gets angry even if children act against her wish. I might have uttered something due to my stupidity. I might have done something mischievous. If she had been my mother she would not have become angry. Hence she is not my mother.

Mother is so called because everything child does, whether good or bad, becomes measured in her. O dear father, she stares at me everyday as though she would burn me. She speaks to me with words as ferocious as black fire. She is not my mother.

Brahmā said :

22-24. On hearing this from his son Sun began to think (and understood). "This is Chāyā and not Uṣā. Desirous of quietening me she is engaged in penance. The daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ is in the northern Kuru in the form of a mare."

On coming to know that she was there Lord Sun went thither

where his wife was staying. He himself assumed the form of a horse.

25-28. On seeing her in the form of a mare, the sun in the form of a horse rushed at her. On seeing the horse excited by passion and on hearing the sound, Uṣā the chaste lady hurriedly fled to the South. She had been meditating on her husband. She was afraid of being attacked by the horse. She did not know who it was. When the husband approached her she fled to the South in great hurry. "Who will be my saviour now, the sages or the Devas?" She thought herself. The sun in the form of a horse pursued his beloved who was running fast. Wherever Uṣā went the sun also went there.

29-31. If anyone comes under the influence of Cupid, what wicked thing does he not do? Facing the southern direction they crossed Bhāgirathī, Narmadā and other rivers, parks, forests and Vindhya mountain. Distressed with fear, the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ went to Gautamī because she had heard that in Janasthāna there were sages who could protect her. After entering Gautamī, the mare went to the hermitage of sages.

32. The horse too came there. It was the Sun in that form. People who were staying in Janasthāna stopped that horse. Lord Sun, the husband of Uṣā, then cursed them in anger.

The Sun said :

33-36. Since you stopped me you will become banyan trees.

Brahmā said :

By their eye of knowledge the sages saw that he was the husband of Uṣā. Thereupon they eulogized the lord of Devas in great delight.

Even as he was being eulogized by the sages the Sun approached the mare sexually. The face of the horse came into contact with the face of the mare. After realising that it was her husband, the daughter of Tvaṣṭṛ shed the semen from her month. From their semen the Aśvins were born in the river Gaṅgā.

37-40. The following persons came there, viz. groups of Devas, Siddhas, sages, rivers, cows, medicinal herbs, groups of luminaries, holy chariot of the seven-horsed lord (i.e. Sun), Aruṇa the charioteer of the Sun, Yama, Manu, Varuṇa, Śani son of the Sun god, the holy river Yamunā, Tāpi, Mahānadi

and father-in-law of the Sun (i.e. Tvaṣṭṛ). O sages, out of wonder, the rivers had assumed their respective forms. They came there to see this wonderful event. On realising his purpose Sun spoke to his father-in-law.

The Sun said :

41. O Tvaṣṭṛ, mount me on to the lathe and chisel off my splendorous parts for pleasing Uṣā who has performed excellent penance. O Prajāpati, you cut off my parts until she finds herself pleased.

Brahmā said :

42. After saying "So be it", Tvaṣṭṛ began to cut off the splendorous parts of the Sun in the presence of Somanātha. They know it as Prabhāsa.

43-47. The place where Uṣā in the form of a mare came into contact with her husband, the place where Aśvins were born, is called Aśvatīrtha.

It is also called Bhānutīrtha where there is the hermitage with five banyan trees. Tāpi and Yamunā came there to see their father (i.e. the Sun). The confluence of the rivers Aruṇā and Varunā with the Gaṅgā is splendid.

There are nine times three thousand (i.e. 27000) holy centres of Devas there severally pertaining to Devas who had come to that holy centre. All these holy centres are good. Ablution performed and charitable gifts distributed there bestow great and everlasting merit.

O Nārada, by remembering, reading and listening to this, man becomes rid of all sins. He becomes virtuous and happy.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Garuda Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre named Garuda destroys all obstacles. I shall recount its power, O Nārada, listen to it attentively.

2. There was an extremely powerful son of Sesha named Mañināga. Afraid of Garuḍa he propitiated Śaṅkara with devotion.

3. Then the lord Maheśvara, Parameṣṭhin became pleased. He said to the great Nāga, "O Nāga, choose a boon".

4. The Nāga said, "O lord, grant me the boon of freedom from Garuḍa".

"So be it", said Śambhu to him, "You shall have freedom from the fear of Garuḍa".

5. The Nāga who was not afraid of Garuḍa, the younger brother of Aruṇa, went out to the place near the milk ocean where Viṣṇu was taking rest.

6. The Nāga wandered here and there over the place which was pleasingly chill. He went to the place which was occupied by Garuḍa.

7. On seeing the Nāga moving about fearlessly Garuḍa seized him and took him off into his own abode.

8. By means of nooses, Garuḍa bound the mighty Nāga. In the meantime, Nandin said to Iśa, the lord of the universe: *Nandikesvara said :*

9. Certainly the Nāga has been either swallowed or imprisoned by Garuḍa, O lord of Devas. Hence he does not come. The nāga may not come out alive.

Brahmā said :

10-13. On hearing the words of Nandin and understanding the situation himself Śiva said:

Śiva said :

The Nāga has been bound and imprisoned in the abode of Garuḍa. Go quickly and tell the lord of worlds, Viṣṇu. At my instance, you, yourself, bring the Nāga bound by Garuḍa, son of Kaśyapa.

On hearing the words of lord Śiva Nandin went and intimated to the lord of Śrī, the ultimate resort of the world, Viṣṇu, (the details).

Pleased in his mind Nārāyaṇa spoke to Garuḍa:

Viṣṇu said :

14. O son of Vinatā (Garuḍa), give Nandin the Nāga at my instance.

Vainateya the bird understood it but said "No". In the presence of Nandin, Garuḍa spoke to Viṣṇu in anger:

Garuḍa said :

15-19. Other masters give their servants whatever is most pleasing to them but you do not do so. Instead you want to take away what has been acquired by me.

See, the three-eyed lord wishes to release the Nāga through Nandin. But you wish to give Nandin the Nāga captured by me.

I bear you always along the path. Hence something should be given to me by you always. It is not proper for you to say "Give" in regard to the Nāga acquired by me.

This cannot be the practice of good masters who wish to maintain good service. Good men give unto the servants. But you are one who takes away what has been brought by me.

O Keśava, it is through my power that you conquer the asuras in battles. In vain do you boast, I am extremely powerful.

Brahmā said :

20-24. On hearing these words of Garuḍa Viṣṇu the bearer of discus and club laughed in the presence of Nandin even as the guardians of the worlds were watching.

The extremely intelligent lord said this: "You have become lean by bearing me (regularly). It is due to your power that I conquer Asuras, O excellent bird."

After saying this, O brahmin, the lord of Śrī spoke this, with his anger calmed down: "Be quick. Bear the small finger of my hand, in the presence of Nandin."

Placing the small finger of his hand over the head of Garuḍa Viṣṇu said again:

"It is true that you carry me always. See to your duty, O bird."

When the finger was placed over his head the head penetrated into his belly and the belly went inside the foot and became smashed. Then, the distressed Garuḍa said piteously out of shame, with palms joined in reverence:

Garuḍa said :

25-28. Save me, save me, O lord of the universe, your

servant. You are the lord of all gentle and submissive worlds. You are the supporter and the supported also. Those who are powerful, forgive thousands of offences. All the sages call you merciful since you have great sympathy even for those who have committed offences.

O mother, residing in the lotus, O mother of the Universe, save me who am distressed. O Kamalā, fond of your son, save me who am miserable and wretched.

Brahmā said :

Then the merciful goddess Śrī spoke to Janārdana:

Kamalā said :

29. O lord, save your own servant Garuḍa who has been involved in adversity”.

Thereupon Janārdana spoke to Nandin the attendant of Śiva:

Viṣṇu said :

30-31. Take the Nāga to Śiva along with Garuḍa. On being glanced at by Maheśvara and favoured by him Garuḍa will regain his own form.

Brahmā said :

After saying “So be it” Nandin went to Śiva along with the Nāga and Garuḍa and intimated everything to him. Śiva, who has the crescent moon on his forehead spoke to Garuḍa:

Śiva said :

32-33. O hero of long arms, go to Gaṅgā, Gautamī the sanctifier of worlds. She is calm and bestower of all cherished desires. After plunging into it you will regain your body and all cherished desires.

O bird, Gautamī, the bestower of all desired things, is the refuge for all living beings whose enterprises are ruined by adverse fate and who are tormented by all sins in hundreds and thousands of ways.

Brahmā said :

34-36. Garuḍa listened to his words with humility. He went to Gaṅgā. After plunging into it he bowed down to Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then the bird of golden complexion regained his

adamantine body and great strength. Hurrying up, O excellent sage, the intelligent one went again to Viṣṇu.

Thenceforward that holy centre of Garuḍa became the bestower of all desires.

If a man of purity in mind and body performs the holy ablution, O dear one, everything becomes everlasting in its benefit. The centre is pleasing to Śiva and Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER TWENTYONE

Govardhana Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. Then there is the Govardhana Tīrtha which destroys all sins. It generates merits unto all ancestors. Even on being remembered it dispels sins.

2. Its power has been tested by me, O Nārada.

There was a certain brahmin farmer known as Jābāli.

3. Even at midday he never rested his bullocks. He hit them with his whip on their backs and sides.

4. On seeing those bullocks full of tears in their eyes, the cow Kāmadhenu, the mother of the worlds, said to Nandin.

5. Nandin too was distressed and intimated everything to Śiva. Śiva said to the Bull, "May whatever you say be fulfilled."

6-7. Backed by Śiva's permission Nandin withdrew all the bovine species. When all cattle had vanished in heaven and in the mortal world, Devas came to me in hurry and said: "It is impossible to live without cows". I then told them, "Go to lord Śiva and request him".

8. In the same manner they eulogized Śiva and intimated to him the matter under reference. Śiva said to Devas, "My Bull knows everything".

9-10. Those Devas spoke to the Bull, "Give us the cows and bullocks that are helpful to us".

The Bull said to Devas, "Let the sacrifice Gosava be performed. Thereby you will obtain all cows both divine and human."

Then the sacrifice Gosava was performed by Devas.

11-13. The sacrifice was performed on the auspicious banks of Gautamī. Then the cattle flourished. That holy centre was named Govardhana and it increased the pleasure of Devas. The holy ablution performed there, O excellent sage, yields the benefit of gifts of thousands of cows. We do not know what the benefit will be if any charitable gift is made.

By seeing Śiva, the lord of Devas, the presiding deity Gau-tameśvara, one attains heavenly world as long as the mountain Meru lasts on Earth.

CHAPTER TWENTYTWO

Pāpapraṇāśana Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. There is the holy centre named Pāpapraṇāśana (Destroyer of sins). It dispels the fear of sins. I shall recount it, O Nārada. Listen to it attentively.

2. There was a brahmin known as Dhṛtavrata. His wife was a young woman named Mahī. She was the most beautiful woman in the world.

3. Their son was named Sanājjāta. He resembled the sun in splendour. Death urged by Kāla, O sage, took away Dhṛtavrata.

4. Unable to see anyone to protect her, that beautiful widow with a young son went to the hermitage of Gālava.

5. After entrusting her son to him that woman deluded by sin wandered here and there over many countries leading a lecherous life.

6-10. Her son became the master of Vedas and Vedāngas in the hermitage of Gālava. Still, due to the faults of his mother he too became sexy and passionate.

There is a place known as Janasthāna. People of different castes stayed there. The lady Mahī resided there adopting the profession of a prostitute.

Her son too wandered over many countries as a lecherous debauchee. As time passed he too came to Janasthāna and lived there.

The son of Dhṛtavrata, the brahmin (Sanājjāta) was desirous of a harlot. The lady Mahī too wanted men who would lavishly spend money on her.

Due to the curious turn of fate the mother and the son had sexual union. She did not recognise her son nor did he recognize his mother.

11. Although their union lasted for a long time, the mother and the son did not know the real facts about each other.

12. Although the brahmin's actions were bad, he possessed a good mind due to the virtue of his father. Listen to this wonderful account, O Nārada.

13. Living a carefree life he did not abandon prayers pertaining to Brahman. After performing the morning prayers he worked for earning wealth.

14-15. With the power of his learning he earned a lot and gave everything to that harlot. He used to get up early in the morning and go to Gaṅgā. He performed all acts of cleanliness, ablutions, prayers, etc. After performing all those he used to bow down to brahmins and return home.

16-17. When he went to Gautamī in the morning he was invariably ugly. His limbs were all afflicted by leprosy. Impure fetid blood oozed out of his body.

When he returned after bath in Gautamī Gaṅgā, he used to have handsome features. He was calm. He resembled the fire god and the sun. He appeared like the sun in human form.

18-23. That brahmin himself was not aware of the two different appearances. The holy sage Gālava, devoutly attached to penance and pursuit of knowledge, had his hermitage on the banks of Gautamī and lived there in the company of other sages. The brahmin Sanājjāta took bath everyday in the holy river and bowed to Gālava at the very same place. After bowing to Gālava he used to go to his own place.

Gālava observed the physical features of Sanājjāta both before and after his bath and prayers. On seeing this Gālava was surprised and he thought there must be some reason behind this.

Once when this brahmin was about to leave after bowing to Gālava, the sage called him out of wonder and spoke to him.

Gālava said :

24. Who are you? Where will you go? What do you do? Where do you eat? What is your name? Where do you sleep? Who is your wife? Tell me.

Brahmā said :

25-29. On hearing the words of Gālava, the brahmin said to the sage:

The Brahmin said :

I shall tell you tomorrow decisively everything connected with the matter.

Brahmā said :

Saying this to Gālava, Sanājjāta went home. Taking food at night he went to bed with the harlot. Sanājjāta was taken by surprise on remembering the words of Gālava. He said to her :

The Brahmin said :

You are endowed with all good qualities. Though you had been a harlot yet you are a chaste lady (now). Our mutual love is quite befitting. Let it continue as long as we live.

Still I wish to ask you something. What is your name? Where is your family? What is your native place? Where are your relatives? Let everything be mentioned to me.

The Harlot said :

30-31. There was a pure initiated brahmin Dhṛtavrata by name. I am Mahī, his wife. My son had been left in the hermitage of Gālava. He was an intelligent boy known as Sanājjāta. Due to my previous defects I abandoned my family tradition. I am staying here as a carefree harlot, but, O brahmin, know me to be a brahmin lady.

Brahmā said :

32. On hearing her words he was hit in a vulnerable spot. He fell suddenly on the ground. Seeing him in this condition the harlot spoke to him.

The Harlot said :

33-36. What has happened, O excellent brahmin? Where has your love gone? What is that word uttered by me which has afflicted your mind so much?

Consoling himself by means of his own effort the brahmin spoke these words.

The Brahmin said :

My father was the brahmin Dhṛtavrata. I am his son Sanāj-jāta. This lady, my mother Mahī has come here by chance.

Brahmā said :

On hearing his words she too became excessively distressed. For the whole of that night both of them lamented.

Afterwards when the day dawned with the bright sun, the brahmin went to Gālava, the greatest among the sages, and intimated to him.

The Brahmin said :

37-39. O brahmin, I am the son of Dhṛtavrata. I have been nurtured by you and my sacred thread has been tied by you. O holy lord, this is Mahī my mother.

What shall I do. How can I expiate?

Brahmā said :

On hearing the words of the brahmin, Gālava spoke words of sympathy to the Brahmin:

"I am seeing everyday this uncommon feature of having two forms in you.

40. It was then that you have been asked about the news. Everything has been heard and understood by me. The evil action which you have committed has entirely perished in Gaṅgā.

41. By virtue of the sanctity of this Tīrtha, due to the grace of this goddess, you have been purified, O dear one, everyday. In this matter you need not worry at all.

42-43. Everyday in the morning your features appear sinful. Again I used to see your excellent form. When you come

you are sinful. When you go you are sinless. I see this everyday. You have been made pure by the goddess now.

44-46. Now nothing remains for you to do. This mother of yours, O brahmin, who is known as a harlot, has repented much. She has refrained from committing sins. In regard to all living beings, love is natural. But due to the great merit resulting from association with good people, the turning away can be effected by the grace of fate. Due to the merit acquired by previous actions she has sufficiently repented.

47-49. By taking her holy bath in this Tīrtha she will become purified".

Accordingly both of them, the mother and the son did so, O Nārada. Due to the holy dip both of them were undoubtedly rid of their sins. Thenceforward they call that Tīrtha Dhautapāpa. It is known as Pāpapraṇāśana and Gālava. Whether it is a "Great sin" or a minor one, whether it is little or big- this holy centre Dhautapāpa shall destroy everything. It yields good merit.

CHAPTER TWENTYTHREE

Viśvāmitra Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. To the south of it, O brahmin, is the very rare Tīrtha known as Pitṛtīrtha. It is pure. It dispels all sins.

2. They know this as Pitṛtīrtha, O brahmin, because it was the place where Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, propitiated his ancestors, in the company of Sītā.

3. If holy bath, charitable gift and water libation unto the ancestors were performed there everything attains an everlasting status. No worry need be felt in this respect.

4-5. The place where the great king Rāma, the son of Daśaratha, honoured the great sage Viśvāmitra along with the sages, the seers of reality, is the holy centre Viśvāmitra. It yields great merit. It is frequented by ages. I shall recount its features as cited by the expounders of the Vedas.

6-7. Formerly, there was a great drought, extremely terrible unto the subjects. The extremely intelligent Viśvāmitra went to the Gautamī, accompanied by his disciples.

On seeing his disciples, sons and wife very lean and afflicted by hunger the glorious sage became distressed and spoke thus to his disciples.

Viśvāmitra said :

8. Let something to eat, something to munch and crunch be brought, no matter what the quantity be, in whatever manner possible, from wherever it is available. Let it be brought as it is. Do not delay. You must go now itself. It must be brought in a trice.

Brahmā said :

9-12. At this bidding of the sage the hungry disciples set out in a hurry. Wandering here and there they saw a dead dog. Taking it they rushed back and offered the same to their preceptor. Saying "Good ! well done !" he grasped it with his hand.

"Cut the flesh of the dog. Wash it with water. Cook it duly after repeating the Mantras and perform Homa into the fire in accordance with the injunctions.

After propitiating Devas, sages, Pitṛs, guests, preceptors and others, all of us shall partake of the remainder", said the sage thus.

13-17. On hearing the words of Viśvāmitra, the disciples did exactly so. When the dog's flesh was being cooked, Agni the messenger of Devas went to the abode of Devas and intimated everything to them.

Agni said :

Dog's flesh has to be taken by Devas as it has been offered by the sage and it has occurred so.

Brahmā said :

At these words of Agni, Indra assumed the form of a vulture and flying through the sky took away the closed pot that was filled with the flesh.

On seeing that the disciples informed the sage about the vulture. "O excellent sage, the pot has been taken away by the senseless vulture".

Thereafter, the holy sage became furious. He was ready to curse Indra. On coming to know of this, Indra filled the pot with honey.

18. Indra in the form of a bird, thereupon, placed the pot filled with honey among the comets. Viśvāmitra became angry. On seeing the pot, the sage said thus furiously.

Viśvāmitra said :

19. "Give us the dog's flesh alone. You can take away the excellent nectar. If not, I shall reduce you to ashes."

Becoming frightened Indra spoke then.

Indra said :

20. "Perform the Homa of honey duly and drink it along with your sons. Of what avail is this unholy filthy flesh of a dog, O great sage?"

Visvamitra said :

21-25. No. If a single person, that is, I alone take it in, what is the benefit? The subjects are exhausted and distressed, O Indra. Of what avail is that honey (wine)? If the people get nectar I shall also consume the same. Or after the divine Pitṛs have consumed flesh, I shall partake of that. I do not speak untruth. Believe me.

Thereafter the frightened lord of thousand eyes called the clouds quickly and showered nectar. The brahmin Viśvāmitra propitiated Devas at first and the three worlds thereafter by means of holy nectar offered by Indra. He then partook of it along with his disciples and his wife.

26-28. Thenceforth that holy centre is mentioned as the bestower of great merit. It is the place where Indra came and where the nectar was offered without meat. It is a holy centre that bestows merit on men. The holy bath taken there and the charitable gifts offered yield the benefit of all sacrifices. Thenceforth that holy centre is remembered as Viśvāmitra, Madhutīrtha, Aindra, Śyena and Parjanya.

CHAPTER TWENTYFOUR

Sveta and other Tirthas

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Sveta Tīrtha in the three worlds is very auspicious. On being simply remembered it rids people of all sins.

2. Formerly, there was a brahmin Śveta who was the dearest friend of Gautama. He stayed on the bank of Gautamī river and was engaged in the worship of guests.

3-5. He was devoutly attached to Śiva in thought, words and deeds. That excellent brahmin continued to meditate on and worship Śiva till the last days of his life. When his days were over, the messengers of lord Yama came there to take away that excellent brahmin devoted to Śiva, but, O Nārada, they were not able even to enter his abode. When the time passed away Citraka spoke to (the god of) Death.

Citraka said :

6. O Mṛtyu, why does not Śveta come yet? His span of life has come to an end. Nor have the messengers of Mṛtyu too come yet. Why ? This puzzles me.

Brahmā said :

7. The infuriated Mṛtyu thereupon went himself to the abode of Śveta. Seeing his messengers highly frightened and standing mum, Mṛtyu said, "What is the matter, O messengers?"

The messengers then said to Mṛtyu.

The Messengers said :

8. We are not able even to look at Śveta who is protected by Śiva. What terror can there be to those with whom Śiva is pleased !

Brahmā said :

9-11. Then Mṛtyu with the noose in his hand entered the place where that brahmin was worshipping Śiva. The brahmin was not at all aware of either Yama's servants or Mṛtyu himself.

On seeing Mṛtyu holding the noose and standing near

Śveta who was worshipping Śiva with devotion the surprised Nandin said :

Nandin said :

O Mṛtyu, what do you see here?

Mṛtyu spoke to Nandin.

Mṛtyu said :

12-15. I came here to take away Śveta. Hence I am looking for the excellent brahmin.

Nandin said :

Go out, go out.

Brahmā said :

Then Mṛtyu threw up the noose against Śveta. O great sages, Nandin then became angry. Nandin hit Mṛtyu with the baton given by Śiva. Mṛtyu fell on the ground. Then the messengers saw that Mṛtyu was struck down. They intimated the incident to Yama.

16-20. Then Dharma whose vehicle is buffalo and who controls all addressed his attendants and associates, viz. Citragupta, Kāla, Yamadaṇḍa, buffalo, ghosts and vampires, Ādhis, Vyādhis, ailments of eyes, belly and ears, the three types of fever, sins, and hells severally. "Hurry up, hurry up", said Yama to them and himself proceeded ahead, surrounded by these and others, to the place where Śveta the excellent brahmin was worshipping Śiva. On seeing Yama approaching, Nandin who was wielding his weapons said to Vināyaka, Skanda and Bhūtanātha (Chief of Ghosts) who was whirling a baton (to be ready). Then a fight ensued which terrified the worlds.

21. Kārttikeya pierced the servants of Yama by means of his javelin. He killed Yama, the powerful ruler of the southern quarter.

22-24. The followers of Yama who survived intimated this to Āditya. On hearing about that extremely wonderful event Āditya approached me accompanied by Devas and followed by the guardians of quarters.

Lord Viṣṇu, Indra, Agni, Varuṇa, moon, sun, Aśvins, Maruts and I—all of us went to Yama.

25-26. The powerful lord of the southern quarter was

lying dade on the bank of Gaṅgā. Seas, serpents, rivers and living beings came there in order to see Yama the lord of Devas and son of the god Sun. On seeing Yama with all his armies killed Devas became frightened. With palms joined in reverence they said to Śambhu.

Devas said :

27-30. You always possess the quality of being fond of your devotees and that of slaying the wicked. O primordial Maker, obeisance to you. O blue-throated lord, obeisance to you. O lord, fond of Brahmā, obeisance to you. O lord, fond of Devas, obeisance to you.

Yama and his attendants were unable to take away the brahmin Śveta whose span of life has come to an end, (because) he is your devotee. On seeing the great lord they remain contented. O lord, truly you possess the quality of being fond of your devotees.

Even Yama, the annihilator is not able to look at those persons who have sought refuge in you, the merciful lord. After realising this, O lord, they worship you with devotion.

You alone are the lord of worlds; you alone are the leader of worlds; without you none is competent? Excepting you who will be competent to make this arrangement?

Brahmā said :

31. Even as they were eulogizing him lord Śiva appeared in front of them. He asked them pleasantly: "What shall I give you?"

Devas said :

32-34. This is Dharma, the son of Vivasvat and the Controller of all embodied beings. He has been established in the arrangement of Dharma and Adharma. He is the guardian of southern quarter.

He does not deserve death. He is not an offender. He is not a sinner. Without him no work of the creator of Universe can take place.

Hence, O Lord of Devas, revive Yama along with his army and vehicles. O lord, a request can never be fruitless in regard to great men. It is certainly fruitful.

Brahmā said:

35. Then the lord said, "Certainly I shall revive him; undoubtedly I shall make Yama come back to life, if Devas agree to my suggestion now."

36. Then Devas said: "We shall do as you bid—you in whose control the entire Universe along with Hari, Brahmā and others function."

37-38. Then the lord said to Devas who gathered there: "Let not my devotee undergo death."

"No", said Devas, "In that case, O lord, the people including the mobile and immobile will become immortal. O lord, identical with the universe, then there will not be any difference between mortals and immortals."

39-42. Śiva said to them again: "You listen to my speech. We are the perpetual masters of our devotees, and the devotees of Viṣṇu who resort to Gautamī. Mṛtyu does not deserve that lordship and mastery. Yama should never discuss them nor talk to them. They should never be attacked by worries and physical ailments, etc. Those who seek refuge in Śiva are liberated at the very moment. They are worthy of being bowed to by Yama along with his followers." Then Devas said to lord Śiva, "Let it be so".

43-46. Then the holy lord spoke to Nandin, his vehicle.

Śiva said :

Sprinkle the dead Yama with the waters of Gautamī.

Brahmā said :

Then Yama and his attendants were sprinkled by Nandin. They woke up alive and went to their abode.

Viṣṇu and Devas stayed on the northern bank of Gautamī worshipping Maheśvara, lord of Devas.

47-50. On the northern bank the following numbers of holy centres were established : (a) eighty thousand, (b) fourteen thousand, (c) six thousand and (d) six thousand. Thus there were one hundred and six thousand holy centres on the northern bank. On the southern bank there came to be (a) six thousand, (b) thirty thousand holy centres. Thus there are thirty six thousand holy centres on the southern bank. O Nārada, the recounting

of Śvetatīrtha is meritorious. The place where Mṛtyu fell down is called Mṛtyu Tīrtha. By merely remembering it one lives upto a thousand years. The holy dip and the offering of charitable gifts there destroys sins. If it is listened to, read or remembered it removes impurities. It yields worldly pleasures and salvation to the people.

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE

Śukratīrtha and Mṛtasañjivant Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Śukratīrtha is conducive to the achievement of all Siddhis. It subdues sins and destroys ailments.

2-4. There were two great sages of excellent virtue, namely Aṅgiras and Bhṛgu. Their sons known as Jīva (Jupiter) and Kavi (Venus) were very intelligent and handsome. The sons were obedient to their parents. On seeing that their sons had had their initiation ceremony the fathers spoke to each other.

The sages said :

Only one of us need be the preceptor for our sons, maintaining discipline. Let one be the preceptor and let the other one remain carefree and happy.

Brahmā said :

5. On hearing this Aṅgiras said to Bhārgava quickly, "I shall teach them equally. Let Bhārgava remain carefree and happy."

6. On hearing these words of Aṅgiras the scion of the family of Bhṛgu said "So be it" and entrusted his son Śukra to Aṅgiras.

7. He taught both the boys separately on account of his unequal feeling towards them. After a long time Śukra spoke to Bṛhaspati.

Śukra said :

8. O preceptor, everyday you teach me with discrimination.

This discrimination between son and disciple is not proper on the part of a preceptor.

9. Only teachers of deluded thinking practise discrimination. There is no limit to the sins incurred by the persons of discriminatory feelings.

10. O preceptor, you have been well-understood. I shall bow down to you again and again. I shall go to another preceptor. It behoves you to permit me.

11. O brahmin, I shall go to my father. If he too were to have this discrimination, I shall go elsewhere. O lord, I take leave of you. Bid me depart.

Brahmā said :

12. After taking leave of his preceptor Brhaspati and on being permitted by him Śukra went from there thinking, "I shall go to my father only after I have acquired learning."

13. So "Whom shall I approach? Which preceptor will be excellent?" thinking thus he asked Vṛddhagautama of great intellect.

Śukra said :

14. Who can be my preceptor, O excellent sage? Tell me. I shall go to that person who is competent to be the preceptor of all the three worlds.

Brahmā said :

15. Old Gautama told him to approach Lord Śiva, the preceptor of the Universe, lord of the worlds.

Śukra said :

How can I see that lord of Devas? Where can I propitiate him?

On being addressed thus, Gautama said.

Gautama said :

16. Remaining pure in mind and body on the Gautami Tirtha propitiate Śiva by means of hymns. Being pleased thereby the lord of three worlds will impart learning to you.

Brahmā said :

17. At those words of Gautama, the scion of the family of

Bhṛgu went to Gaṅgā. After taking a holy dip and becoming pure the boy began eulogizing Śiva.

18-21. “O Śambhu, I am seeking refuge in you, the sole refuge for the poor and the helpless. O lord with the crescent moon, I am a boy of puerile intellect. I do not know how to eulogize you. Obeisance be to you. I have been abandoned by my preceptor. I have neither friends nor comrades. In every respect you are the lord. O lord of the worlds, obeisance be to you. You are weightier than the weightiest and greater than the greatest. I am only a small boy. O lord identical with the universe, obeisance be to you. It is for the sake of learning that I have come to you. O lord of Devas, I do not know your way. Look at me with kindness. Obeisance be to you, O lord, witness unto the worlds.”

Brahmā said :

22-23. Even as he was eulogizing thus the lord of Devas became pleased with him.

Śiva said :

Welfare unto you. Choose what you wish even if it were to be difficult of access unto Devas.

Brahmā said :

24-27. Śukra said to the lord of Devas, with palms joined in reverence and the mind greatly pleased.

Sukra said :

O lord, I beg of you that learning which is not accessible to the sages as well as Brahmā and others. You are my preceptor. You are my deity.

Brahmā said :

The excellent Deva granted unto suppliant Śukra the Vidyā called Sañjavāni which was unknown even to Devas.

Other Vidyās are secular. Vedic lore is known to many. When Śankara is pleased what is it that remains unachieved.

28. After acquiring the great learning he went to his father. By virtue of his learning Śukra received honour. He became the preceptor of Daityas.

29-32. Afterwards Kaca, the son of Bṛhaspati acquired Vidyā from Śukra. The reason thereof was something very different. From Kaca, Bṛhaspati acquired this and from him Devas acquired it separately. It was this great Vidyā which they called Mṛtajīvani.

The place where Śukra acquired that Vidyā after worshiping Śiva on the northern bank of Gautamī is called Śukratīrtha.

This Tīrtha is conducive to the increase of life and health. Holy dip and charitable gifts at that place bestow everlasting merit.

CHAPTER TWENTYSIX

Seven Thousand Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Indra Tīrtha destroys the sin of brahmin slaughter. Even by being remembered it destroys heaps of sins and masses of sufferings.

2. Formerly, when Vṛtra was slain, O Nārada, the sin of brahmin slaughter pursued Indra who was frightened by the very thought of Brahmin slaughter.

3. He, the slayer of Vṛtra, began to run here and there. Wherever he went the thought of Brahmin slaughter pursued him.

4-5. He entered a great lake and penetrated a lotus stalk. Assuming the form of a fibre Indra took his abode there. The slaughter-thought stood watching on the bank of the lake for a thousand divine years. During this whole period Devas remained without Indra.

6-7. Devas had consultations among themselves without excitement: "How can Indra be regained?" After thinking of the place of slaughter, I spoke to Devas: "Let Indra be sprinkled with the waters of Gautamī. After taking a holy dip he will be purified in his soul and will become Indra once again."

8-9. Accordingly they decided and went to Gautami. Devas and sages were desirous of showering the lord after he had taken a holy dip. The infuriated Gautama spoke as Indra was about to be showered with the holy water.

Gautama said :

10. I will reduce to ashes all those persons who will shower the sinful Indra who had defiled the bed of his preceptor. Let Devas go away quickly.

Brahmā said :

11. On hearing the words of the sage Devas avoided Gautami and hurried to Narmadā taking Indra with them.

12-13. They stood ready for showering Indra on the northern bank of Narmadā. As Indra was about to be showered, the holy sage Māṇḍavya said, "If the showering is performed I will reduce you to ashes." Then Devas worshipped Māṇḍavya by hymns and persuaded him by cogent reasons.

Devas said :

14. O sage, wherever Indra the thousand-eyed lord is about to be showered, a terrible obstacle crops up there.

15-17. Hence, O sage, the cause of our welfare, perform Sānti rite for quelling the evil. Be pleased to grant us boons. O sage; we shall offer you a place where you shall perform sacrifice ('Removal of dirt'). We shall give to you many other excellent things as well. Hence, it behoves you to permit. The place where the ablution of Indra is to take place shall be full of grains, trees and fruits. It will bestow all cherished things on men. There will never be drought or famine in this place.

Brahmā said :

18. Then Māṇḍavya, the excellent sage, honoured by the world agreed to it. The rites of ablution and purification were performed there with all ceremonials.

19-23. Then that land was called Mālava by Devas and sages when Indra was showered and purified. They brought Gautami Gaṅgā and showered him again for the increase of merit. Dēvas, sages, I, Viṣṇu, Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Agastya, Atri, Kaśyapa, Yakṣas and Nāgas and others performed holy

ablution by that sacred water. Then I showered Indra with the water coming out of Kamaṇḍalu. Two rivers Puṇyā and Siktā arose therefrom and joined Gaṅgā.

24-27. Their confluences are well known. They are resorted to by sages. Thenceforth that holy centre is called Puṇyā-sangama Tīrtha.

At the confluence of Siktā (with Gaṅgā) the holy centre is called Aindra Tīrtha. Seven thousand splendid holy centres cropped up there. A holy dip and the distribution of charitable gifts at the confluence gives everlasting benefit. This must be realised. No worry need be felt on this account. He who reads this holy narrative or listens to it shall be rid of all sins of thought, words and deeds.

CHAPTER TWENTYSEVEN

Paulastya Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre Paulastya Tīrtha is mentioned as one which fulfils all desires of men. I shall mention its magic power that gives lost kingdom back to one.

2. The eldest son of Viśravas who is now the lord of northern quarter was formerly richly endowed with all types of riches and achievements. He was the ruler of Laṅkā as well.

3. He had three step-brothers, viz. Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa and Vibhiṣaṇa. They were very powerful, endowed with unmeasured luster. They were his enemies as well.

4-5. They too were the sons of Viśravas but they were Rākṣasas (because they were born) of a Rākṣasi (ogress). Dhanada (Kubera), seated in the aerial chariot and accompanied by his step-brothers used to come to me everyday with great devotion and return after a while.

Rāvaṇa's infuriated mother spoke to her sons.

Rāvaṇa's mother said:

6-7. I shall die. I don't (care to) live, O sons, because of this disparity and dissimilarity.

Devas and Dānavas were mutual enemies (though) they were brothers (step-brothers). (Step-brothers) wish for each other's slaughter in pursuance of victory and prosperity. Hence, you are not at all desirous of victory, nor are you competent. You have no manliness. Aimless and useless is the life of that fellow who permits an enemy to be prosperous.

Brahmā said :

8. On hearing those words of their mother, O sage, the three brothers went to the forest and performed penance.

9-10. All these three obtained boons from me. At the instigation of their uncle Mārīca and their maternal grandfather and at the instance of their mother Rāvaṇa requested for Laṅkā. Due to their Rākṣasahood and the defects of their mother, there was a great enmity between the brothers.

11-13. Then a war between brothers ensued like the war between Devas and Dānavas. In the war Rāvaṇa conquered his quiet and calm elder brother Dhanada and captured the city of Laṅkā, the (aerial chariot) Puṣpaka and other things. He then proclaimed throughout the three worlds consisting of mobile and immobile beings: "He who offers refuge to my step-brother is liable to be killed by me."

Forsaken and ousted by his brother, Dhanada did not receive any support anywhere. He went to Pulastya his grandfather and bowed to him.

Dhanada said :

14-17. I have been ousted by my wicked brother. What shall I do ? Tell me what should be my support and refuge, the fate or a holy centre?

Brahmā said :

On hearing the words of his grandson Pulastya said:

Pulastya said :

Dear child, go to Gautamī and eulogize lord Maheśvara. There in the middle of Gaṅgā your wicked brother will have no access. You will attain prosperous achievement. Do so at my bidding.

Brahmā said :

18-19. Saying "So be it" Dhanada went to Gautamī accompanied by his wife, parents and the aged Pulastya. The lord of wealth took bath in Gaṅgā. Maintaining all holy rites he eulogized Śiva, lord of the lord of Devas, the bestower of worldly pleasures and liberation.

Dhanada said :

20-23. O Śambhu, you alone are the master of this Universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings. There is no one else. If anyone swaggers after slighting you out of delusion, he is worthy of being punished.

You sustain everything by your eight cosmic bodies. Everything exists (and functions) at your bidding. Still, non-scholars shall never attain you who are possessed of ancient glory and splendid resplendence.

Something was born out of her dirt and Ambā jokingly said: "O lord, this is your heroic son." You glanced at it and it became Vighnarāja. Oh, the (powerful) action of the glance of Iśa !

On seeing Kāma and Rati separated in their conjugal enjoyment Girijā's eyes were filled with tears. She spoke to Iśa about this. As a result of that, the bodiless Kāma acquired body and Rati acquired the fortune of conjugal bliss from the lord of Umā.¹

Brahmā said :

24. Even as he was eulogizing thus, the three-eyed lord appeared in front of him and asked him to choose a boon as he liked. Out of excessive delight he did not utter a word.

25-27. Dhanada and Pulastya were silent. Lord Śiva was delighted repeating "O, choose the boon, O, choose the boon." Then an unembodied voice was heard there telling Maheśvara thus: "The status of the protector of wealth should be granted to

1. The reference here is to the episode of the burning of Kāma by Śiva's glance when he was trying to inspire Śiva with amorous thought for Pārvati at the instigation of gods at a time when Śiva was engaged in deep meditation. (vide Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Bāla Kāṇḍa, Ch. 23).

Dhanada." It was only after knowing the silent wish of Pulastya and the father of Dhanada, that the voice made the splendid intention explicit.

28. The divine voice became auspicious. What should take place is like what has already taken place. What is about to be given is like what has already been given. What should be attained is like what has already been attained.

29-33. He who had a number of enemies and who experienced miseries worshipped Someśvara and acquired Liṅga, the lordship of a quarter, the mastery of wealth, vast liberal-mindedness, wives and sons.

On hearing that voice Dhanada spoke these words to the Trident-bearing lord of Devas: "Let this be so."

Saying "May it be so," the lord of Devas assented to the Divine voice. The lord then honoured Pulastya, sage Viśravas and Dhanapāla with holy boons and went away. Thenceforth, they know that holy centre as Paulastya Tīrtha or Dhanada Tīrtha or Vaiśravasa Tīrtha. It is holy and splendid. It fulfils all cherished desires. Holy dip etc. in these holy centres bestows much merit.

CHAPTER TWENTYEIGHT

Agnitirtha

Brahma said :

1. The holy centre known as Agnitirtha is the bestower of the fruit of all sacrifices. It subdues all obstacles. Listen to the benefit of that holy centre.

2-4. The brother of Agni was well known as Jātavedas. He was the bearer of Havya.¹ He was the excellent clever brother of the Fire-god, very fond of him. As he was carrying Havya to gods and was at the abode of the sages on the banks of Gau-

1. Any substance, e.g. clarified butter, food etc. to be offered as oblation, to gods; opposed to 'Kavya' or what is offered to ancestors.

tarnī, Madhu the powerful son of Diti killed him even as the chief Sages and Devas were looking on. When Jātavedas died, Devas did not get their Havya.

5 When his dear brother Jātavedas died, Agni was overwhelmed by anger. He entered the waters of Gaṅgā.

6 When Agni entered the waters of Gaṅgā, Devas and human beings cast away their lives because they are considered to be Agnijīvas (having their life in Agni).

7-8 Devas, sages, and Pitṛs went to the place where Agni had entered water. Saying "Without fire we will not be alive" they began to praise Agni particularly. On realizing that Agni had entered the waters the heaven-dwellers spoke pleasing words to him.

Devas said :

9. O Agni, resuscitate the lives of Devas by means of Havya and those of pitṛs by means of Kavya. By the cooking of food and the splitting of seeds resuscitate all human beings.

Brahmā said :

10-13. Agni said to Devas:

"My brother who was very strong has gone. O Devas, while your work is being carried out, my fate will be the same as that of my brother Jātavedas. Hence I am not enthusiastic enough to work for you. Jātavedas who always performed his duty, working for you, has met this fate. I do not know what mine will be. Moreover, I may not have the ability to move about from world to world. Even granting that I may have the ability for it, if your work is not regularly performed by me my fate might be the same."

Then, Devas and sages spoke with emotion.

14-15. "Longevity, love for work and ability to move about will be given to you. O carrier of oblations, we shall give you the Prayājas and Anuyājas (i.e. the benefits of these holy rites).

You are the excellent mouth of Devas. All Āhutis are first given to you. O excellent Deva, we shall partake of what is given by you."

Brahmā said :

16-19. Thereupon the Fire-god was pleased at the words of Devas. He attained the power to move about here and there. He was capable of carrying Havya to Devas and Kavya to Pitṛs. At the instance of Devas, Agni became powerful and fearless everywhere. He is called by the names Jātavedas, Br̥hadbhānu, Saptārci (seven-rayed), Nilalohita (Blue-red), Jalagarbha (one who hid under water), Śamīgarbha (one who lies latent in Śamī tree), Yajñagarbha (one who lies concealed in Yajña).

Devas dragged Agni from under the water and performed Abhiṣeka. Thereafter Agni became Sarvaga (moving about everywhere). He got two abodes: one on this Earth and another in heaven. Then Devas went away to their abodes in the manner they had come.

This holy centre is called Vahnitīrtha.

20-22. There have cropped up some seven hundred Tīrthas of great merit. If a man who has controlled himself performs the rites of holy dip or distribution of charitable gifts in this Tīrtha, he attains the benefit of a horse sacrifice and even more. That will be splendid and without deficiency. Devatīrtha, Agneyatīrtha and Jātavedasa are all there. There is a multi-coloured Liṅga established by Agni. By visiting that lord one shall obtain the benefit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER TWENTYNINE

R̥ṇapramocana Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. Those conversant with the Vedas know the holy centre R̥ṇapramocana. I shall mention its features, O Nārada. Listen to it attentively.

2-4. There was a favourite son of Kaksīvān named Pr̥thu-

śravas. Due to his detachment he did not marry. Nor did he worship fire.

His younger brother was competent, but, O sage, due to his fear of incurring sin he did not marry before his elder brother.

Then the manes spoke separately to the elder and the younger sons of Kakṣīvān.

Pitṛs said :

5-7. Let the marriage be performed for removing the three-fold debts.

Brahmā said :

Thereupon the elder one said : "No, what is the debt? By whom is it incurred?" The younger one said to the Pitṛs : "Due to the fear of sin, O intelligent ones, it is not proper for me to marry while I have the elder brother." The grandfathers thereupon spoke to both of them again.

Pitṛs said :

8-9. O sons of Kakṣīvān, both of you go to the holy Gautamī. Perform the rite of holy dip therein. The holy dip in Gautamī fulfills all cherished desires. Go to Gautamī Gaṅgā which sanctifies the three worlds. Perform the rites of bath and libation in that river with due faith.

10-12. Gautamī is the bestower of all cherished things when it is seen, meditated upon or plunged into. There is no sort of restriction of place, time, caste etc. for plunging into it. The elder brother will be freed from the sin of indebtedness and the younger one will not incur the sin of marrying before the elder brother.

Brahmā said :

Then the elder brother Pṛthuśravas performed the holy dip and libation rites. He became free from indebtedness to Pitṛs. Thenceforth that Tirtha is called R̥ṇamocana. O Nārada, by taking bath or distributing charitable gifts a debtor becomes free from all debts mentioned in Vēdas and Smṛtis as well as ordinary debts incurred by him.

CHAPTER THIRTY

Kadrū-Suparṇā-Saṅgama Tīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. There are two holy centres viz. Suparṇāsaṅgama and Kādrava Saṅgama where lord Maheśvara has resorted to the banks of Gaṅgā.
2. The following holy puddles and deep pits are also there viz. Agnikuṇḍa, Raudra, Vaiṣṇava, Saura, Saumya, Brāhma, Kaumāra and Vāruṇa.
3. The river Apsarā joins Gaṅgā and that confluence is a holy centre. Merely by remembering that holy centre a man can be assured and become contented.
4. It quells all sins. Listen, O Nārada, attentively.

Formerly, Vālakhilyas, the great sages, were harassed by Indra. All of them spoke to sage Kaśyapa after giving a moiety of their penance.

Vālakhilyas said :

5. Beget a splendid son through whom Indra's arrogance can be quelled. We shall give you a moiety of our penance.

The sage said to them, "So be it".

6. That Prajāpati made Suparṇā pregnant. He made Kadrū the mother of Nāgas too pregnant.

7-8. Prajāpati who was desirous of going abroad told those two pregnant ladies, "You must not commit any offence. You must not go anywhere. For certain, you will be cursed if you go elsewhere."

Brahmā said :

- 9-13. After saying thus to his wives he went away. When their husband had gone, both of them went to the sacrifice of sages with purified mind. The sacrificial chamber was crowded with groups of brahmins. It was situated on the banks of Gaṅgā. Both of them were arrogant because of their youth and wealth. They were mad too. Though forbidden many times by the sages, the seers of truth, they spoiled the Havi offerings in the sacrifice. Who can prevent the misconduct and evil actions of

women? On seeing both of them fallen in the evil path the brahmins became enraged and excited. (They cursed them thus) "Since you are clinging to the evil path you will become rivers. Thereupon Suparnā and Kadrū became rivers.

14-17. Prajāpati Kaśyapa returned home after some time. He heard the details of the incidents in the sessional sacrifice and the curse of those two ladies. On hearing it he was perplexed and thought, "What shall I do?" He told the sages known as Vālakhilyas. They said to the brahmin Kaśyapa : "Go to Gaṅgā Gautamī and eulogize Maheśāna. They will then become your wives again. You go to that place in the middle of Gaṅgā where lord Maheśvara resides perpetually due to the fear of sin of brahmin slaughter, by the name of Madhyameśvara."

18. Saying, "So be it" Kaśyapa of holy rites took bath in Gaṅgā and eulogized Maheśvara, the lord of Devas, by means of sacred hymns.

Kaśyapa said :

19. He is the sole master of the three worlds but he has not the least feeling of pride of possession. May that Siddhanātha, the maker of the entire Universe and the husband of Śivā, be pleased.

20. You alone are competent to dispel the misery of all embodied beings, whether mobile or immobile, who have been scorched by the sun of therefold misery¹ and who run about here and there.

21. The three types of Yoga (contact) of Sattva etc. (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) of Lord Śiva cannot be recounted even by Śakra and others. Considering Soma (i.e. Śiva) to be of diverse wonderful activities, an excellent person who is always devoted to charitable gifts is happy always.

Brahmā said :

22. Eulogized by these and other hymns, lord Śiva, the

1. The there well known miseries are ādhyātmika (caused by self), ādhidaivika (caused by supernatural beings), and ādhibhautika (caused by the great elements); the terms are interpreted with slight differences by different commentators.

beloved husband of Gaurī became pleased. Śambhu granted many boons to Kaśyapa.

23-24. To him who was seeking his wives the lord said: "The two wives of yours will have the forms of rivers. They will reach Gaṅgā, the most excellent river. Due to this mere contact they will regain their own bodies."

Due to the grace of Gaṅgā they became pregnant once again.

25. Then the noble-souled Prajāpati, became delighted on regaining his wives. He invited those brahmins who had resorted to the banks of Gautamī.

26. The delighted Prajāpati performed their Sīmantonna-yana rite (parting of hairs on the head ritualistically). He fed the brahmins in accordance with injunctions.

27-29. The brahmins had their food in the abode of Kaśyapa. Kadrū was seated near her husband. Looking at the brahmins she squinted and winked her eye and laughed at them. They became excited (and cursed) : "O sinful woman, let that sinning eye of thine with which you winked and laughed be split." Then Kadrū became blind of one eye. She is called the mother of serpents. Then the holy sage Kaśyapa pacified the sages.

30-33. They were pleased and said: "The Gautamī, the most excellent of rivers will protect one from thousands of crimes on being resorted to. Kaśyapa, the excellent sage, did so along with his wives. Thenceforth, they know that their confluence is a holy centre. The river Kadrū is all round and the river Sauparṇikā is in the East. The holy centre Jaṭādhara extends all round from the Kadrū to the east as far as the Sauparṇikā river. This holy centre is a bit holier than Vārāṇasī. It suppresses all sins. It bestows the benefit of all sacrifices."

CHAPTER THIRTYONE

*Sarasvatisaṅgama**Brahmā said :*

1. The holy centre named Purūravas destroys all sins even on being remembered. Why not on being visited? Those who are conversant with the Vedas know it.

2. King Purūravas went to the abode of Brahmā. There, by chance he saw the divine river Sarasvatī laughing by the side of Brahmā. On seeing her richly endowed with beauty the king asked Urvaśī:

The King said :

3. Who is this beautiful saintly lady near Brahmā? She is the most excellent lady among all ladies (assembled here). She (seems to) illuminate this assembly.

Brahmā said :

4. Urvaśī said to the king: "This is the splendid divine river Sarasvatī, the daughter of Brahmā. She comes here daily and goes back."

On hearing it the king was surprised (and he said), "Bring her near me"

Brahmā said :

5-9. Urvaśī said again to the king who used to distribute plenty of monetary gifts.

Urvasi said :

I shall mention everything to her and fetch her.

Brahmā said :

Then out of pleasure the king sent Urvaśī there. Urvasi then went and repeated the words of the king. Sarasvatī agreed to what was mentioned by Urvaśī. She promised saying "So be it" and went to the place where Purūravas was staying. He indulged in sexual dalliance on the banks of Sarasvatī for many years. Sarasvān was born as (her) son and his (Sarasvān's) son was Bṛhadratha.

10-12. I observed Sarasvatī going everyday to the abode of the king. I saw Sarasvān (her son). I saw evidences of similar activities with regard to other persons also. So I cursed her, "Be Mahānadī." Afraid of my curse Vāgiśā (Sarasvatī) went to the divine river Gautamī, who is the holy mother sanctifying the whole world, who was born of Kamanḍalu (water-pot), who is the suppressor of the three distresses and who is the bestower of pleasures here and hereafter.

13-16. After going to Gautamī, the divine river, she recounted (the story of) my curse from the beginning. Gaṅgā said to me: "It behoves you to make her free from the effects of the curse. It is not proper on your part to have cursed Sarasvatī. This is the nature of women because youthful women desire men. O Brahmā, all young women are naturally unsteady. O lotus-seated lord, you are the creator of the Universe. How is it, that you do not know this? Whom does not cupid deceive naturally?"

Then I withdrew the curse and said "Sarasvatī shall be visible too."

17-20. Due to that curse the river Sarasvatī is both visible and invisible in the mortal world.

Purūravas, the most excellent and virtuous king, went to the place where the divine river (Sarasvatī), agitated due to the curse, joined Gaṅgā. He performed penance and propitiated lord Siddheśvara. He acquired all cherished desires by the favour of Gaṅgā. Thenceforth that holy centre is called Purūravas. It is also called Sarasvatīsaṅgama and Brahmatīrtha. The lord there is Siddheśvara and the holy center bestows all cherished things.

CHAPTER THIRTYTWO

Review of the Greatness of Five Tirthas

Brahmā said :

1. Sages know these five holy centres as very holy, viz. Sāvitrī, Gāyatrī, Śraddhā (Faith), Medhā (Intellect) and Sarasvatī.

2-4. By taking bath there and drinking water therein one is released from all sins. Sāvitrī, Gāyatrī, Śraddhā, Medhā and Sarasvatī—these were my eldest daughters. (Then) I created the most beautiful woman in the world, the most excellent among all.

On seeing her, O excellent sage, my mind became deranged. I was desirous of seizing her and on seeing what I was going to do that lady fled.

5. That maiden assumed the form of a hind and I became a stag then. In order to save virtue, Śambhu became a hunter of the stag.

6. Those five daughters of mine (also) became afraid of me and went to Gaṅgā, the great river. Thereupon Maheśvara went ahead for the sake of saving virtue.

7. Then Hara, the hunter of stag, took up his bow and arrows. Iśa said to me, "I will kill you."

8-11. I desisted from that (evil) action and gave the maiden to the Sun. The five daughters beginning with Sāvitrī assumed the forms of rivers and flowed together. Again they came near me to the heavenly world. The place where these rivers joined the divine river Gaṅgā came to be called Pañcatīrtha. All confluences are holy. Sarasvatī (is the most important of) these five rivers. Holy dip, distribution of charitable gifts, whatever a man does in those rivers yields all cherished things. It yields salvation through Naiṣkarmya (cessation of activities). The holy centre of Mrgavyādha is also there. It bestows all objects on men. It has the benefit of heaven and salvation. It yields the benefit of Brahmatīrtha.

CHAPTER THIRTYTHREE

Śamī and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known as Śamitīrtha subdues all sins. I shall narrate it. Listen to it attentively, O Nārada.

2. There was a Kṣatriya named Priyavrata. He was the most excellent of all conquerors. He was initiated for a horse sacrifice by his preceptor on the southern bank of Gautamī.

3-6. Vasiṣṭha was the priest of that king of powerful arms.

When that horse-sacrifice wherein the sages were the Rtviks (officiating priests), began, a Dānava named Hiranyākṣa came to that sacrificial chamber. Devas with Indra as their leader became frightened on seeing that demon. Some of them went to heaven. Havyavāṭ (Fire-god) entered the Śamī tree. Viṣṇu went to the Aśvattha (the holy fig tree), Bhānu (Sun-god) went to the Arka plant. Śiva went to the Vaṭa (Banyan) tree. Soma (Moon) went to the Palāśa tree. Havyavāhana (Fire-god) went to the waters of Gaṅgā. The Aśvins (Twin gods) took the sacrificial horse (and fled). Yama turned himself into a crow.

7. In the meantime, the holy sage Vasiṣṭha took up a Yaṣṭi (thick stick) and commanded demons to stop.

8. Then the sacrifice began to function again. The Daitya who had his own intrinsic strength went away. Thereafter these holy centres became auspicious. They bestow the benefits of ten horse-sacrifices.

9. The first holy centre is Śamitīrtha. The second holy centre is Vaiṣṇava. The other holy centres, viz. Arka (belonging to Sun-god), Śaiva (belonging to Śiva), Saumya (belonging to Moon-god) and Vāsiṣṭha (belonging to Vasiṣṭha) are the bestowers of all cherished things.

10-12. When the elaborate horse sacrifice had been completed Devas and sages became pleased. They spoke to Vasiṣṭha, Priyavrata the sponsor of the sacrifice, those trees and Gaṅgā with great joy: "These have gone here and there for the fulfilment of horse-sacrifice. The holy centres bestow the benefit of horse sacrifice." Devas said thus. Therefore by taking holy dip and

distributing charitable gifts in these holy centres, one surely attains the benefit of a horse sacrifice.

CHAPTER THIRTYFOUR

Twenty-two Thousand Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1-2. Listen to the names of some holy centres I am going to recount now. They are Viśvāmitra, Hariścandra, Śunahṣepa, Rohita, Vāruna, Brāhma, Āgneya, Aindra, Aindava, Aiśvara, Maitra, Vaiṣṇava, Yāmya, Āśvina and Auśana.

3. There was a king born in the family of Ikṣvāku, named Hariścandra. The sages Nārada and Parvata came to his abode. After receiving them with great hospitality Hariścandra said to the two sages:

Hariścandra said :

4. The whole world undergoes sufferings for the sake of a son. What is it that one gets from a son? A son may be wise or foolish, excellent or middling.

Brahmā said :

5-9. Parvata and Nārada spoke to Hariścandra:

Nārada and Parvata said :

The reply can be one, hundred or thousand. O king, all the replies are good. Still this is being mentioned. O excellent king, to a person without a son the other world does not exist. (He cannot expect to go there.) To that person of ill luck this world too does not exist (i.e. he cannot be happy here too). O ruler of men, a person who takes bath at the birth of his son shall derive the benefit of holy bath at the end of ten horse sacrifices. By obtaining a son one attains prestige. (One may become) the most excellent among the immortal beings. (What) the Devas get through nectar, the brahmins and other

castes get through a son. A son releases his father and grandfathers from the three debts.¹

10. Of what avail is (the vow of taking in only) roots and water? Of what avail is the practice of growing beard and moustache? Of what avail is penance without a son? O great king, a son is said as one leading to heaven and salvation.

11. Son alone is the other world, virtue, love and wealth. Son is liberation, the great light. He is the person who takes all embodied beings (across the ocean of worldly existence).

12. Without a son, O leading king, heaven and salvation are very difficult to achieve. In the world, it is the son who is the most conducive to the achievement of virtue, love and wealth.

13-15. A charitable gift given or a sacrifice performed without a son is fruitless. It appears to me that life itself, without a son is fruitless. One gets relief from debts to the manes through a son by whom people are redeemed from sins. If a father sees the face of a live son born to him he gets pleasure. By seeing a son, a father obtains all those enjoyments and pleasures that can be had in the mortal world or in heaven. Hence there is nothing else in the three worlds as desirable as a son".

On hearing these words the king was extremely surprised and he spoke again to the two sages.

Hariścandra said :

16. Tell me how I can obtain a son. I am willing to go anywhere and perform any rite, whatever be the means thereof. By manly endeavour, repetition of Mantras, performance of sacrifices or distribution of charitable gifts a son should be got by me.

Brahmā said :

17-19. They said to the excellent king Hariścandra who

1. The three well known debts are: (1) Rṣi-ṛṇa or debt to the sages, which one discharges by the study of Veda; (2) Deva-ṛṇa or debt to the gods, which is discharged by performing worship and sacrifice; and (3) Pitṛ-ṛṇa or debt to the manes, which is discharged by procreation of a son. Evidently these great debts or obligations aim respectively at acquisition, dissemination and advancement of knowledge, preservation of religious and moral values, and perpetuation of the human race.

was seeking a son, after meditating deeply for a short while: "O bestower of honour, go to Gautamī. There the lord of waters fulfils whatever excellent wish one has in mind. Varuṇa has been glorified by sages as the bestower of everything. On being delighted he will grant you a son at the proper time, sooner or later."

On hearing this, the excellent king carried out the suggestions of the sages.

20. Resoiting to the banks of Gautamī he propitiated Varuṇa. Varuṇa who was pleased said to Hariścandra :

Varuṇa said :

21. O king, I shall grant you a son. Being issueless you have performed holy rites; certainly a son will be born to you if you are prepared to offer him in sacrifice.

Brahmā said :

22-23. Hariścandra said to Varuṇa, "I shall sacrifice him".

Hariścandra then prepared the holy offering pertaining to Varuṇa. The king then gave it to his wife. Thereafter a son was born to the king. When the son was born, the lord of waters, the most excellent among the eloquent ones, spoke.

Varuṇa said :

24-28. The son should be sacrificed today itself. Do you remember your former promise?

Brahmā said :

Hariścandra said this to Varuṇa who approached him duly:

Hariścandra said :

A sacrificial animal becomes fit for sacrifice after it passes ten days. Thereafter I shall perform the sacrifice.

Brahmā said :

On hearing the words of the king, Varuṇa agreed and returned home. When the boy passed the tenth day he approached the king once again and said, "Perform the sacrifice".

The King said to Varuṇa :

O lord of waters, the sacrificial animal without teeth is useless. Go now and come when the boy cuts his teeth.

29-31. On hearing those words of the king the lord of waters went again. When the teeth were cut, O Nārada, and the boy was aged seven years, Varuṇa said to the king again, "Perform the sacrifice". The king said to Varuṇa, "O lord of waters, these teeth will fall off. Other teeth will come up. Then I shall perform the sacrifice. Please go away now." Varuṇa went away. When the new set of teeth grew up, O Naradā, he said to the king, "Perform the sacrifice". The king said to the lord of waters.

The king said :

32. If a Kṣatriya happens to be the sacrificial animal, the same will be the most excellent one, if he knows the science of archery.

Brahmā said :

33-35. On hearing those words of the king, Varuṇa went to his own abode. When Rohita became efficient in the use of miraculous weapons, when that suppressor of enemies became conversant with the Vedas and scriptures, when the sixteen year old Prince Rohita was crowned as heir-apparent, the delighted Varuṇa went to the place where the king and Rohita were present. Varuṇa said to the king, "Sacrifice your son".

36. The king said, "yes". After saying so, the king said to the Rtviks and his eldest son Rohita, within the hearing of Varuṇa :

Hariścandra said :

37-38. Come on my great hero, come on my son, I shall sacrifice you unto Varuṇa.

Brahmā said :

Then Rohita asked his father, "What is this?" The father explained everything in detail in the manner it had happened. Even as Varuṇa was listening, Rohita said to his father :

Rohita said :

39. I am pure. I am in a hurry. At the very outset, O great

king, I shall perform the sacrifice unto Viṣṇu, the lord, of the worlds, along with the Ṛtviks and the priest, Varuṇa being the sacrificial animal. It behoves you to grant permission for the same.

Brahmā said :

40-43. On hearing those words of Rohita the lord of waters was overwhelmed by great anger.

Taking up his divine bow and seated in his chariot without any discomfort Rohita went to the forest on the banks of Gaṅgā where Hariścandra, the lord of men, had propitiated Varuṇa and obtained a son. In the meantime the infuriated Varuṇa made king Hariścandra suffer from dropsy. Five years elapsed and as the sixth year was running, the prince heard about the ailment of the king.

44-46. He then thought thus: "Though I was born to my father I had been the cause of distress unto him. What benefit did he derive from me? Now what shall be my duty?"

On the banks of Gaṅgā the prince saw holy sages. He saw the most excellent sage known as Ajīgarta. He was wandering on the banks of Gaṅgā accompanied by his three sons and wife. He had no means of subsistence. On seeing him the prince bowed to him and spoke:

Rohita said :

47-49. How is it that you appear to be gloomy, lean and lacking in sustenance?

Brahmā said :

Ajīgarta said to prince Rohita:

Ajīgarta said :

I have no means for supporting my family. I have many dependents to be fed. We will die without food. Tell me. What shall we do?

Brahmā said :

50-53. On hearing it the prince spoke to the sage:

Rohita said :

What is it that you have in mind? Tell me, O most excellent one among the eloquent ones.

Ajigarta said :

I do not have gold, silver, cows, grains, garments etc., O great king. Therefore, I do not have any means of subsistence. I have three sons and a wife. I am the fifth one. There is no one to buy anyone of us in exchange for food.

Rohita said :

54. O Ajigarta of great intelligence, what will you take from me? Tell me truthfully. You need not say anything else. Indeed, brahmins are truthful in speech.

Ajigarta said :

55. Take one of the three sons, or me, or take this (woman) my wife. We shall keep alive by this sale.

Rohita said :

56. Of what avail is your wife? O intelligent one, of what avail are you, an old man? Give me a youthful son of yours, whomsoever you may wish to give.

Ajigarta said :

57. O Rohita, I will not sell my eldest son Sunahpuccha. The mother will not sell the youngest one. Hence I shall sell Sunahsepa, the one between these two. Tell me the amount (you wish to give) for him.

Rohita said :

58. A sacrificial animal has to be kept ready for Varuṇa. (He must be) a man of superior qualities. If you are willing to take a price in exchange, tell me truthfully, O great sage.

Brahma said :

59. Saying "So be it" Ajigarta fixed a thousand cows, (measures) of grains, gold coins and clothes as the price of his son. "O Prince", he said, "give the excellent things (to me), I shall give my son to you".

Brahmā said :

60. Saying "So be it" Rohita too gave him money and clothes. After giving it, Rohita went to his father along with the son of the sage. He informed his father about the son of the sage bought for a price.

Rohita said :

61-67. Perform the sacrifice unto Varuṇa with (this) animal. You be free from your ailments.

Brahmā said :

Then after the words of his son Hariścandra said:

Hariścandra said :

The Vedas say that Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas should be protected by the king. Indeed, excellent brahmins are especially the leaders of all castes. They are persons worthy of being worshipped even by Viṣṇu. Where are persons like me? By slighting and dishonouring them, kings will be faced with the destruction of their family. Brahmins are identical with the holy centres. They are identical with Devas. They are the saviours of persons about to fall into hell. After making them sacrificial animals how can I pretend to protect miserable persons. It is not proper that I should make a brahmin the sacrificial animal. It is better to die of ailments. I will not make a brahmin the sacrificial animal at all. Hence, dear son, go happily along with the brahmin boy.

Brahmā said :

68-70. In the meantime an ethereal voice spoke thus:

The Ethereal Voice said :

O great king, go to Gautamī along with your Rtviks and priests as well as this brahmin's son who is the sacrificial animal and Rohita, your son. The sacrifice has to be performed by you without killing Śunahṣepa. The sacrifice shall of course be complete there. Hence, go, O king of great intellect.

Brahmā said :

71-74. On hearing that voice the excellent king hastened

to Gaṅgā along with sage Viśvāmitra, his priest Vasiṣṭha, sage Vāma as well as other sages. After reaching Gautamī Gaṅgā he got himself initiated for the human sacrifice. He prepared the altar, pavilion, sacred pit etc. and erected the Post for the sacrificial animal and other things as well. After everything was ready and the sacrifice began Śunahṣepa, the sacrificial animal, was tied to the Yūpa (post) along with the chanting of Mantras. On seeing him sprinkled with water Viśvāmitra said this:

Visvāmitra said :

75-79. Visvāmitra said to Devas, sages, to Hariścandra and particularly to Rohita: "May all of you free this Śunahṣepa the excellent brahmin boy. O Devas, to whom the offering is to be given in the sacrifice, let not this sacrificial animal, Śunahṣepa, the excellent brahmin boy, be offered to you, in the sacrificial fire along with fats, hairs, skins and the flesh consecrated by the chanting of Mantras. Let the leading brahmins be sprinkled over with water. Let them go to Gautamī and take their bath there. Let them eulogize Devas severally by chanting Mantras and hymns. Engaged in auspicious things let them rejoice. Let sages and Devas, partakers of offerings, protect this boy."

Brahmā said :

80-81. The sages said, "So be it". The excellent king agreed. Śunahṣepa went to Gaṅgā, the sanctifier of the three worlds. After taking bath, he eulogized those Devas, the partakers of offerings. Even as Viśvāmitra stood listening, the delighted Devas said to Śunahṣepa,

Devas said :

82-84. Let this, sacrifice be complete without killing Śunahṣepa.

Brahmā said :

Varuṇa specifically spoke (so) to the excellent king.

Then the human sacrifice of the king, known in all the worlds, was completed. Thus by the grace of Devas, the sages of holy centre, the sacrifice of the king was completed.

85-92. Viśvāmitra honoured Śunahṣepa in the midst of

assembly. After honouring him in the presence of Devas, he made him the eldest of his sons. The sons of the intelligent Viśvāmitra who did not accept the status of Śunahṣepa as the eldest son were cursed by Viśvāmitra. He honoured those sons who accepted his status as the eldest son and granted them boons. Thus this narrative has been recounted by me. All these incidents happened on the southern bank of Gautamī. At that place many well known sacred holy centres praised by Devas and others cropped up. Listen to their names from me, O sage of excellent intellect.

They are Hariścandra, Śunahṣepa, Visvāmitra, Rohita and others. They are twentytwo thousand holy centres. Having a dip therein and distribution of charitable offerings bestow the benefit of a human sacrifice. O excellent sage, the greatness of this holy centre has been described. He who reads this or causes this to be read or listens to this with devotion shall get a son if he has no son. He gets other things too pleasing to his mind.

CHAPTER THIRTYFIVE

The Twentyfive Confluences of Various Rivers

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Somatīrtha is one that increases the pleasure of Manes. Listen attentively to the extremely sacred incident that happened there, O Nārada.

2. Formerly Soma (Moon) full of nectar had been the king of Gandharvas and not of Devas. Then Devas approached me and said :

Devas said :

3. Formerly Soma, the bestower of vital airs on Devas, had been taken away by Gandharvas. Not able to meditate on him, sages and Devas became extremely distressed. Let some strategic means be employed so that Soma can be ours.

Brahmā said :

4. Vāk (Sarasvatī) said to Devas: "The Gandharvas are madly passionate over women. O Devas, it behoves you to bring Soma after giving me to them."

5. The immortal ones replied to Vāk: "We are not competent to give you away. It is impossible to live without Soma, nor is it possible to live without you".

6-13. Again Vāk said to Devas: "I shall come here again. A way should be thought out. Let an excellent sacrifice be performed on the southern bank of Gautamī. If Devas are prepared let them come there for sacrifice. Gandharvas are always fond of women. Exchange me for Soma".

"So be it", said Devas who firmly agreed to what was said by Sarasvatī. Through the messengers they invited Devas, Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Nāgas severally to the sacred mountain. Thereafter, O sage, the name of that mountain became Devagiri. There came Devas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Siddhas, sages and the eight species of inferior gods.¹

While the great sacrifice was being performed by the sages on the banks of Gautamī, the thousand-eyed lord surrounded by Devas, spoke in the presence of Sarasvatī after honouring Gandharvas.

Indra said :

Exchange the nectar-souled Soma of yours for Sarasvatī.

Brahmā said :

14. At the instance of Indra those Gandharvas, passionate over women, gave Soma to Devas and took Sarasvatī.

15-19. Devas possessed Soma and Gandharvas possessed Sarasvatī. While she stayed there she secretly came near Devas everyday saying, "Let it remain a secret". That is how, O Nārada, Soma was bought. While buying Soma one should speak in a low tone. Thereafter Devas possessed both Soma and Sarasvatī. The Gandharvas had neither Soma nor Sarasvatī.

For the sake of Soma all the following came to Gautamī:

1. 'Devayonayah' is demi-gods or inferior gods such as Ādityas, Vasus, Viśvedevas etc.

cows, Devas, mountains, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Siddhas, Sādhyas, sages, Guhyakas, Gandharvas, Maruts, Nāgas, medicinal herbs, Mothers,¹ Guardians of quarters, Rudras, Ādityas, Vasus, Aśvins and other Devas who deserve a share in the sacrifice.

20-21. Twentyfive rivers, O sage, have joined Gaṅgā. The place where the entire ghee offering was given is called the holy centre of Pūrnā. As mentioned before, the rivers that joined Gautamī have holy centres in their names. Now listen to holy centres with their names O Nārada.

22-27. The holy centres are: Somatīrtha, Gandharva, Devatīrtha, Pūrnatīrtha, Śāla, Śrīparṇā-Saṅgama, Ilāsaṅgaīna, the holy confluence of Kusumā, Puṣṭisaṅgama, the auspicious Karṇikā Saṅgama, Vaiṇavī Saṅgama, Kṛśarāsaṅgama, Vasa-viśaṅgama, Śivaśaryā, Śikhī, Kusumbhikā, Upārathyā, Śāntijā, Devajā, Aja, Vṛddha, Sura and Bhadra—all these joined Gautamī. These and many other rivers, the holy rivers in the world, went to the Devaparvata mountain for the sake of Soma. Others also came to the sacrificial pavilion. Those holy rivers joined Gaṅgā in due order.

28-31. Some of them were in the form of rivers flowing east; some in the form of rivers flowing west, others in the form of lakes and still others in the form of streams. All these holy centres are severally well known. Taking bath in them, or performing Japa, Homa and Pitṛtarpaṇa (water libation to the manes) fulfils all cherished desires of men. It gives enjoyment and salvation. The people who read about these or remember them become liberated from all sins and go to lord Viṣṇu's regions. Twenty rivers have been mentioned between Pūrnā and Pravarā. Then there are five divine rivers, my daughters. All together twentyfive of them have been described thus.

1. 'Mātarah' is divine mothers or female energies of great gods, e.g. Brhmāṇi, Māheśvari, Vaiṣṇavi, Aindri etc.

CHAPTER THIRTYSIX

Amṛtāsaṅgama and other holy centres

Brahmā said :

1. Mahānadi is an excellent river. Its confluence is called Pravarā-Saṅgama. Lord Siddheśvara presides over this holy centre. He renders help unto all his devotees.

2. There was an extremely horrible fight between Devas and Dānavas. (Later on) there was mutual love and amity too between them, O great sage.

3. They went to the mountain Meru. Devas and Dānavas consulted one another. They wished for the welfare of each other.

Devas and Daityas said :

4. It is possible to obtain immortality through nectar. Let us make the excellent nectar and drink it. We shall become immortal.

5-6. We shall join together and protect the worlds. Abandoning fight we shall attain happiness. Fighting is a cause of misery. With pleasure and avoiding jealousy, we shall enjoy riches earned by us. Loving treatment is always pleasant to us.

7. What has happened to the contrary should never be remembered. The pleasure that one derives from absence of enmity is not obtained even by our rule over the three worlds or by acquiring a higher position or even in salvation.

Brahmā said :

8-9. Thus becoming friendly to one another Devas and Dānavas joined together with great delight and churned the Ocean. They made the Mandara mountain their churning rod and Vāsuki the rope. Devas and Dānavas churned the ocean.

10. Therefrom the holy nectar dear to Devas came out. When the holy nectar was produced they said to one another:

11-13. "We shall go to our abodes. We have done our duty. We are tired. Let this be distributed among all in an equitable manner. In an auspicious hour when all have assembled together, O excellent Devas, let this holy nectar be distributed." After saying thus Daityas, Dānavas and Rākṣasas

went away. After they had gone Devas began to consult one another.

Devas said :

14. Our enemies, our suppressors have gone after confiding in us. The nectar should not at all be given to them.

Brahmā said :

15-18. Brhaspati agreed and said to Devas thus:

Brhaspati said :

Drink this nectar in such a manner that our enemies do not become aware of it. This is the secret advice to defeat our enemies. Those who are conversant with the science of politics know that the enemies are to be hated in every respect. The enemies are never to be trusted. They should never be told (any secret). They should never be consulted. Nectar should not be given to them. They are likely to become immortal thereby. When those enemies, Daityas, become immortal we will not be able to defeat them. Therefore the nectar should not be given to them.

Brahmā said :

19-21. After consulting each other thus, Devas said to Brhaspati:

Devas said :

Where shall we go? Where shall we have secret counsel? Where shall we drink it? Where shall we stay? We shall do that alone first. O Brhaspati, tell us.

Brhaspati said :

Let the immortal beings go to Brahmā and ask him the great expedient in this matter. He alone is the knower, donor and speaker (thereof).

Brahmā said :

22-27. On hearing the words of Brhaspati Devas came near me. After bowing down to me they intimated to me what had transpired.

O son, at the instance of Devas I went to Hari along with

Devas. Everything was then mentioned to Viṣṇu and Śambhu the remover of poison.

Viṣṇu, Śambhu and I went to the cave of Meru along with Devas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras without the knowledge of Asuras. After making Hari the watchman we sat for drinking Soma juice.

Āditya was the person to take note of those who partook of Soma. Soma was the distributor of share of nectar and the discus-bearing lord was the watchman. Neither Daityas nor Dānavas nor Rākṣasas knew it except Rāhu the highly intelligent son of Simhikā. He drank the Soma juice. Rāhu who had acquired efficacy to assume any form he desired entered the place.

28. He assumed the form of Deva and held the drinking bowl. On realising that it was a Daitya, the Sun-god intimated to Soma.

29. Soma gave nectar to that Daitya who had the form of a non-Daitya but informed Viṣṇu.

30. By means of his discus, Viṣṇu lifted the Daitya who could manage to gulp nectar. Viṣṇu cut off his head immediately. But, O dear one, that head became immortal.

31-32. The body bereft of head fell on the Earth. The body that had touched the nectar fell on the southern bank of Gautamī, O great sage, and shook the Earth. The body too became immortal, O son, and that was mysterious.

33. The body was dependent on the head and the head was dependent on the body. Both of them became immortal. This demon became extremely powerful. Devas thought:

34. “(if) the head were joined to the body it will eat all Devas. Hence we shall destroy at first this body which has come down to the Earth”. Then all the excited Devas said to Śaṅkara:

Devas said ::

35. Destroy the demon's body that has come down to the Earth, O lord, excellent among Devas. You are the ocean of mercy and the saviour of those who seek refuge in you.

36. Kindly do something so that the body of the demon does not join the head.

Brahmā said :

37-38. Iśa sent his excellent Śakti, the goddess Mother, the protectress of the worlds, along with the "Mothers". The goddess held the weapons of Iśa. She was full of the energy of Iśa. Desirous of eating it up she went to the place where the body came down to the Earth.

39. Devas pacified the head alone there itself on the Meru. The body fought with the goddess for many years.

40-41. Rāhu said to Devas : Pierce my body at the very outset. The excellent juice is within it. Extract it from the body. When the juice is separated, the body shall be reduced to ashes. Hence do that at the outset.

Brahmā said :

42. On hearing these words of Rāhu Devas became pleased. They performed his consecration. "Be pleased. Be the most excellent of all planets."

43-46. At the instance of Devas, Śakti who is mentioned as Iśvari, pierced the body of the lord of Daityas. Equipped with the power of Devas she immediately extracted the excellent nectar outside. After placing that body there Ambikā devoured it. Ambikā of great strength is called Kālarātri and Bhadrakāli. The excellent juice, the most excellent juice of all juices that had been placed there, oozed out and became the river Pravarā. She took in the nectar too that had been extracted and placed.

47-48. Then the excellent river Pravarā was born. It is auspicious and nectarous. It was born of the body of Rāhu and is fully endowed with the Śakti of Rudra. It is the most excellent and beautiful of all rivers. It is induced by nectar. There are five thousand meritorious holy centres there.

49-51. Worshipped by Devas Śambhu himself stayed there. The delighted Devas gave unto the divine river excellent boons, severally: "Whenever Śambhu, the lord of Devas, is worshipped, you too shall be worshipped with a desire for the welfare of worlds. O goddess, stay here. O goddess of juice, stay here, always bestowing all (spiritual and worldly) achievements.

52-56. You will be the bestower of cherished things on being eulogized, glorified or meditated upon. At the behest

of deities all the desires will be fulfilled, the desires of those who bow down to you with devotion and desire for anything whatsoever.

Sages call this Nivāsapuram (city of residence) since the eternal residence of Śiva and Śakti has taken place there. The highly delighted Devas gave excellent boons to Pravarā. The confluence of Pravarā with Gaṅgā is the favourite of Devas. It has been described to you. Worldly pleasures and salvation will be obtained by all who take their holy dip therein. Whatever they desire in their minds will be realised even if it happens to be inaccessible to the gods”.

After granting this, Devas went away.

57-58. Thenceforth, they know it as the holy centre of Pravarā Saṅgama. The place where the Śakti was induced by the Lord of Devas is called Preritā. It is also well known as Amṛtā. In this manner Pravarā is a great river. Know that a holy dip and distribution of charities etc. at the confluence of Pravarā is of everlasting benefit. It yields pleasure to the Manes.

CHAPTER THIRTYSEVEN

Description of seventeen holy centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre where Śiva is called Vṛddheśvara is named Vṛddhā Saṅgama. I shall describe it in detail. Listen to it. It destroys sins.

2-3. There was a sage belonging to the family of Gautama, named Vaidha. He was a sage of great penance. When the brahmin was a boy as the son of Gautama (scion of the family of Gautama) he had no nose. He was born without a nose. Hence he had an ugly form. Due to the lack of worldly attachment he wandered to various holy centres in the land.

4. Since he was shy and modest he had no contact with any preceptor. Since he was bashful and reserved he had no opportunity to learn along with other pupils.

5. With great difficulty (somehow) he was initiated into the study of Vedas by his father Gautama. After doing so much Gautama set out on a journey.

6. Thus, much time elapsed. The brahmin was supported by the brahmin mother. That Gautama had no opportunity to study the Vedas.

7. Gautama did not engage himself in a regular study of any scriptures. But he observed vows regularly and performed rites in sacred fires.

8-10. He was brahmin only by name, by the practice of Gāyatrī and the performance of holy rites in sacred fire. He maintained his brahminhood with this much alone. O sage, Gautama the noble brahmin continued to perform holy rites in the fire and repeated the Gāyatrī Mantra. O son, Gautama became long-lived. His span of life increased but he could not get a wife. There was no one to offer him his daughter (in marriage).

11. He was wandering about in the holy centres in various places in different forests and holy hermitages.

12. During the course of his wanderings, Gautama came to Himālayas. There he espied a beautiful cave overgrown with creepers and branches of trees.

13. The great brahmin sat down there and decided to stay. Entering within he saw an excellent woman.

14. She was a lean old woman with flaccid limbs. She was a virgin practising celibacy and performing penance. She was staying in isolation there.

15. On seeing her the excellent sage stood ready for making obeisance to her but she prevented him.

The old woman said :

16. You are about to become my Guru (preceptor). It does not behove you to salute me. Longevity, learning, wealth, fame, virtue, heavenly enjoyment etc. of a person, perish if a Guru were to bow down to his disciple.

Brahmā said :

17-18. Gautama who was surprised (at this remark) spoke to her with palms joined in reverence:

Gautama said :

You are a saintly old lady superior to me in qualities. I am younger in age with lesser knowledge and learning. How can I be your Guru?

The old woman said :

19-23. In this connection, O sage of good holy rites, I shall narrate to you what happened long ago.

The son of Arṣiṣena was known as Rtadhvaja. He was a meritorious, intelligent and heroic Kṣatriya devoted to the duties of Kṣatriyas. Once, attracted by a desire for hunting, Rtadhvaja went to a forest. He took rest in this cave. He was a clever, intelligent youth surrounded by a large army. As he was taking rest, a celestial damsel, the daughter of the king of Gandharvas, known as Suṣyāmā saw the excellent king. On seeing her the king became enamoured of her and she too began to love him. O sage of excellent intellect, the king indulged in sexual dalliance with her. As his passionate love was fully satisfied the great king took leave of her and went back home.

24. I was born of that Suṣyāmā, O sage of great intellect. As she was about to go back to heaven, O sage, my mother said this to me:

Suṣyāmā said :

25-30. O gentle lady, he who enters this cave will become your husband.

The old lady said :

After saying this, O sage of great intellect, my mother expired. You are the only man who has entered this cave. Never has anyone else entered it. My father performed penance after ruling over his kingdom for eighty thousand years. Then he went to heaven. After my father had gone to heaven, O great sage, my brother ruled over that kingdom for ten thousand years and then died. But I remained here itself. O brahmin, I have never been wooed by anyone else. I have neither father nor mother. O brahmin, I am mistress of myself, a Kṣatriya girl waiting ready (for you). Hence, O brahmin, accept me who have been seeking a man and observing the holy vows.

Gautama said :

31. O gentle lady, I am aged a thousand years. You are older than I. I am a boy. You are an old lady. Hence, our mutual union is impossible.

The old lady said :

32-34. You have been indicated formerly as my husband. No one else is accepted by me to be my husband. You have been granted to me by Brahmā. Hence, it does not behove you to disown me. Or, if you do not desire me in spite of the fact that I am undefiled and ever prepared to follow you, I shall abandon my life even now in your presence. To all embodied beings death is far better than the non-acquisition of what is desired. There is no end to sins if one abandons persons attached to one.

Brahmā said :

35-37. On hearing the words of the old lady, Gautama said:

Gautama said :

I am devoid of penance. I do not possess good learning. I am poor and without possession. I am not a suitable bridegroom for you. I am deformed and bereft of worldly pleasures. I have no nose. What shall I do? I have neither learning nor penance as my asset. Hence first, O splendid lady, you should make me handsome and bestow on me good learning. Afterwards you can carry out what you have stated. Thereupon, the old lady said to the brahmin:

The old lady said :

38-39. Goddess Sarasvatī has been propitiated by me, O brahmin, by means of penance. So also the Waters of beautiful form and Agni the bestower of comeliness. Hence, goddess Speech will grant you learning and Agni, the beautiful god, will grant you a lovely form.

Brahmā said :

40. After saying this to Gautama the old lady pleaded (fire god) and made him handsome as well as learned.

41. Thereafter, Gautama who became learned, handsome and brilliant married the old lady. With great pleasure he sported with that charming lady for many years in the cave. He was happy and delighted in his mind.

42-43. While the couple stayed happily in their cave on the mountain, O most revered sage, sages Vasiṣṭha, Vāmadeva and others who had been wandering over sacred holy centres reached that cave.

44-45. On coming to know about the arrival of those sages, Gautama accompanied by his wife welcomed them with great hospitality. Some of them laughed at them. Some of those sages, boys proud of their youth, as well as men of middle age saw the old lady as well as Gautama and laughed.

46-48. They saw that the old lady was lean and lanky with hairs over the body. Her lips were hanging down. Her ears were broad like the winnowing basket. Her teeth, nose and hairs were all too long. She was infirm with her physical form shattered and decaying. They saw that Gautama was equipped with learning, good fortune, brilliance and comely features. On seeing this (disparity) some of those childish sons of sages began to laugh. On seeing her the narrow-minded disciples said smilingly:

The sages said :

49. Is this your son or grandson, old lady? Who is this Gautama? Tell us the truth, O gentle lady.

After saying this those brahmins laughed.

50-54. (They went on saying thus) "O saintly lady, truly the fruit of penance has been said to be powerful. By means of penance one attains peace and tranquility. If one is incompetent one is faced with exhaustion. O splendid lady, only he who views (everyone) with equanimity has peace and tranquility. Truthful speech amounts to the protection of what has been acquired in the course of many births.

Of what avail is profuse speech now. It is practically meaningless and worthless. You alone are blessed lady endowed with good fortune in this world. Tell us (is it not so?).

Your sins have been burnt by austerities you have practised. You have been glorified by your exertion in performing penance.

In this world, you have become lean and emaciated by practising austerities and subjugating your sense-organs, by worshipful hospitality to the guests and the nursing and nurturing of your son. Let not the body be nourished by accumulating sins.

55-60. Mercifulness, charitable gift, penance, truthfulness, cleanliness, subjugation of sense-organs, worshipful hospitality to the guests, quiescence, protection of sons etc.—by means of all these you are maintaining your duty. If anyone has only such activities as are conducive to the acquisition of what is required by his belly, he is considered certainly fit to be confined to hell. O beautiful lady, tell me who is that woman who endures all miseries? Who is that woman who is on a par with a dog (for miserable life)? A woman even of good eyebrows should be considered unholy if she is devoid of husband and sons. O splendid lady, certainly you are endowed with virtue because of your continuous hospitality to the guests. You are feeding brahmins with cooked food. Although you are very old and bereft of your husband you are still virtuous and splendid. Although you are deformed (physically) you must be considered beautiful. Although you have no wealth you are still rich. Penance has been performed by you with good concentration. Ekāṅguṣṭha (standing on a single toe) and similar other severe and difficult penances have been performed by you.

61. Lord of Lakṣmi (i.e. Viṣṇu) has been worshipped very well by you in your previous birth with devotion. Good charitable gifts have been distributed, sacrifices with good monetary gifts have been performed (by you.)

62. Holy centres have been duly visited and plenty of gifts have been given and much has been sacrificed. Hence Gautama, the knower of the Vedas has been obtained by you as son.

63. He is conversant with all the principles of Vedas and Vedāṅgas; he is well read in all the scriptures. A son (like) Gautama is very difficult to obtain even by the merit of all the three worlds.

64. (Defective Verse) Is he your great-grandson, grandson or son? Or is he your daughter's son? Sesame seeds are causes of satisfaction through a son but in the case of daughter's son they are like those kept in a leather bag.

65-66. O old lady with plenty of penance, through this boy you will attain the great region of Viṣṇu or a pure befitting family (in the next birth). In this matter no worry need be felt."

Thereupon some of the disciples of sages said in surprise: "A youthful woman is poison unto an old man but a young man is like nectar unto an old woman. Oh, the conjunction of desirable and undesirable things has been seen by us after a long period."

Brahmā said :

67. Thus spoke some of them even as the couple were listening to their talk.

After saying this and after receiving due hospitality the great sages went away.

68. On hearing the talk of the sages the couple were ashamed and sorry. The highly intelligent Gautama in the company of his wife asked Agastya the great excellent sage:

Gautama said :

69. What is that land or holy centre where happiness can be had? What is that place which bestows worldly pleasures and salvation? O highly intelligent one, tell me quickly.

Agastya said :

70-71. These words have been heard by me from the sages who had been narrating the same: "All desires are realised in Gautamī river". Hence go, O sage of great intellect, to Gautamī, the destroyer of sins. I shall follow you. Do as you please.

Brahmā said :

72-73. On hearing these words of Agastya Gautama and the old lady went there. That holy sage performed penance along with his wife. He eulogized lord Viṣṇu and Śambhu. The holy sage propitiated Gaṅgā on behalf of his wife.

Gautama said :

74. Like a tree unto the travellers in the desert, O Śiva, you in the company of your consort are the sole refuge unto those persons who are distressed in this world.

75. You entirely remove the sins of all living beings—high and low. O Kṛṣṇa, you are like the cloud to the planets that wither due to drought.

76. O Gautamī, you are the ladder leading to the fort of Vaikuṇṭha that is difficult of access. You are the river of nectar. Be the refuge of seven (? worlds) coming beneath.

Brahmā said :

77. Then the delighted Gautamī, worthy of being sought refuge in, spoke to Gautama who was accompanied by the old woman, who had sought refuge in her and who was in great distress.

Gautami said :

78-80. Pour my water over your beloved wife after consecrating it with Mantras. Pour the water out of pots sanctified with Mantras and other modes of worshipful service. She will then become beautiful with all her limbs rendered youthful. She will have conjugal felicity, fascinating eyes and good traits. She will attain beautiful physical form. Your beautiful wife shall pour water over you. That being done you will have all good traits in full and you will attain a beautiful form.

Brahmā said :

81. At the instance of Gaṅgā they said 'yes' and did as they were told. Both of them obtained beautiful form by the grace of Gautamī.

82. The water used for pouring became a river; it became well known, O excellent sage, by the name of the old woman.

83. It was known as 'Vṛddhānadi.' Similarly, Gautama was called 'Vṛddhagautama'. He was so called by the sages staying along with them.

The old woman said to Gautamī Gaṅgā in visible form :

Vṛddhā said :

84-85. O goddess, let this river be called Vṛddhā after my name. Let its confluence with you be an excellent holy centre. By means of holy dip, charitable gifts, Homas etc., let it be conducive to the increase of beauty, good fortune, wealth,

sons and grandsons. Let it bestow longevity, health and welfare. Let it give victory and increase pleasure. Let it sanctify the manes.

Brahmā said :

86. "Let it be so", said Gaṅgā to the old lady, the beloved wife of Gautama. The Liṅga installed by Gautama is glorified by the name Vṛddhā.

87-88. The excellent sage attained great joy there itself along with the old woman. The holy dip and charitable gifts there are the bestower of all desired things.

Thereafter, that holy centre is called Vṛddhā Saṅgama.

CHAPTER THIRTYEIGHT

Sixteen thousand holy centres

1. The holy centre named Ilātīrtha is one that brings about spiritual achievement of men. It sanctifies men who commit (even) such (heinous) sins as brahmin slaughter etc. It bestows all cherished things.

2. Once a ruler of men named Ila born of the family of Vivasvān (Sun) went to the hunting forest along with a large army.

3. He wandered over the forest infested with beasts of prey, full of birds of various shapes and sizes and rendered beautiful by the branches of trees.

4. Wandering over the forest with his mind inclined to the sport of hunting the excellent king determined to stay there. Ila said to his ministers:

Ila said :

5. All of you go to the city looked after and protected by my son. May you all look after the welfare of the land, treasury, army, kingdom as well as the Prince.

6-7. Let Vasiṣṭha too go like my intelligent father accompanied by his wives. I shall stay in the forest maintaining

sacrificial fires. I shall stay here with a few horses, elephants and men who can enjoy forest pleasures and who are skilled in the sport of hunting. Let all others go back to the city from here.

Brahmā said :

8-10. Saying "So be it" they went away. King Ila himself went to the mountain Himavat slowly. Staying on the Himavat full of jewels the king saw a cave wonderfully studded with different jewels. A certain Yakṣa leader known as Samanyu lived in that cave on that beautiful excellent mountain. His wife Samā was devoted to her husband and eagerly engaged in rendering service to him.

11-16. That highly intelligent Yakṣa roamed about here and there in his forest as he pleased, accompanied by his wife. He sported about dancing and singing. Though he had assumed the form of a deer the Yakṣa could know (whatever happened there). But Ila did not know that the cave was (used as residence by and)under the protection of the Yakṣa. That abode of the Yakṣa was large and wonderfully embellished with many jewels. There the king stayed surrounded by a large army. He stayed in the abode all alone. The Yakṣa who was accompanied by his wife and who had assumed the form of a deer was furious over this trespass. He thought thus: "I am not strong enough to defeat Ila. If I request him he is not likely to give my abode back to me. My abode has been taken away by him. How can I kill this arrogant fellow in battle?" After thinking thus he (wanted to) send his own heroic followers, the bow-bearing Yakṣas.

Yakṣa said :

17. Defeat king Ila in battle, Ila who is arrogant because he possesses elephants. It behoves you to do that which will make him leave and go elsewhere from my home.

Brahmā said :

18-21. At those words of the Yakṣa leader all those Yakṣas proud and undaunted in battle went to Ila and said: "Go out of this cave-home. Otherwise, you will be defeated in battle

and have to run out of this". At those words of the Yakṣas, the emperor fought with them in anger. After defeating the Yakṣas, he stayed there for ten nights. With his abode taken away and with his servants killed the Yakṣa leader assumed the form of a deer and stayed in the forest along with his wife. Worried over the situation he spoke to the Yakṣinī, his beloved wife in the form of a doe.

Yakṣa said :

22. O beloved, how will I conquer (this king) who is strong, invincible, proud on account of glory and heroism, blind due to arrogance and very much attached to the sport of hunting?

Yakṣinī said :

23. Tell me, O loved one, is there any means of subduing his arrogance? If my words (or deeds) can help, tell me. I shall do that.

Yakṣa said :

24-25. O lady of excellent waist, there is a means of subduing the arrogance of the king. O lady of great fortune, do that whereby the pride of this king is driven away. It will be splendid and pleasing to me.

O blessed lady, go to that place where this silly king is staying.

26-27. There you reveal yourself in front of Ila after assuming the form of a hind, O splendid lady. Draw king Ila to the forest known as Umāvana. O lady of good fortune, attract that king who is staying in my abode and who is very much attached to the sport of hunting. Let the evil-minded one attain the form of a woman.

28. O beloved, this king is evil-minded and is indulging in vices. He will fall into adversity through this. This is the means thereof that has been thought of by me.

29. The kingdoms of all kings come to an end through the increase of sins and indulgence in vices. Assuming the form of a charming hind lead him on to the forest Umāvana, O lady of good eyebrows.

30. If this king gets in there he will undoubtedly become a woman. O gentle lady, this should be done by you. It is not

proper for me because I am a man. You are a woman and a Yakṣinī besides.

Yakṣinī said :

31. How is it that you should not go to the excellent forest Umāvana? What will be the harm if you go there? Tell me that briefly.

Yakṣa said :

32. Śiva roamed about as he pleased on the excellent mountain, Himavat accompanied by Umā and followed by Devas and his Gaṇas. Once Pārvatī said to Śankara standing alone in an isolated place:

33-35. "This is the nature of women that they would love to have sexual dalliance in secret. Hence, O lord of Devas, give me a fixed place well guarded at your behest and known as Umāvana.

O lord, excepting you, Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya and Nandin who-ever enters this place should be turned into a woman."

36. Order was accordingly given by the delighted lord with the Moon on his crest. What is it that a man does not do, on being lovingly requested by his beloved? Hence I should not go to the excellent Umāvana.

Brahmā said :

37. On hearing the words of her husband the Yakṣinī who could assume any form as she pleased and whose eyes were large, became a hind and appeared in front of Ila.

38-40. The Yakṣa remained there alone. The king espied the hind. On seeing the hind the king who was particularly attached to the sport of hunting started by himself and followed the hind seated on his horse. She (the Yakṣinī) attracted the king who was overwhelmed by (the spirit of) hunting and gradually went to that forest called Umāvana. In some places (on certain occasions) she became invisible and in some places she revealed herself.

41. Standing still, sometimes walking and running as though

she was afraid, that hind of roving eyes dragged him on to the forest of Umāvana.

42-46. Following closely riding on his horse he reached that forest Umāvana. On realising that he had entered Umāvana, the Yakṣinī who could assume any form she desired abandoned the form of the hind and assumed a divine form. She stood near an Aśoka tree with one of her hands resting on its branch. The young maiden Samā who had assumed a divine form and who had applied (over her body) sweet smelling divine unguents (was delighted) because she had achieved her object. The tired king Ilā was searching for the hind with rolling eyes. Fully remembering what her husband had said she smilingly looked at the king and said to him.

Samā said :

47. O delicate-limbed one, O young maiden, O Ilā, where are you going alone seated on a horse and dressed like a man. Whom will you follow?

Brahmā said :

48-52. On hearing (himself addressed by) the name 'Ilā' the king became furious and rebuked the hind. Still the Yakṣinī said, "O Ilā, what is it you are looking for?" On hearing (himself addressed by) the name 'Ilā' the king who was seated on the horse holding the bow and who had conquered the three worlds became angry and showed her the bow. Again she said to the noble-souled king: "O Ilā, see for yourself. Tell me thereafter whether I am speaking the truth or lying". Thereupon the king surveyed himself and saw the pair of protruding breasts between his arms. He became bewildered wondering what had happened to himself.

Ilā said :

What has happened to me? Surely you must know it clearly. Tell me everything precisely. Tell me, O woman of holy rites, who you are.

The Yaksini said :

53.. Samanyu, my husband, stays in an excellent cave of

the Himālayas. He is the lord of Yakṣas. He is prosperous. I am his wife, a Yakṣinī.

54-56. It was his Yakṣas who had been killed by you out of delusion without a formal fight. It was in his splendidly cool cave that you had been seated. In order to make you come out from the same, I assumed the form of a hind and entered the forest Umāvana. You too entered it. Formerly, Maheśvara had declared: "The ignorant man who comes within this range will acquire womanhood". That is why you have attained womanhood. It does not behove you to grieve over this. Even a mature person cannot know the mysterious future.

Brahmā said :

57. On hearing the words of the Yakṣinī (the king) seated on the horse fell down. After pacifying him the Yakṣinī said again:

Yakṣini said :

58. You have once for all become a woman. It does not behove you to strive to regain manhood. Learn the arts befitting women. Learn all these things such as the graceful charms of a woman, the elegance and coquetry of a woman, nay, all the activities of a woman.

Brahmā said :

59-60. After attaining all those accomplishments Ilā said to Yakṣinī :

Ilā said :

Who will be my husband? What is my duty? How can manhood be attained again? Mention this to me who am particularly distressed. There is no better thing conducive to welfare than the suppression of grief of distressed people.

Yakṣinī said :

61. There is a son of the Moon named Budha (Mercury). O extremely fortunate lady, to the east of this forest is the hermitage of that youth of great handsome features.

62. It is through this path that the planet Budha goes to meet his father, Moon, and also to pay respects to him everyday.

63. When the quiescent Budha goes (along this way) reveal yourself to him. O fortunate lady, on seeing him you will fulfil all your cherished desires.

Brahmā said :

64. After consoling her the Yakṣinī of splendid eyebrows vanished. She also reported the matter to her husband, the Yakṣa, who became happy on hearing it.

65-67. The army of Ilā that had been stationed there, went away. Ilā stayed in the forest Umāvana singing, dancing and pursuing activities of feminine interest. She pondered over the ways of Karman. Once while Ilā was dancing, the intelligent Budha saw her on his way to meet his father. On seeing Ilā, Budha halted on his way, approached her and said thus:

Budha said :

68-70. Be my wife and become comfortably placed in my abode as the most beloved of all women.

Brahmā said :

With great devotion Ilā approved of the suggestion of Budha and did accordingly. She remembered the earlier statement of the Yakṣinī and therefore, O sage, became satisfied.

After taking her to his excellent home Budha indulged in sexual dalliance with her with great pleasure. In every respect she pleased her husband. After the lapse of a great deal of time the delighted Budha spoke to his beloved:

Budha said :

71-75. What is it that you wish that I should give you, O gentle lady? What is that delightful thought that lurks in your mind?

Brahmā said :

The moment he made that statement Ilā spoke to Budha, the son of the Moon, who was her delighted lover: "Give me a son".

Budha said :

This semen of mine is infallible as well as one that is the

outcome of great delight. Hence you will have a son who will be a Kṣatriya well known all over the world. He will be the founder of Lunar dynasty. He will be like the Sun in brilliance. He will be on a par with Brhaspati in intelligence. He will be equal to the Earth in forbearance. He will be like a lion in vigour and vitality in the battle-field. In anger he will be on a par with the Fire-god.

Brahmā said :

76. At the nativity of the noble son of Budha, there were cries of "Victory" everywhere in the abode of Devas.

77. When the son of Budha was born the great Devas came there. With great joy, O highly intelligent one, I too came there.

78-79. The moment he was born, the boy made a highly pitched loud sound. Hence the sages and Devas who had gathered there said, "Since his sound was loud (Purū—loud, great; Rava—Sound), he shall be Purūravas". Delighted in their minds they named him so.

80. Budha taught his son all the splendid arts of a Kṣatriya. At that time Budha taught his son the science of archery along with its practical application.

81. Like the moon in the bright half of the lunar month he grew up very fast.

Once that highly intelligent boy noticed that his mother Ilā was overwhelmed by sorrow. He humbly bowed down to Ilā and said :

Aila said :

82. Budha, my father, is your beloved husband, O mother. I, your son, am skilful. Wherefore then do you have this mental anguish?

Ilā said :

83-84. It is true, dear son, that Budha is my husband and you, my son, are a mine of virtues. I have never experienced any worry on account of my husband or son. Still, O highly intelligent one, I am worried because I frequently recollect a former misery.

Then he said to his mother:

Aila said :

85-86. Tell me at once, my dear mother.

Brahmā said :

Ilā spoke to him thus: "It is a secret. How can I tell you? Still I shall tell you, my dear son, since the son is the ultimate resort of parents. A son is the exceedingly splendid ship for those who are about to sink in the ocean of misery."

Brahmā said :

87-89. On hearing those words of his mother the humble son placed her feet on his head and said to her with choking words with his eyes filled with tears: "If a son does not remove the difficulty of his parents by means of remedies (at his disposal), then, alas, his birth and life are futile. Though alive, he is (no better than) dead. Holy rites such as resorting to pilgrim centres, distribution of charitable gifts, performance of sacrifices, penances and other things are meritorious only when they are performed by a person who has pleased his parents. Speak out, my dear mother, all those thoughts that lurk in your mind as they are."

She spoke to her son with the lower lip hanging loosely down on account of her hot breaths. Excited like one about to be drowned in the ocean of misery she narrated everything in the manner it had occurred.

90-96. She narrated all these details: The family of the Ikṣvākus born of the Solar dynasty, her own birth therein (as a man), her name (as a man), his dear sons and wife, his priest Vasiṣṭha, his own region, departure to the forest, sending off his priest and ministers back to the city, of his indulgence in the sport of hunting, entry into the cave of the Himālayas, access to the abode of the leading Yakṣa, entry into the forest of Umāvana and the complete transformation into a woman, the statement of Yakṣinī that no man was permitted to enter the place as ordered by Maheśvara, the granting of boon, the contact with Budha, love and the birth of a son. These and other things she completely narrated. After hearing everything Purūravas spoke to his mother: "What shall I do? What shall I do to earn merit? If you are satisfied with this much that is enough, O mother. If there is anything else in your mind please tell that also to me."

Ila said :

97-98. I would wish for the excellent manhood. I should like to regain the excellent kingdom and the coronation of my sons, especially that of yours. I should like to do all these, viz. to give charitable gifts, to perform sacrifice and to be on the path of salvation. I wish to do everything by virtue of your favour my dear son.

The son said :

99. I am asking you the means whereby you will attain manhood. Tell me exactly whether it is through penance or through some other means.

Ila said :

100. Dear Son, go and ask Budha your father. He knows everything precisely. He will advise you what is conducive to your welfare.

Brahmā said :

101. At those words of his mother, Aila immediately went to his father. After bowing down to him he asked him what he and his mother should do.

Budha said :

102-103. I know Ila, O highly intelligent one. I know he was transformed into Ilā. I know how he entered the forest Umāvana and also the command of Śambhu. Hence the redemption from the curse shall be only through the favour of Śambhu and that of Umā. Only by propitiating them can the curse be removed and not otherwise.

Purūravas said :

104. How can I see that lord as well as mother Umā? Shall it be through any holy centre or through penance? Father, mention this at the outset.

Budha said :

105. Dear Son, go to Gautamī. The glorious Śiva who dis-

pels curses and bestows boons stays there always accompanied by Umā.

Brahmā said :

106-110. On hearing the words of his father Purūravas became delighted. Wishing for the manhood of his mother, hurrying to perform penance, the intelligent (son of Budha) went to the Gautamīgaṅgā that sanctifies the three worlds, after bowing down to the Himālaya mountain, his mother, father and preceptor. Ilā and the son of Moon followed their son who went ahead. From the excellent mountain Himavat all of them came to Gautamī.

They took their holy bath there and performed penance for a short while. Thereafter, they recited the splendid eulogy of Bhava, the lord of Devas. Listen to the order of their eulogies. Budha eulogized first, then Ilā and then their son Purūravas eulogized goddess Gaurī and Śaṅkara.

Budha said :

111. Let those two deities be my refuge; those two deities who take delight in the sound of the girdle, who resemble the natural gold, who have good features and who are worshipped by Skanda and Gaṇeśvara. They are worthy of being sought refuge in.

Ilā said :

112-113. Let Śaṅkari and Śaṅkara be my refuge. Meditating upon those two deities, the embodied beings who have been scorched by the forest fire of the three types of worldly distresses, attain the greatest beatitude immediately.

I am distressed. My mind has been afflicted. There is no one other than you to protect me from suffering, distress etc. O lord, your feet are extremely meritorious and worthy of being sought refuge in. Let them be by my refuge.

Purūravas said :

114-115. Gaurī and Hara are worthy of being sought refuge in by the entire universe. They are the immanent souls of the universe. This entire (visible universe) rises from, prospers in

and finally merges with those two deities. Let them be my refuge.

In the course of a great festival Devas said, "O Iśa, touch and hold the feet of the daughter of the lord of mountains". As soon as this was said they were lovingly held by Śiva. Let those two feet be my refuge. They are worthy of being sought refuge in.

The eminent goddess said :

116. What is it that you all wish to have? What shall I grant you all—tell me. You have performed that which is difficult even unto Devas. Welfare unto you all. Be satisfied, for you have done your duty.

Purūravas said :

117. King Ila had unwittingly entered your forest, O Ambikā (Mother). O goddess of Devas, forgive him. It behoves you to grant him manhood.

Brahmā said :

118. "So be it" said the goddess to all of them, the goddess who abided by the opinion of Bhava. Then the lord who is always devoted to the utterances of the goddess said:

Śiva said :

119-122. Let this king regain his manhood merely by taking a holy plunge here.

Brahmā said :

Water oozed out from the body of Ilā as she took her holy dip. Whatever she had acquired from Yakṣinī, such as dance, music, graceful charms etc. entered the waters of Gaṅgā along with the continuous flow of water and the following rivers issued forth: Nrityā (Dance), Gītā (Song) and Saubhāgyā (Conjugal Felicity). They also joined Gaṅgā. These three confluences are very holy. Holy plunge and charitable gift in these confluences bestow the benefit of the kingdom of Devas.

123. After regaining manhood by the favour of Gauri and Sambhu Ila performed the Vajapeya sacrifice for the achievement of great prosperity.

124-125. That excellent king brought all these: his priest Vasiṣṭha, his wife and sons, his ministers, his army, and his treasury. Then he established a kingdom in the Dāṇḍaka with the four types of military units. There that city became well known after the name of Ila.

126-128. This charming town in the valley of Sahya surpasses even the city of Mahendra.

After getting fed up with the enjoyment of worldly pleasures in that excellent city he crowned his sons born previously, in the kingdom that had come to him by succession in the Solar dynasty. Afterwards he sprinkled (the holy water) on Aila with great affection saying, "Let this (boy) be the founder of the Lunar dynasty (and) a glorious king."

O sage, (in fact) he became more intelligent and excellent than all others (and so) the eldest.

129-131 Sixteen thousand holy centres grew up in the places where the splendid sacrifices were performed by king Ila, where he met the sons after regaining his manhood and where the rivers arising from the faculty of dance, music, conjugal felicity, auspiciousness etc. bestowed by Yakṣinī joined Gaṅgā, O Nārada. The holy centres grew up on both the banks. O dear one, Śambhu is called Ilēśvara here. Holy dip, charitable gifts etc. in them bestow the benefit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER THIRTYNINE

Cakra Tirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre famous as Cakratīrtha destroys sins of brahmin-slaughter etc. because it was here that lord Hari obtained his discus.
2. The place where Lord Viṣṇu stood and worshipped Śāṅkara for the sake of discus is mentioned as Cakratīrtha.
- 3-6. By merely listening to it one is freed from all sins.

Once Dakṣa began a sacrifice. When Devas had gathered, lord Śiva was slandered and insulted by Dakṣa in the assembly of Devas. The great lord was slighted. Dakṣa's mind was so polluted that he wantonly neglected to invite the lord of Devas. Satī, the daughter of Dakṣa, heard the reason for not inviting Śiva when it was mentioned by Ahalyā. The goddess of Devas became angry. "I shall destroy my father who is a sinner. I will not forgive him at all", said she on hearing the derogatory remarks made by her father against her husband.

7-9. "Where is the limit to the sins of those women who listen to the censure of their husbands. Whatever may be his nature or status the husband is the ultimate resort of women. What doubt is there then in regard to Mahādeva, the lord of everything, the preceptor of the Universe? His censure has been heard by me. I shall therefore not hold on to this despicable body. I shall cast off this body."

After saying thus that goddess of Devas, the highly chaste lady, was overwhelmed by great fury and she blazed.

10-12. With thoughts directed towards Śiva alone she abandoned her body through yogic power.

Meheśvara heard everything from Nārada. On hearing it he became angry. He asked Jayā and Vijayā¹ and both of them said that Dakṣāyanī's (Dakṣa's daughter's) (ultimate wish) was the destruction of the sacrifice of Dakṣa.

On hearing this, Maheśvara went to the place of sacrifice surrounded by his terrible Gaṇas. He went along with the senior Bhūtas (ghosts).

13. That sacrifice sponsored by Brahmā and Devas was entirely surrounded by them. It had been guarded with purity of mind by Dakṣa, the sacrificer.

14. It had been looked after from all round by Vasiṣṭha and other formidable sages. It had been well protected everywhere by Indra, Ādityas, Vasus and others.

15-16. It had been embellished with the Vedas, Rk, Yajus .

1. According to Vāmana Purāṇa, Jayā was a daughter of sage Gautama by Ahalyā in addition to Jayanti and Aparājitā. Vijayā was presumably another name of either of the latter two.

and Sāman as well as the utterances of Svāhā. It had been adorned all round by Śraddhā (Faith), Puṣṭi (Nourishment), Tuṣṭi (Satisfaction), Śānti (Peace), Lajjā (Bashfulness), Sarasvatī (Speech), Bhūmi (Earth), Dyau (Heaven), Śarvarī (Night), Kṣānti (Forbearance), Uṣā (Dawn), Āśā (Hope), Jayā (Victory), Mati (Intellect) as well as others.

17-19. It had been constructed by Viśvakarman and the noble Tvaṣṭṛ. It was splendidly flourishing with cherished desires (fulfilled) through these divine cows that showered anything anyone desired, viz. Surabhi, Nandinī, Kāmadhuk and Kāmadohini. There were the trees and creepers of Kalpa, Pārijāta, Kalpalatā etc. In fact whatever is the most covetable thing was present in that sacrifice there. It was well protected by Indra, Pūṣan and Hari themselves.

20. These utterances were heard all round, viz. "Let this be given," "Let this be eaten"; "Let this be done", "Stay here happily". Thus the sacrifice of Dakṣa had been honoured.

21-24. It was Virabhadra accompanied by Bhadrakālī who went ahead. He was full of sorrow and anger in his mind. Afterwards holding the spear and Pināka bow Mahādeva followed bedecked by the great Bhūtas (spirits). Those spirits encircled the sacrifice all round Maheśvara. They destroyed the sacrifice. A great commotion ensued there. Some of them fled. Some went to Śiva and began to eulogize the lord of Devas. Some were angry with Śaṅkara. On seeing the sacrifice destroyed thus Pūṣan came there.

25. After uprooting the teeth of Pūṣan Virabhadra routed Indra in a trice. O brahmin, he pierced and split the eyes of Bhaga.

26. Again, he whirled the Sun-god with his arms and hurled him down. Thereupon, all Devas sought refuge in Viṣṇu.

Devas said :

27. Save us, save us, O lord with the club in hands, from the danger arising from the leader of the Bhūtas. There is a certain Gaṇa (attendant) of Maheśvara. He is the leader of Pramathas. Even as Hari was watching the entire sacrifice pertaining to Viṣṇu the entire sacrifice was destroyed.

Brahmā said :

28. In order to kill the leader of Bhūtas the discus was discharged by Hari. As it advanced and approached him the leader of Bhūtas grasped it.

29. When the discus of Viṣṇu was grasped, the guardians of the quarters went away due to fear. On seeing the sacrifice (destroyed) and Devas in that (agitated) state the Patriarch Dakṣa eulogized lord Śiva with devotion.

Dakṣa said :

30-35. Be victorious, O Śaṅkara, lord of Soma (Moon). Be victorious, O omniscient one. Salutation to you. Be victorious, O Śambhu the benefactor, be victorious. Salutation to the lord identical with time or God of Death. O primordial maker, salutation to you. O blue-throated one, salutation to you.

O lord fond of Brahman, salutation to you. O lord in the form of Brahman, salutation to you. O lord, Parameśvara of three abodes, obeisance to the three-formed lord. O lord having all as your form (or Multiformed one), obeisance to you. O lord, the support of the three worlds, the bestower of cherished desires, obeisance to you, who can be realized only through Vadānta. Obeisance to you, the supreme soul. O lord with sacrifice for your form, obeisance to you. O lord, the abode of sacrifice, obeisance to you. O lord, the bestower of sacrifice, salutation to you. O the conveyor of sacrificial offerings, obeisance to you. O lord, obeisance to you, the destroyer of sacrifice. Obeisance to you, the distributor of benefits, O lord of universe. Save me, save me. O lord, fond of those who seek refuge in you. O lord, you alone are the refuge of devotees as well as non-devotees.

Brahmā said :

36. As he eulogized thus, Maheśvara became pleased with him and said to him, "What shall I give you"? (He replied) "O lord, let my sacrifice be complete".

37. "So be it" said Maheśvara, lord of Devas, Śaṅkara, the soul of all living beings and the ocean of mercy.

38. After making the sacrifice of Dakṣa complete, O sage, and after saying thus the lord vanished along with his Bhūtas.

39-40. Devas went away to their respective abodes in the manner they came.

Then once a great battle ensued between Devas and Daityas. Therein Devas became afraid of Daityas. With complete devotion Devas eulogized Viṣṇu, the lord of Śrī in the following words:

Devas said :

41-42. Indra and other Devas perform penance seeking the benign side-glance of Lakṣmī. We seek refuge in that lord, who has become Brahman and to whose feet Lakṣmī is devoted.

In all the three worlds there is none equal or superior to Nṛsiṁha whose vehicle is Garuḍa. With great sympathy, let that lord of Devas protect all of us who have sought refuge in him from great dangers.

Brahmā said :

43. Thereupon the lord holding the conch, discus and club became pleased and said to them: "What for have all of you come? I shall do it for you."

Devas said :

44. O slayer of Madhu, Devas have an excessive danger from Daityas. Hence, O Lord, try to save them.

Brahmā said :

45-46. Hari said, "O Devas, my discus has been caught hold of by Hara. What shall I do? The discus is gone and all of you have fallen into misery. Yet your protection will be afforded by me. Let all Devas go back."

Brahmā said :

47. Then, after Devas had gone Viṣṇu prepared himself to get the discus. After going to Godāvarī he began the worship of Sambhu.

48. With great devotion Viṣṇu performed the daily worship of the consort of Umā with a thousand divine sweet smelling golden lotuses.

49. "Obeisance, the Pināka-bearing Maheśa, who removes great danger in the forest of worldly existence and who fulfils all cherished desires".

50. By means of this Mantra and with the mind endowed with devotion lord Viṣṇu worshipped Śiva, the lover of Bhavāni.

51-52. As the worship proceeded something happened between them. Listen to that. The lotuses were found to be one short of a thousand. When Viṣṇu noticed the shortage he dislodged his own eye and offered Arghya.¹ Taking the vessel of Arghya containing a thousand lotuses and meditating on Śambhu, Hari who had no other refuge, offered Arghya.

Viṣṇu said :

53. O lord, you alone know the innermost feelings of men. You alone are refuge and overlord. What doubt can be there ?

Brahmā said :

54. Speaking thus with tears welled up in his eyes he got himself merged as though with Iśvara. Then Śambhu appeared in front of him, accompanied by Bhavāni.

55. He embraced Hari closely and filled him with various boons. He got back his original eye as well as discus.

56-58. Then all Devas eulogized Hari and Śaṅkara. They eulogized Gaṅgā the most excellent of all rivers as well as the bull-bannered lord. Thenceforth that holy centre is remembered as Cakratīrtha. Merely by listening to it one is freed from all sins. He who performs the rites of holy dip, charitable gifts and libation to the manes, shall be rid of all sins. He will attain heaven along with the ancestors. This holy centre can be seen with a mark of discus even today.

CHAPTER FORTY

Cakreśvara and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1-4. The holy centre Pippala comes after Cakratīrtha because the lord here is called Cakreśvara and it was from here

1. Things such as water, honey etc. offered to deities, guest etc. as a token of respect.

that lord Hari obtained his discus. The place where Viṣṇu himself stood and worshipped Lord Śaṅkara for getting the discus back is cited as Cakratīrtha. They know the place as Pippala where Śambhu became pleased with Viṣṇu. Even Śeṣa is not competent to narrate its glory. Listen, O Nārada, to the reason for the name Pippaleśa given to Cakreśvara. Listen to it with devotion because what is mentioned in the Vedas is being recounted by me.

5. There was a famous sage named Dadhīci. He was endowed with good qualities. His wife was a chaste lady of noble birth and highly intelligent.

6. She was the sister of that lady well known as Lopāmudrā. She was famous by the name Gabhastinī and glorified as Vaḍavā.

7. She was the beloved wife of Dadhīci. He performed penance regularly along with her. Dadhīci was devoted to the duties of a householder and he always maintained the sacred fire.

8. He resorted to Gaṅgā and was devoted to the propitiation of gods and guests. He was fondly attached to his wife. He was as calm as Agastya.

9-10. Due to his spiritual power Daityas and Dānavas came to that region, O great sages. It was there that Agastya too had his hermitage. After defeating Daityas who came for attacking them Devas, Rudras, Ādityas, twin brothers Aśvins, Indra, Viṣṇu, Yama and the Fire-god came there.

11. They were excessively delighted by their victory. They were eulogized by the Maruts. On seeing Dadhīci, the great sage, the leading Devas bowed down to him.

12. With great delight, Dadhīci welcomed and honoured Devas severally. Accompanied by his wife he thereafter performed the duties of a householder to them.

13-14. Devas were asked about their welfare and general happiness by him. They chatted with him. Devas who were delighted in their minds bowed down to sage Dadhīci who was made happy by his wife and who was seated there.

Devas said :

15. What is it that is difficult to be obtained by us, O sage,

in this world since a sage like you, the very Kalpa tree¹ in this world, is kind to us.

16. This alone is the benefit of all living men, O excellent sage, viz., the holy plunge in the holy centres, kindness to all living beings and meeting with people like you.

17. Listen, O sage, to what is being said by us out of affection.

We have come here after defeating Daityas and killing Rākṣasas.

18. We are happy, O brahmin, and especially so since we see you here. We have no use for our weapons. Indeed, we are not capable of carrying them.

19-20. We do not see, O leading sage, a place fit enough for keeping these weapons. If they are kept in heaven, Daityas will take them away. If they are kept in nether regions they will (surely) take them away. Hence, the weapons are being placed, O bestower of honour, in your sacred hermitage.

21. There is no fear at all here, O brahmin, from Dānavas and Rākṣasas. This is a sacred place well protected at your behest. There is no one equal to you in the power of penance.

22-24. O most excellent one among the knowers of Brahman, we have conquered our enemies. Daityas have already been killed. We don't need our weapons any more. They have become burdensome since they have fulfilled their purpose. The place worthy of placing them is near you, O leader among sages. Along with our lovely maidens we shall enjoy divine pleasures in the heavenly park, Nandana. Therefore, we shall go (now) along with Indra. We have fulfilled our tasks and we shall go to our respective abodes. As for the protection of weapons, let them be guarded by you. Therefore, bid us farewell. You are capable of holding and guarding them.

Brahma said :

25-30. On hearing their words, Dadhīci said to Devas : "Let it be so", although he was prevented by his wife who said thus : "What (have we to do) with the affairs of Devas ? In

1. The divine wish-fulfilling tree obtained by the churning of the ocean (Vide Agnipurāṇa, Ch. 3).

fact, it has an adverse effect. Of what avail is indulgence in the other people's affairs to those who have understood scriptures, who abide by the supreme entity and who are free from attachment to the activities of the world. O sage, there is no happiness thereby either here or hereafter. Listen, O excellent brahmin, if the place (for keeping weapons) is given the enemies of Devas will hate us. If these weapons are lost or taken away, O great sage, Devas will become angry and turn into our enemies. Hence, O excellent one among the knowers of Vedas, this excessive affectionate attachment to other people's objects is not proper. As long as the material kept in deposit exists there is friendship, but once it is lost or taken away they will become our enemies. If one has power to give away things in charity, he should give them to the needy without any thought. If not, good people should help others by speech, thoughts and acts. But keeping things belonging to other peoples is repudiated by good people. Therefore, my dear husband, get rid of (these weapons) immediately."

Brahmā said :

31-34. On hearing these words of his beloved wife the brahmin said thus to his wife of splendid eyebrows.

Dadhici said :

Having given consent at first to Devas, O gentle lady, saying "No" to them will not give me any pleasure.

Brahmā said :

On hearing these words of her husband the beloved wife (of Dadhici) remained silent, thinking "Excepting the fate nothing else is capable of doing anything to men." At that opportune moment the excellent Devas deposited those highly shining weapons, bowed down to the great sage and went to their abodes. After depositing their weapons in a safe place Devas became contented.

When Devas had gone, the excellent sage lived in great delight while practising virtue in the company of his wife.

35. A long time elapsed. A thousand years according to the reckoning of Devas passed away. Devas neither spoke

about their weapons, O great sage, nor did they seem to think about them.

36. Dadhici said to Gabasti : "O gentle lady, Asuras are powerful, behaving inimically toward me. Devas do not appear to be desirous of taking away their weapons deposited with us. Tell me what is proper in the circumstances."

37. She said to her husband humbly : "It has already been said, dear lord. You know what is proper in this situation. The powerful Daityas, who have increased their efficiency and who are endowed with the power of penance will take away these weapons".

38. Therefore, Dadhici did thus for protecting weapons. He washed those weapons with holy water inspired with Mantras. The water absorbed the essential splendour of all the weapons and Dadhici drank this holy water.

39. Deprived of their intrinsic splendour those weapons gradually wasted away as time passed by.

Then at last Devas came and said to Dadhici : "Great danger from our enemies has befallen us.

40-41. Give back those weapons, O excellent sage, which had been kept with you by Devas."

Dadhici said : "Due to the fear of asuras and also due to the fact that you did not come for a long time, the weapons have been liquefied and drunk by me. They can be said to be stationed in my body. What is proper in this situation, you may please say".

On hearing what was mentioned by him, Devas spoke to him thus with great humility.

42. "O leading sage, give us the weapons. Can you say 'Yes' or do you refuse ? Without them we will be lost for ever. Our enemies are powerful. Where shall we go ?

43. Neither in the mortal world, nor in the nether world, nor in the heaven, O dear one, is it possible for us to stay today. You are an excellent brahmin. Moreover, you are endowed with (the power of) penance. It is not proper to say anything else in your presence."

44. The brahmin said then : "You may take the weapons assimilated in my bones. There is no doubt about this."

Devas said to him : "Of what avail is this to us ? Without the weapons the great Devas have become 'effeminate'".

45. Again, the excellent sage said : "I shall abandon the spirits animating my body (as) I am endowed with the power of Yoga. You may make weapons out of my bones (as they have merged with them). Let them be excellent ones with excellent forms."

46. "Do so", said Devas in reply to Dadhici who resembled Fire-god and who was never deficient in intrinsic power. At that time the wife of the sage was not there in the vicinity to say pleasing words to him, O great sage.

47-48. Not seeing her, but afraid of her, Devas said to the brahmin : "Do so quickly". With pleasure the sage cast off his vital spirits (ordinarily) very difficult to abandon, saying to them : "Use this body as you please. Let all Devas be pleased with my bones. What have I to do with this body ?"

Brahmā said :

49-50. Having said thus the noble-souled sage seated himself in the Padmāsana ("lotus pose"). He fixed his eyes at the tip of his nose. He was as pure as the light. By his yogic power he gradually led the vital air along with the gastric fire, to the inner portion of Daharākāśa (the ethereal portion in the cavity of the heart). He fixed his intellect in Brahman which is immeasurable, which is the highest in status and which should be meditated upon. He attained identity with Brahman.

51. On observing that his physical body had become lifeless Devas in their hurry, said to Tvaṣṭṛ, "Make a number of weapons immediately".

52-53. He said to them: "O Devas, how should it be done? This terrible body is that of a brahmin. I am afraid and incompetent to make weapons. If the bones are torn off I shall make excellent weapons from them quickly."

Thereupon, Devas said to bullocks in their great hurry:

Devas said :

54. O bullocks, to facilitate your work your faces are made adamantine in a trice by Devas for getting weapons. Tear off the body of Dadhici and give the pure bones now.

Brahmā said :

55. At the instance of Devas they did so. They licked the bones clean and gave them to Devas. Devas of brave valour and strength hurriedly went to their abodes and so did the bullocks.

56-57. After making the weapons of gods the noble Tvaṣṭṛ went away hurriedly.

Then, after some time, the wife of the sage who was of good conduct, who had been the beloved wife of her husband, who was gentle and who had a boy in the womb came there. She held in her hand a pot full of water. She was on her way back after worshipping Umā. Carrying fruits and flowers she came quickly eager to see the sacred fire, her husband and the hermitage.

58. On her way, her necklace slipped from her neck and fell on the ground. The bangle also fell down from her wrist. Her right eye throbbed. Seeing all these omens she became distressed in her mind.

59-61. "What calamity is going to befall me immediately?" She pondered thus in her mind. While she was coming home, the fall of a meteor prevented her from proceeding. She came to the hermitage in great bewilderment but did not see her husband in front. Wondering where could he have gone she asked the Fire-god. The Fire-god mentioned everything to her in detail—the advent of Devas, request for the bones of the sage, the collection of the bones and their departure. On hearing everything she became distressed. Due to agitation born of misery she fell on the ground. Slowly she was consoled by the Fire-god. She said to Fire-god:

62-63. "I am not capable of cursing the immortal beings. What shall I do ? I shall enter fire."

Brahmā said :

After checking her anger and grief for her husband the chaste lady then spoke these righteous words :

64-67. "Everything that is produced in this human world is destructible too. It should not be bewailed. Meritorious men abandon their lives in protection of cows, brahmins and Devas. Blessed are those living beings who, after obtaining an

efficient body endowed with virtue in this world that whirls like a wheel, abandon it for Devas and Brahmins. All the vital airs of every embodied being are sure to go away. There is no doubt at all in this. After realizing this, those masterminds cast them off for brahmins, cows, Devas and the distressed beings. I had dedicated myself to him. Though prevented by me he agreed to keep the weapons. Who knows the mind of the creator whose activities are beyond the comprehension of men of mortal world ?”

Brahmā said :

68-69. After saying this, she duly worshipped the sacrificial fires along with the skin and hairs of her husband. She slit open her stomach, took out her son from the womb and held him in her hand. After bowing to Gaṅgā, the Earth, plants and trees in the penance grove and medicinal herbs, she entered the hermitage (once again).

She said :

70. This boy is bereft of his father, mother and other relatives born of his family. May all the groups of living beings, the guardians of quarters and medicinal herbs protect him.

71. Those who view and protect a boy bereft of his mother and father without any distinction from their own children are certainly to be honoured and saluted even by Brahmā and others.

Brahmā said:

72-73. After saying this the lady with her mind devoutly directed towards her husband cast off her son. She placed the boy near the holy fig-trees with the sacrificial vessel (in her hand). She circumambulated the fire and entered it. She went to heaven along with her husband.

74. The trees in the hermitage and the residents of the forest who had been nurtured by the sage Dadhici like his own children, began to cry.

75. The animals, the birds and the trees, all of them said to one another. “We cannot live without him. Nor can we live without that mother”.

The trees said:

76-78. Only those men are blessed and contented who give natural and continuous affection to the children of the parents who have gone to the next world. Formerly the sage and his wife had been treating us in a manner which (our own) father and mother were not habituated to. Fie on us. We are sinners. It is certain that hereafter, to all of us, this boy is Dadhīci, this boy is the mother. This is the eternal virtue.

Brahmā said:

79. After saying thus the medicinal herbs, plants and trees approached king Soma (i.e. the Moon) and requested for excellent nectar.

80. Soma gave them excellent nectar. They gave the boy the nectar that is dear to Devas.

81. Satisfied with this, the boy grew up like the moon in the bright half of the lunar month. Since he had been brought up by the Pippalas (fruits of the fig tree), the boy was (called) Pippalāda (the eater of Pippala fruits). After growing up he said to the Pippalas thus in great wonder.

Pippalāda said:

82. Men are born of men. Birds are born of birds. Plants and creepers are produced from seeds. No inconsistency is seen. How was I with hands, feet, vital breath etc. born of you?

Brahmā said:

83-84. On hearing his words the trees told him everything in the proper order viz., the death of Dadhīci, the entry of the chaste lady into the funeral pyre, the collection of bones by Devas etc. On hearing these details the boy was overwhelmed by sorrow and he fell on the ground.

85. He was consoled by trees by words endowed with meanings. On recovering he again said to those medicinal herbs, plants and trees :

Pippalāda said :

86-87. I will kill the murderers of my father. Otherwise it is unbearable to live. A real son maintains the friends and

enemies of his father. He alone is the real son. Others are enemies in the form of sons. They say that friends of father redeem even the enemies.

Brahmā said :

88. The trees took that boy to the presence of the Moon. Those trees intimated the utterance of the boy to Soma (Moon). On hearing it, Soma spoke to Pippalāda :

Soma said :

89. Learn all the branches of knowledge in a formal way, my dear son. You will attain at my behest the power of penance, auspicious speech, heroism, handsome features, strength and intellect.

Brahmā said :

90-92. Pippalāda then said to the Moon humbly :

Pippalāda said :

I consider all these futile as long as I do not take revenge on the murderers of my father. Hence, tell me at the outset. In which land, on which occasion, by the help of which Deva or Mantra or holy centre can my ambition be realised, O excellent Deva ?

Brahmā said :

93. After meditating for a long time the Moon said: "Whether it is enjoyment of worldly pleasures or attainment of salvation, everything is attained undoubtedly from lord Maheśvara".

94. He said to the Moon again : "How will I see Maheśvara ? I am a boy with childish intelligence. I have neither skill nor power of penance."

The Moon said :

95-98. O gentle boy, go to Gautamī. Eulogize Cakrēśvara Siva. Dear boy, with a very little effort, the lord will be pleased with you, the merciful lord will be pleased. Śambhu has been realised personally by Viṣṇu the powerful lord. He granted boons to Viṣṇu and the discus honoured by the Devas. Go there, O highly intelligent one. Go to the river Gautamī in the Dañdaka forest. The medicinal herbs know that holy centre

Cakreśvara. After going there, eulogize Śaṅkara, lord of Devas, with full devotion. Delighted in his mind he will grant you all cherished desires.

Brahmā said :

99-100. At the instance of the Moon, O brahmin, the sage Pippalāda came to the place where Rudra, the lord of the universe, the bestower of Discus (was present).

Overwhelmed by a great sympathy the Pippalas (holy fig trees) took him to their penance groves. After taking his holy dip in Godāvari and after bowing down to the lord of the three worlds, the pure Pippalāda eulogized Śiva with full devotion.

Pippalāda said :

101-107. I bow down to Śambhu the primordial lord in whom bold and self-possessed persons seek refuge earnestly for their salvation. Those self-possessed persons have cast off all worldly desires. They have renounced all actions. They have controlled their minds as well as vital airs.

He is the witness unto all. He is the immanent soul in everyone. He is the lord of all. He is the repository of all arts. Let that enemy of Cupid have mercy on me after understanding everything that is within my mind.

The Ten-headed (Rāvaṇa) had conquered the lords of the quarters. He shook the Kailāsa mountain honoured by Devas. He went down beneath the nether worlds when pressed down with toe (by Śiva). His body was bruised. On hearing his piteous cries the lord laughed along with the goddess and granted him pardon. Though the lord had been furious, yet he was pleased with him. In this manner, O Maheśvara, you are (sometimes) a donor unto (even) undeserving persons. Bāna became praiseworthy after performing the noble worship, beautiful and fascinating, unto the Moon-crested lord. By performing the daily worship he surpassed Indra in prosperity.

After conquering enemies and worshipping Devas Viśākha i.e. Skanda went ahead to bow down to his father. He became angry on seeing the lord of Gaṇas (i.e. Vināyaka) held in the lap. Lord Śiva took him (also) in his lap and laughed. Though he was seated in the lap of Śiva, the boy was reluctant to leave

off the lap of his mother due to his childish innate nature. Unable to pacify his furious son Śiva assumed his half-female form.

Brahmā said :

108-109. Then the extremely delighted self-born lord spoke to Pippalāda.

Śiva said :

O Pippalāda, welfare to you. Choose any boon as you wish.

Pippalāda said :

110. My father of great renown who was never arrogant and who was truthful has been killed by Devas, O Mahādeva. So also my chaste mother.

111. O lord, after hearing in detail the death of both of them on account of Devas, I am overwhelmed by misery and anger. I am not eager to live.

112. Hence, grant me sufficient capacity to destroy Devas. In all the three worlds, you alone, O Moon-crested one, are worthy of being served by those who should not be killed.

Īśvara said :

113. O sinless one, if you are capable of looking at my third eye you will be competent to assail your foes.

Brahmā said :

114. Then he desired to look at the third eye of the lord but could not. Then he said to Śaṅkara : "I am not able".

Īśvara said :

115. O boy, do some penance so that you will be able to look at my third eye. Then you will undoubtedly attain your desire.

Brahmā said :

116-119. On hearing these words of Īśāna the son of Dadhīci of righteous soul decided to perform penance. Although he was a boy he engaged himself solely in meditation on Śiva like a powerful person, there itself for many years. Everyday he used to get up early in the morning, take his bath and bow

down to the elders and preceptors in due order. He used to sit comfortably and fix his mind in the Suṣumnā (the tubular structure inside the spinal column) without thinking of anything else. By means of crossed arms he made the sign of Svastika over his navel. He forgot the world and its affairs. He thought of superior excellence of one position over another. He meditated on the splendour of Śiva. Pippalāda looked at the third eye of the lord. With palms joined in reverence in the form of a cup he humbly spoke thus.

Pippalāda said :

120-121. Formerly, this boon had been granted to me by Śiva, the lord of Devas. The lord of Devas had said that the moment I was able to see the brilliant splendour of the third eye, whatever I wanted would happen. Hence give me that which will bring about destruction of enemies.

122-123. At that very time, a voice said: "O highly brilliant one, your mother went to heaven after saying thus : 'Men who have forgotten what is conducive to their welfare, who are engaged in harassing others and whose minds wander here and there fall into the abysmal depths of hell.'"

124. On hearing that aerial voice, Pippalāda became angry. When the fire of pride and prestige burns within, advice regarding proper conduct is meaningless.

125-127. Kṛtyā, the female deity of destruction, said to him, "Give; Give". Since the brahmin was remembering Vaḍavā thus, Kṛtyā that came out of his eyes had the shape and features of Vaḍavā. She contained within herself plenty of fire for destroying all living beings. That Kṛtyā became one with fire within, in view of the fact that he was meditating on his mother with the child in the womb. Even as she came out she was extremely terrible. She was as terrible as the tongue of Mṛtyu (Goddess of death).

128. She said to Pippalāda, "What is my duty ? Tell me that". Pippalāda said to her, "Devour Devas, my enemies."

129-130. Saying "So be it," she caught hold of Pippalāda standing in front of her. He said, "O Kṛtya, what is this?" She said, "What has been said by you is carried out by me. The body is made by Devas."

Thereupon, that frightened sage went to Śiva and eulogized that lord. Then Śiva said to Kṛtyā :

Śiva said :

131. O Kṛtyā, do not seize living beings remaining within a range of a Yojana (12 km) at my behest. Go far away from that place and do your duty.

Brahmā said :

132. That Kṛtyā which had the form of Vaḍavā stood at a distance of a Yojana to the East from the holy centre Pippala.

133-134. A big blaze of fire, capable of destroying the world, came out of her. On seeing it, Devas became afraid and approached Śiva. Eulogizing the lord, the frightened heaven-dwellers said to Śiva :

Devas said :

135. O Sambhu, protect us. The Kṛtyā and the fire born of it assail us. O lord of all, O bestower of protection from fear to the frightened persons, be our refuge.

136. O Śiva, you alone are the refuge to the creatures that are attacked from all sides, that are distressed and that are extremely wearied.

137. The Kṛtyā coming from the fire of your eye has been requested by the sage and she is desirous of destroying the three worlds. You are our protector and none else.

Brahmā said :

138-139. The lord of the universe said to them : "This Kṛtyā does not harass those who live within the range of a Yojana. Hence, you all, by day and night, remain here itself, O immortal ones. You will have nothing to fear from her."

Brahmā said :

140. Again, they said to the lord of Devas : "O lord honoured and worshipped by gods, how shall we live here after abandoning heaven granted by you ?"

Brahmā said :

141-143. On hearing the words of Devas Śiva said :

Sīva said :

Here is the Deva with eyes all round, the Deva who has faces all round, who always blows up with his rays and who is considered the father of all living beings. Let that lord Sun alone remain here directly in his visible form for ever. All others will be considered remaining here in his physical form.

Brahmā said :

144-148. At the instance of Śambhu Devas created (the Sun) from Pārijāta tree. Tvaṣṭṛ said to the Sun :

Tvaṣṭṛ said :

O lord of the universe, stay here itself. Protect these Devas yourself. We too shall stay here in the presence of Śambhu by means of our parts.

Brahmā said :

All round Cakrēvara, within a range of a Yojana, resorting to the banks of Gaṅgā the excellent Devas stood by. Each had a fourth of an Ānguli (about 2.5 cms.) of the bank of Gaṅgā. They were three crores and five hundred, O excellent sage. Who is competent to speak about or hear the prosperity of these holy centres.

Thereafter, Devas spoke to Sīva.

Devas said :

149-155. O lord of Devas identical with the Universe, quieten Pippalāda.

Brahmā said :

Saying "O yes", the lord of the universe said to Pippalāda :

Sīva said :

Even if Devas are destroyed your father will not return. His life had been given by your father for the realization of the task of Devas. Who can be so kind to the wretched and the distressed in this world ? Similarly, O dear one, your mother, a chaste lady, has gone to heaven. No one is equal to her, not even Lopāmudrā (wife of sage Agastya) and Arundhatī (wife of sage Vasiṣṭha). Much fame has been acquired by your

father due to whose bones Devas are victorious and happy for ever. An act of everlasting fame has been performed by your mother. Excellent fame spreading everywhere has been acquired by you, the son.

It behoves you to protect those who have dropped off from heaven for fear of your exploits. It behoves you to save the immortal ones who have fled because they were afraid of you. There is no meritorious deed superior to the protection accorded to the distressed.

156. A person who has gone to heaven lives in the other world without any malady for as many years as there are days when the fascinating fame prevails in human world.

157. Only those who have no fame are considered dead here. Only those who are devoid of renown are (considered) blind. Those who are not habitually liberal in gifts are eunuchs. Only those who are not invariably virtuous are to be pitied.

Brahmā said :

158. On hearing the lord of Devas the sage became calm. After bowing down to the lord he spoke with palms joined in reverence.

Pippalāda said :

159-163. I shall bow down to Śiva worthy of being worshipped by Devas and others for the welfare of these people and others too, viz. those who help me by words, thoughts and deeds and those who are engaged in actions conducive to my welfare. May lord Śiva do what these people wish, the people by whom I have been guarded and nurtured (as though) I belonged to the same family as theirs and I had the same qualities as theirs. I am bowing down to the Moon-crested lord for ever. O lord, O lord of Devas, let this holy centre be known all over the three worlds by the name of those by whom I have been brought up like my father and mother. If they attain fame I shall become free from indebtedness to them. If Devas admit that this holy centre is superior to other holy residences of Devas and all other holy centres on Earth, I shall condone the guilt of Devas for ever.

Brahmā said :

164. In the presence of the thousand-eyed lord (Indra) and others he spoke these words of fine sentiment and good syllables. Devas too agreed to the words uttered by the son of Dadhīci.

165. After appreciating the intellect, humility, learning, heroism, strength, truthfulness, filial devotion, and purity of emotions, Śaṅkara said to Pippalāda.

Śaṅkara said :

166. Dear boy, whatever cherished desire you have and whatever is pleasing to Devas you will attain. Speak out what is conducive to your welfare. Do not hesitate to speak out your mind.

Pippalāda said :

167. Those who take holy plunge in Gaṅgā and those who are virtuous, O Maheśa, and see thy lotus-like feet—let them attain their desires immediately. After their death let them attain the region of Śiva.

168. O lord, my father has attained your region. So also my mother, the Pippala and the immortal ones. After seeing the lord of lords they have attained happiness. Let them see you. Let them attain your region.

Brahmā said :

169. Saying “so be it” to Pippalāda, Maheśvara, lord of Devas spoke to him congratulating him along with Devas.

170. Devas were pleased after being freed from fear arising from him. All of them spoke this to the son of Dadhīci in the presence of Śiva.

Devas said :

171. Undoubtedly, what is liked by Devas has been performed by you. The behest of the lord of Devas, that embellishes the three worlds has been carried out by you.

172. O brahmin, what is requested for by you earlier is for others and not for yourself. Therefore, say something that you wish. We shall grant you something.

Brahmā said :

173. Devas repeated the same thing to the excellent brahmin again and again. After bowing down to Śambhu, the Pippalas and Umā, Pippalāda spoke with palms joined in reverence.

Pippalāda said :

174-179. I desire to see my parents who have always been the subjects of discussion by means of words. Blessed are those living beings in this world who are under the control of their parents, who are devoted to their service and who eagerly await their command.

After obtaining the sense-organs, the physical body, nobility of birth, capacity, intellect and the beauty of form, he, the son, shall be contented by utilising them in their service.

Seeing their own mother is easy even for animals and birds. Even that has become difficult for me. I ask you. Is it the result of my sins ?

(?) If it had been difficult of access to all (there would not have been any complaint). If it is easy of access to someone and not to others it is not proper. There is no other sinner than I.

O excellent Devas, if only I can get a glimpse of my parents I shall deem it as the fruit of my acts of thought, speech and body.

Who will be competent to count the great sins of those persons born in the world who cannot see their parents ?

Brahmā said :

180-183. On hearing those words of the sage, Devas consulted among themselves and said to him. "Surely you will see today your parents, the auspicious couple, seated in an excellent aerial chariot and eager to see you. Cast off your sorrow, covetousness and delusion, and pacify your mind". After some time, the excellent Devas said to the son of Dadhīci : "See. See your parents, the auspicious couple, are eager to see you. They are seated in an excellent aerial chariot. They have heavenly characteristics with golden ornaments. They are being

fanned by the celestial damsels. They are eulogized by the Kinnaras."

184. On seeing his parents he bowed down to them in the presence of Śiva. Their eyes were filled with tears of pleasure. Somehow he spoke to them.

The Son said :

185. Other sons who perpetuate their families redeem their parents. But I am merely the cause of splitting the belly of my mother. Even though I am like this I shall look at them due to delusion. I am a wicked person with an evil mind.

Brahmā said :

186. On looking at them he could not speak anything further out of sorrow. Devas spoke to Pippalāda and his parents.

Devas said :

187. Blessed are you, dear son, whose fame has spread in the world and has gone up to heaven. The three-eyed lord has been directly perceived by you. Devas have been consoled by you. With you as son the excellent worlds will never dwindle down.

Brahmā said :

188. At that time a shower of flowers fell on his head from heaven. The shouts of "Victory" uttered by Devas arose, O great sage.

189. After bestowing blessings on his son and after bowing down to Śambhu, Gaṅgā and Devas along with his wife Dadhīci spoke to his son.

Dadhīci said :

190. Get yourself a wife. Have devotion to Śiva and serve Gaṅgā. After procreating sons and after performing sacrifices with due gifts, dear son, you can be contented. Thereafter, proceed to heaven for a long stay there.

Brahmā said :

191-192. "I shall do thus" said Pippalāda, the son of

Dadhīci. Along with his wife, Dadhīci consoled his son again and again permitted by Devas he returned to heaven.

With great bewilderment Devas said to Pippalāda.

Devas said :

193-199. Welfare unto you. Quiet Kṛtyā and the great fire arising from her.

Brahmā said :

Pippalāda said to them : "I am incapable of warding her off. I shall never utter a lie. You can yourselves speak to Kṛtyā.

On seeing me that highly terrible Kṛtyā will do just the opposite thing".

Devas went unto her and spoke to her and the fire, pleading for their being pleased for the sake of peace. Both of them said : "No. I have been created by the brahmin for devouring everything; so also the fire born of me. How can it be otherwise ? The five great elements and everything that is mobile and immobile must be kept in our mouth. There is nothing that remains to be mentioned."

After consulting me (Brahmā) Devas said again to both of them.

"Both of you devour everything in due order."

Vaḍavā then spoke to Devas thus. O Nārada, listen to it.

Vaḍavā said :

200-202. O excellent Devas everything is worthy of being devoured by me in accordance with your wish.

Brahmā said :

That Vaḍavā became a river, O sage, and joined Gaṅgā. The immortal ones call fire arising from her the primordial fire. It was extremely terrible and they know that it is the first of elements.

Devas said :

Waters should be considered the eldest. So also you are the first. Still, devour the eldest (ocean) according to what we say. Go and devour as you please.

Brahmā said :

203-205. Fire-god said to Devas : "There is water there. How can I go ? If you alone take me up to the vast sheet of water I shall go."

They said: "O Fire-god, in what way should your movement be ?

The Fire-god said to those Devas, "If a virtuous virgin places me in a golden pot and takes me to a place where I can move about myself (it shall be proper)."

On hearing those words of his, Devas said to the virgin Sarasvatī :

Devas said :

206-209. O Sarasvati, bear this Fire-god on your head and take him to the ocean.

Brahmā said:

Sarasvatī said to Devas: "I alone am unable to hold him. If I am helped by four others I shall carry him to the ocean quickly."

On hearing the words of Sarasvatī Devas spoke to Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Narmadā and Tapatī severally.

Accompanied by them she was able to carry him. After placing the Fire-god in a golden pot and carrying it on their heads they went to the ocean.

210-212. The five rivers (including) Sarasvatī brought the fire and placed it in Prabhāsa where Somanātha, the lord of Devas, the lord of the universe, the moon-crested lord is stationed along with Devas. The great fire presides over the place drinking water slowly. Then Devas spoke to Śiva, the most excellent Deva.

Devas said:

213-217. Tell us the way of sanctifying the bones of the cows as well as the bones of us.

Brahmā said:

Śiva then said to everyone: "By plunging into Gaṅgā scrupulously Devas and cows are released from their sins. There is no doubt about this."

Thereafter, the bones taken from the body of the sage were washed. Being washed there, they attained sanctity.

The place where Devas got rid of their sins is the holy centre Pāpanāśana (Destroyer of sins). A holy dip and distribution of charitable gifts there destroy even the sin of brahmin slaughter.

The holy centre where the cows were sanctified is cited as Gotūrtha. By taking a holy dip there the highly intelligent devotee shall obtain the benefit of a cow-sacrifice.

218. The place where the bones of that brahmin became sacred, O Nārada, should be known as Pitṛtirtha. It is conducive to the increase of delight of the manes.

219-220 If the ashes, bones, nails or hairs of any living being, even if he has committed sin, were to fall into this holy centre he will stay in heaven as long as the moon, sun and stars exist. So, from the holy centre of Cakreśvara three holy centres are evolved, O Nārada. Then the sanctified cows and Devas spoke to Śambhu.

The cows and Devas said:

221-223. We shall go to our respective abodes. The sun is established here. As long as the sun stays Devas shall be established. O lord of worlds, it behoves you to permit it. The eternal sun is the immanent soul of mobile and immobile beings. The sun in the nature of a Deva has been established there by us where Gaṅgā, mother of universe, and the three-eyed Lord Śiva are established. The residence and the establishment of Devas shall be where the three-eyed lord is.

Brahmā said :

224. Taking leave of Pippalāda Devas went to their own abode. The Pippalas attained the everlasting (pleasures of) heaven after the lapse of some time.

225. The brahmin Pippalāda of great exploits established the position of trees in the overlordship of the field and worshipped Saṅkara.

226. The courageous son of Dadhīci of fierce splendour married the daughter of Gautama and begot sons. He earned wealth and fame and attained heaven along with his friends.

227. Thenceforth that holy centre is called Pippaleśvara. It is sacred and it affords the benefit of all sacrifices. The very remembrance of it destroys sins.

228. What doubt is there then (that sins will be removed)

through holy dip and charitable gifts and by the visit to the Sun. Cakrēśvara and Pippaleśa are the two names of the lord of Devas.

229-230. After knowing this along with the esoteric truth one shall achieve all cherished desires. That holy centre is called Pratiṣṭhāna because the sun is installed there and the abodes of Devas are established there. It is dear even to Devas. This narrative is very sacred. He who reads this narrative or listens to this or remembers it lives for a long time. He will be righteous and become wealthy. Remembering Śambhu at the time of death he will attain him as well.

CHAPTER FORTYONE

Nāgatirtha a Holy Centre

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known by the name of Nāgatirtha is auspicious. It bestows all cherished things. Here the lord is Nāgeśvara. Listen to the detailed description of the same.

2. In the city of Pratiṣṭhāna¹ there was a king known as Sūrasena. He was a prosperous intelligent king born of Lunar Dynasty. He was an ocean of virtue.

3. In the company of his beloved wife he made great efforts for getting a son. After a long time a serpent of very terrible features was born as his son.

4. Sūrasena, the king, nursed and brought him up. No man ever knew that the king's son was a serpent.

5. Excepting his mother and father, no one whthin or without knew (this secret). Neither the nurse nor the chief minister nor the priest knew it.

6. On seeing that terrible serpent the excellent king and his wife were acutely distressed everyday. (They thought) that having no sons is far better than having a serpent for a son.

1. (a) An ancient city near modern Allahabad, situated on the eastern side of the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā. (b) The capital of Sālivāhana on the Godāvari.

7-8. There was a special thing in this instance. The great serpent used to speak like men. That serpent said to his father, "Perform the holy rites of tonsure as well as Upanayana (sacred thread) and the study of the Vedic texts. Till he studies the Vedas a twice-born is considered equal to a Śūdra."

Brahmā said :

9. On hearing these words of his son Śūrasena was extremely distressed. He fetched a certain brahmin and got the consecratory rites duly performed. After learning the Vedas the serpent said to his father.

The serpent said :

10. Celebrate my marriage, O king. I am desirous of a woman, O excellent king. This is my opinion that your duties will not be fulfilled otherwise.

11. One should beget sons in accordance with the injunctions of the Vedas and perform all consecratory rites. There is no redemption for one who does not become a father and perform such rites.

Brahmā said :

12-13. Being surprised the father said to that son with the shape of a serpent :

Śūrasena said :

Who will give his daughter in marriage to a person whose voice frightens even brave men? Tell me my son. What shall I do?

Brahmā said :

14-16. On hearing those words of his father the clever serpent said.

The serpent said :

There are many types of marriages of kings, O king, O ruler of men. Forcible abduction, with the use of weapons, is also a type of marriage. When the marriage of the son is celebrated the father can be contented.

If you are not celebrating my marriage I shall undoubtedly die in Gaṅgā.

Brahmā said :

17. On realizing the decision of that son, the excellent king without a (human) son called his ministers for discussing the marriage and said.

Sūrasena said :

18-22. My son Nāgeśvara is the heir apparent. He is an ocean of virtue. He has good qualities. He is intelligent. He is heroic. He is invincible. He scorches the enemies. If Nāga is seated in a chariot with his bow he becomes incomparable in the whole of the earth. His marriage is to be celebrated. I am becoming old. I want to be carefree after placing the burden of my kingdom on his shoulders. My beloved son will not get rid of his childish nature till he marries. Hence all of you approve of this. All of you, engaged in what is conducive to my welfare, may kindly make efforts for the celebration of his marriage. Once my son is married I will not have any worry at all. Those who have fulfilled their worldly duties place the burden on their sons and go to forest for performing penance.

Brahmā said :

23. On hearing the words of the king the ministers humbly joined their palms in reverence. Delightedly they spoke to the king of profound brilliance :

The Ministers said :

24. Your son is superior to all in virtue. You are renowned everywhere. Therefore in the matter of your son's marriage what is there to be deliberated upon ? What is there to be worried about ?

Brahmā said :

25. When the ministers said so, the excellent king of grave features did not mention to the ministers the fact that his son was a serpent. They too did not know it (from other sources).

26-28 The king said to them again : "Who shall be the bride richly endowed with virtues ? Who will be that prosperous king, born of a great dynasty and abode of good qualities, worthy of alliance with us ? Who is that heroic king whose alliance shall be praised by all ?

On hearing those words of the king the Chief Minister of great intellect, a man of noble birth and excellent conduct who was ever engaged in what was conducive to the welfare of the king and his affairs, spoke thus. He had understood the mind of the king and he was aware of his wishes.

The Minister said :

29. O great king, there is a king named Vijaya in the Eastern land. He has countless horses, elephants and jewels.

30. That intelligent great king has eight valorous sons. Their sister Bhogavati is precisely like another Laksmi. She is a suitable wife unto your son, O king.

Brahma said :

31-34. On hearing the words of the old Minister the king replied to him :

The King said :

How can his daughter be (the wife) of this son of mine ? Tell me that.

The old Minister said :

You have been understood, O great king. I have observed what (thoughts are there) in your mind. Permit me to carry out the duties of a Surasena (i.e. one who has heroic soldiers in his army).

Brahma said :

On hearing the words of the old Minister, he honoured him with ornaments, garments and words (of praise). He then sent him with a great army.

35-41. He went to the Eastern land and met the great king. He addressed him by a variety of respectful words in accordance with the requirements of polity and strategic means. The highly intelligent (minister) made an alliance for the marriage of Bhogavati, the daughter of the great king, and Naga the intelligent son of king Surasena. The alliance was contracted through false and true utterances. He honoured the king with ornaments, garments etc. After receiving the due honour the king said then, "I shall give".

After returning from there the extremely intelligent old minister informed Śūrasena about the marriage proposal.

Afterwards when a great deal of time elapsed the highly intelligent old minister went there along with a great army. He was adorned with ornaments and garments. He went there quickly surrounded by all other ministers. The great intelligent minister, the old minister surrounded by other ministers spoke everything connected with the marriage to the great king.

The old Minister said :

42. The intelligent son of king Śūrasena, well known by the name of Nāga, the ocean of virtue, does not wish to come here.

43-44. The marriage rites of Kṣatriyas, O king, are of various types. Hence the marriage shall be through weapons and ornaments, O extremely intelligent one. Indeed Kṣatriyas and brahmins do speak the truth. So let this marriage through weapons and ornaments be permitted.

Brahmā said :

45-46. On hearing the words of the old minister the excellent king Vijaya considered the utterance of the minister and the king truthful. The king celebrated the marriage of Bhogavatī elaborately with a weapon (by proxy). Then he sent her in accordance with (the injunctions of) scriptures.

47-51. Vijaya who was much delighted entrusted his own ministers with many cows, gold coins, horses, etc. (to be given to Śūrasena). Those ministers with the old Minister at their head took her (the bride) to Pratiṣṭhāna and intimated to Śūrasena that she was his daughter-in-law. They conveyed the message of Vijaya too in so many words. They became contented after handing over to Śūrasena the different types of ornaments, maid-servants, garments and other things. King Śūrasena received with great honour those ministers of Vijaya who had arrived there along with Bhogavatī and bade farewell to them (after giving them some presents) so that Vijaya could be pleased.

52. The young maiden of excellent waistline, the youthful pretty daughter of Vijaya engaged herself in serving her father-in-law and mother-in-law everyday.

53-54. The great and extremely terrible serpent who was the husband of Bhogavati was staying in a deserted house in an isolated place. It had been rendered splendid by means of jewels. Fragrant flowers had been scattered there. The abode was (thus) pleasingly cool. That serpent used to say to his father and mother again and again (thus) :

55. "Why does not my wife, the princess, come near me at all ?" On hearing these words of her son, the mother of the serpent said :

The King's wife said :

56. O Nurse, of great beauty and fortune, go quickly and tell Bhogavati, "Your husband is a serpent". (Tell me) what she says thereupon.

Brahmā said :

57. After saying "so be it" and approaching Bhogavati she said to her in secret very humbly. She said so in a manner fit for reporting an unprecedented thing.

The Nurse said :

58-63. O extremely fortunate lady of gentle manner, I know your husband to be a deity. Nowhere should this be mentioned by you that he is a serpent and certainly not a man.

Brahmā said :

On hearing these words of that (nurse) Bhovavati said this.

Bhogavati said :

Normally the husband of a woman of the mortal world is a man of the mortal world. A husband of the divine species is obtained only by merit.

Brahmā said :

She reported these words of Bhogavati entirely to the serpent, the mother of the serpent and to the king in the due order. The king cried when she said this because he remembered the effect of Karmans. Bhogavati said to the female companion mentioned before :

Bhagavati said :

Welfare unto you. Show me my beloved husband. My (youthful) age passes in vain.

Brahmā said :

64-65. Then she pointed out that terrible serpent. Bhoga-vatī went to the bedchamber filled with fragrant flowers. On seeing her husband in secret (that is) the terrible serpent embellished with jewels, she immediately joined her palms together in reverence and spoke to her husband.

Bhogavati said :

66. Blessed am I, honoured am I whose husband is a deity.

Brahmā said :

67-68. After saying this and remaining there on the bed the lady of slender limbs made the serpent sport about through songs delightful to serpents as well as contacts with his limbs. She pleased her husband by means of fragrant flowers and beverages. Due to her favour the serpent was able to recollect, O sage. After remembering everything perpetrated by fate the serpent said to his beloved wife at night.

The serpent said :

69. Though you are the daughter of a king, O my beloved wife, how is it that you are not afraid on seeing me?

She said (in reply) "Who is competent to transgress what is laid down by fate? To women, the husband alone is the refuge."

Brahmā said :

70. Then the extremely intelligent and delighted Nāgendra said to his wife.

The serpent said :

71. I am pleased with your devotion. What is it that you desire? What shall I grant you? O lady of beautiful limbs, it is due to your favour that I have regained the ability of remembering everything.

72-74. Formerly I was a powerful serpent, a son of Śeṣa, coiled round the arm of Maheśvara. I was then cursed by the angry Pināka-bearing lord of the Devas. I was your husband, and you my wife named Bhogavati. Once Śiva was delighted at the words of Umā in secret. Therefore he laughed boisterously. O gentle lady, I too laughed in the presence of the lord. Then Śambhu became angry and cursed me thus :

Siva said :

75-78. You will be born of human womb. You will be endowed with knowledge and wisdom.

The Serpent said :

Then O gentle lady, Śambhu was pacified by you along with me. And this was said by him, O gentle lady : "You shall perform my worship in the Gautamī when you are in the form of a serpent. I shall endow you with knowledge and wisdom. Then you will be freed from the curse due to the grace of Bhogavati." It is for this reason that I have acquired this state and you too, O lady of splendid face. Now take me to Gautamī and perform the worship along with me.

79. Then I will be released from the curse. Both of us shall go to Śiva once again. Śiva alone is the ultimate resort unto all distressed persons always.

Brahmā said :

80. On hearing the words of her husband, she went to Gautamī along with her husband. After taking bath in Gautamī she performed the worship of Śiva.

81. Then the lord became delighted, O sage, and granted them the divine form. The serpent took leave of his parents and got ready to go to Śiva's world along with his wife. On coming to know of it the extremely intelligent father said.

The father said :

82. The eldest son (of a king) holds the rank of Crown Prince. You are my only son. Hence rule over the entire kingdom. Beget many sons. After I proceed to the supreme abode, go to Śiva's city.

Brahmā said :

83-86. On hearing these words of his father the king of serpents said—"So be it". Along with his wife, father, mother and sons he ruled over the vast kingdom after attaining the beauty of Cupid. When his parents went to heaven he placed his sons in his own place. Accompanied by his wife, ministers and others he went to Śiva's city.

Thenceforth that holy centre is well known as Nāgatīrtha. A holy dip and distribution of charitable gifts in the place where lord Nāgeśvara was installed by Bhogavati bestow the benefit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER FORTYTWO

Māṭṛtīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as "Māṭṛtīrtha" is conducive to all sorts of achievements of men. A creature is freed from all mental ailments merely by remembering that holy centre.

2. There was a terrible battle between Devas and Asuras. Devas were not able to conquer Dānavas in battle.

3. Then, along with Devas, I approached the Trident-armed lord standing in his abode. With my palms joined in reverence I eulogized him by reciting a number of prayers.

4-7. Devas and Asuras after mutual consultation came to an agreement that they should churn the ocean. O Maheśa, while they were churning there emerged Kālakūṭa (a virulent poison). Excepting you who else could have been competent to swallow it?

Cupid is competent to keep the three worlds under his control by means of his flowery weapons. He is worthy of being saluted by other Devas too. (Even he) met with destruction when he tried to extend his power over Hara.

O enemy of Cupid, after churning the ocean you gave to the heaven-dwellers the best thing, viz. the nectar, and yourself

consumed the poison. This adds to your glory. It is certainly a greatness of yours.

Thereupon the three-eyed primordial lord was satisfied.

Siva said :

8-10. I shall give you whatever is desired by you. May the excellent Devas speak out their needs.

Devas said :

We are in great terror of Dānavas. O bull-bannered one, come along with us. Kill our enemies. Save us, O lord, we are having a protector in you.

O Śiva, if you had not been a disinterested friend what could the miserable embodied beings have done ?

Brahmā said :

11. On being requested thus he went at the very same moment to the place where the enemies of Devas were camping. A fierce battle raged between Śaṅkara and the enemies of Devas.

12. Then the three-eyed lord became tired. Śiva (then) assumed the Tāmasa form. As he fought, drops of sweat fell from his forehead.

13. Having resorted to the Tāmasa form he killed Asuras. On seeing that form the Asuras went to the Earth from the top of Meru.

14. Killing all Daityas Hara too went to the Earth. Being, frightened, they went around here and there all over the Earth.

15. In the same manner Rudra too followed them in anger. In the same manner (as before) drops of perspiration fell down as Śambhu fought.

16. Wherever the drops of perspiration came into contact with the Earth, O sage, the Mothers with the features of Śiva were born.

17. All of them said to Maheśvara, "We shall devour Asuras". Then the lord surrounded by Devas said :

Siva said :

18. Those Rākṣasas who came from heaven to the Earth

have reached the nether worlds (now). All of you hear my speech.

19. Let the Mothers go wherever the enemies go. Now, the enemies have gone to the nether worlds. They are afraid of me. Following these enemies all of you too go to the nether worlds.

Brahmā said :

20-23. Piercing the Earth, those Mothers went to the place where Daityas and Dānavas were hiding. The Mothers killed all those terrible enemies of Devas. Through the same path they returned to Devas. Ever since the departure of Mothers and till their return, Devas had been staying on the banks of Gautamī. This holy centre is called Pratiṣṭhāna because Mothers departed therefrom and Devas were firmly established there. It is holy and conducive to victory. Wherever Mothers were born there were separate holy centres called Mātṛtirthas.

24-25. In different places there were holes leading to the nether worlds.

Devas granted boons to the Mothers: "Let them be worshipped in the world in the same manner as Śiva for ever." After saying this Devas vanished and Mothers remained there alone.

26-28. Wherever the goddesses Mothers stayed the places are known as Mātṛtirtha. They are worthy of being resorted to even by Devas. Why not then by the human beings ?

A holy dip, distribution of charitable gifts and water libation to Manes—everything has everlasting benefit in accordance with the utterance of lord Śiva.

He who listens to this narrative, reads or remembers this narrative of the holy centres of the Mothers shall become long-lived and happy.

CHAPTER FORTYTHREE

Brahmatirtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. There is another holy centre which is difficult of access even to Devas. It is known as Brahmatirtha. It bestows on men worldly pleasures and salvation.

2-3. O excellent sage, when the hosts of Devas stood by (on the banks of Gautami), when Daityas had entered the nether worlds and Mothers followed them, my fifth face having the terrible form of an ass said even as I was sitting in the midst of Devas.

4. "O Daityas why do you flee? You need not fear. I am coming quickly. I shall devour all Devas who come over here."

5. On seeing it preventing me and intending to devour in this manner all Devas became frightened and they spoke to Viṣṇu:

6. "Save us, O Viṣṇu, save us, O lord of Universe, cut off the face of this Brahmā".

The discus-bearing lord said to Devas : "I shall cut off the head with my discus.

7-8. But the moment it is cut off it will destroy the universe consisting of mobile and immobile beings. Hence, I shall tell you this secret. Let all Devas hear the entire thing.

The three-eyed lord is the proper person to cut off the head of Brahmā. He will hold it undoubtedly."

Then Śambhu was eulogized and addressed by me:

9. Sacrifice is transitory. It is incapable of according a visible benefit. It is not at all fruitful to the person who performs it. Thinking thus and deciding that one with matted hair was a sure guarantee for the gift of the fruit, people resorted to him and got realization.

10. Then the lord of Devas was pleased. For achieving the task of Devas and for rendering help to the people he spoke to Devas thus : "So be it".

11. After cutting off that fierce face of sinful nature that made hairs stand on ends, after cutting it off with his nails he said : "Where shall it be placed ?"

12-13. Then Earth spoke to Devas : "I am not capable of holding the head. I will be going down to the nether regions."

The Ocean said : "I am not capable of holding the head. I will go dry in a trice."

Then Devas said to Śiva : "This head of Brahmā must be held by you out of pity for the people."

14. "If it is not cut off the entire universe will be destroyed; if it is cut the result is the same."

After thinking thus Lord Śiva held the head of Brahmā in his hand.

15. On seeing that extraordinary and difficult task on the banks of Gautamī, Devas eulogized the lord out of love and devotion.

16. The extremely terrible head of Brahmā had been inimical to Devas. It had approached for devouring them. By the tips of his nails as sharp as a needle the crescent-crested lord plucked it off. Since there was danger in casting it off he held it in his hand out of compassion.

17. On seeing that super-divine activity, all those Devas who were standing near Brahmā eulogized the lord of Devas.

18. Thereafter that holy centre is known as Brahma-tīrtha. Even today the form of Brahmā is one with four faces. It stands there.

19-23. He who sees only the head goes to the region of Brahmā.

The place where Rudra stood and cut off the head of Brahmā is the holy centre Rudra-tīrtha.

The place where the Sun stays directly in the form of Devas is the excellent Saurya Tīrtha. It is reputed as the bestower of benefits of all sacrifices. If one takes bath and visits the Sun, one does not take birth again.

The fifth head of Brahmā that was cut off by Mahādeva was installed in the holy centre Avimukta. By doing so he had done what is conducive to the welfare of Devas.

If a brahmin-slayer visits the head in the holy centre Brahma-tīrtha and the skull of Brahmā himself installed in the holy centre Avimukta on the banks of Gautamī he becomes sanctified.

CHAPTER FORTYFOUR

Avighnatirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre Avighna has been declared to be destructive of all obstacles. In this connection I shall narrate an incident. Listen devoutly, O Nārada.

2. On the northern bank of Gautamī a divine sacrifice was held but it could not be concluded due to some obstacles.

3. Then Devas spoke to Hari and me. Thereupon, I entered in meditation, saw the cause and spoke to them :

4. "This sacrifice is not concluded on account of certain obstacles created by Vināyaka. Hence, let Devas eulogize the primordial lord Vināyaka."

5. After saying "So be it" Devas took their holy plunge in Gautamī. On the banks of the river Devas eulogized Gaṇeśvara, the primordial lord.

Devas said :

6. We seek refuge in that Vighnarāja who is worthy of worship and bowed to by Devas and even by Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā in all undertakings. He is worthy of being meditated upon.

7. There is no other deity equal to Vighnarāja in fulfilling wishes cherished in the heart. After coming to this conclusion, even the destroyer of Tripuras, Lord Śiva worshipped him at the time of slaying the Tripuras.¹

8. May that Vighneśvara, son of Ambikā, bestow upon us freedom from obstacles immediately, in this great sacrifice. If he is meditated upon, the heart wishes of all embodied beings become fulfilled.

9. It was an occasion for merriment to the goddess when a son was born the moment he was conceived. Hence, while bowing down to Vighnarāja, the contented Devas spoke of him as "Sadyojāta" ("Born in a trice").

1. Literally, 'three cities', built by Maya for the Asuras out of gold, silver and iron and in Heaven, Sky and Earth respectively; they had the power to travel anywhere; said to have started tormenting Devas and so were burnt ultimately by Lord Śiva.

10. Gaṇādhiṇīnātha was given to amusement. At one time he had been lying on the lap of his mother. Although he was prevented by his mother he forcibly concealed the moon among the matted locks of his father.

11. He sucked the milk from the breasts of his mother. Still he was not satisfied. His heart had been rendered sour due to the jealousy of his brother. "Be Lambodara (pot-bellied)." Śambhu, thus, named Vighnarāja Lambodara.

12. Surrounded by Devas Maheśa said: "Start your dance." He was delighted by Gaṇeśa by the sound of his anklets. He then crowned his son as the lord of Gaṇas.

13. This deity holds the noose of obstacles in one of his hands. With the other he holds the axe placed on the shoulder. If he is not worshipped he causes obstacles, even to his mother. Who else is equal to Vighnapati?

14. In all undertakings for acquiring virtue, wealth, love etc., he is to be worshipped at the outset. He is worshipped by Devas and Asuras everyday. I bow down at first to that lord who is worshipped at the beginning of every rite and whose worship prevents destruction.

15. Achievement of benefits is befittingly effected by extending worship and entreaties unto him. In view of this the Mouse-vehicled lord takes excessive pride due to his independent power. He is fond of his brother. I worship that deity.

16. I seek refuge in Śrīgaṇeśa who is extremely delightful and who delighted his mother by means of exquisite dances and songs as well as all kinds of desires and sportful amusements.

17. I seek refuge in Śrīgaṇeśa who is made ever more powerful by his father's grace brought about for helping Devas in their fight against Asuras, and by eulogies and Mantras and the acts of obeisance (offered by devotees).

18. At the victorious campaign against Tripuras his father did an unusual thing (i.e. instead of being worshipped by his son he had to worship his son). I bow down to Gaṇeśa who has been worshipped by his father with pleasure and who brought about freedom to his father.

Brahmā said:

19-25. Thus eulogized by Devas Vighneśa spoke to them:

Ganeśa said :

Hereafter, all sacrifices, performed by Devas shall be free from obstacle by my favour.

Brahmā said :

When the divine sacrifice was completed Ganeśa spoke to Devas :

Ganeśa said :

Those who observe holy rites and enlogize me devoutly through this hymn will never experience the misery caused by poverty.

Let all be assured that all the undertakings of those persons who take their holy plunge here and who distribute monetary gifts in devout spirit, will be successful.

Brahmā said :

Simultaneously with this utterance Devas too said: "So be it". When the sacrifice was concluded Devas went to their abode.

Thereafter that holy centre is called Avighna. It bestows cherished desires and destroys obstacles.

CHAPTER FORTYFIVE

Śeṣatirtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Śeṣatirtha grants all cherished desires. I shall describe its features which have already been stated by me.

2. The great Nāga (serpent) named Śeṣa was the lord of nether worlds. Surrounded by all Nāgas he went to Rasātala.

3. This lord of Nāgas was ousted (from Rasātala) by Rākṣasas, Daityas and Danujas who entered Rasātala. He therefore became agitated and spoke to me.

Śeṣa said :

4. Rasātala had been given by you to Rākṣasas as well as to me. They do not give me room. Hence, I am seeking refuge in you.

5. Then I said to him. "Go to Gautami, O Nāga. By eulogizing Mahādeva there you will get everything you desire.

6. There is no other holy centre in the three worlds which can accord what you desire".

Induced by my suggestion the Nāga took his holy plunge in Gaṅgā carefully. With palms joined in reverence, he eulogized the lord of Devas.

Śeṣa said :

7-9. Obeisance to the lord of three worlds, the destroyer of Dakṣa's sacrifice. Obeisance to you, the primordial Maker. Obeisance to the lord identical with the three worlds.

Obeisance to the thousand-headed one. Obeisance to the lord carrying out the duty of annihilation. Obeisance to you having the form of Kāla. Save me, O Śaṅkara, Lord of everything, save me, O lord of Moon, O lord accompanied by Umā, O omnipresent one. O lord of the universe, obeisance to you; Give me whatever I desire in my mind.

Brahmā said :

10-14. Then the delighted Maheśvara granted boons desired by the Nāga. For the destruction of enemies of Devas—Daityas, Dānavas and Rākṣasas, he gave Śeṣa a trident. Then he was advised by Śiva, "Kill the leading enemies by means of this".

Along with the other Nāgas he returned to Rasātala and killed his enemies in battle.

After killing Daityas, Dānavas and Rākṣasas with his trident he returned to the place where Lord Hara, Śeṣeśvara was present.

A crevasse appeared in the path whereby the king of Nāgas came from Rasātala to the place where the lord was present, in order to see the lord.

The holy water of Gaṅgā flowed through that crevasse. It is the bestower of great merit.

15-16. That water flowed to Gaṅgā. Beyond that is the conflu-

ence of Gaṅgā. There is a big sacrificial pit in front of the lord. At the place where the Nāga performed Homa a fire remained present always. The water became hot. It is here that we have the confluence of Gaṅgā.

17. After propitiating the lord of Devas the delighted Nāga of great fame attained what he desired from Śiva and went to Rasātala.

18. Thereafter that holy centre is called Nāgatīrtha. It is holy. It fulfils all desires. It destroys sickness and poverty.

19-20. It is conducive to longevity. It is holy and bestower of fortune. Through holy dips and distribution of gifts it yields salvation. He who listens and reads this with devotion, he who remembers this attains salvation. The place where Śiva handed over the trident to Śeṣa is the holy centre Śeṣeśvara.

There are altogether, O eminent sage, two thousand one hundred holy centres on the banks (of the river). They bestow all riches.

CHAPTER FORTYSIX

Vaḍavā and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1-2. It is the fire Vaḍavā (lit. ‘mare’; Vaḍavānala = submarine fire) that is known as Mahānala. The lord is called Mahānala and the river is called Vaḍavā.

Dear Sir, I shall describe that holy centre which dispels death, old age and other defects.

Formerly, the sages performed a sacrifice in the Naimiṣa forest.

3-4. The sages of great austerities made Mṛtyu (Death) as slaughterer.¹ When sacrifice went on with Mṛtyu as the slaughterer, no one died among the mobile and immobile beings. Excepting the sacrificial animals, O excellent sage, mortal beings attained immortality.

1. Śamitṛ is one who officiates in a sacrifice as a slaughterer of the sacrificial victim.

5. Therefore, heaven became void and the mortal world was overcrowded because they were neglected by Mṛtyu. Then Devas said to the Rākṣasas.

6. "All of you go to sacrifice. Destroy that great sacrifice of sages."

On hearing these words of Devas the Rākṣasas said to Devas :

7. "We shall destroy that sacrifice. But what is our benefit therefrom? No one engages himself in any activity anywhere on any occasion without a proper reason."

Brahmā said :

8. Devas said to Asuras : "You too will get the benefit of sacrifice (?). Hence you go to the excellent sacrifice of sages".

9. On hearing it they hurried to the place where the sacrifice was on in order to destroy it, especially at the instance of Devas.

10. On coming to know of it, the sages said to Mṛtyu : "What shall we do? At the instance of Devas the Rākṣasas have come here as the destroyers of sacrifice."

11-12. The residents of Naimiṣa forest discussed the matter with Mṛtyu. Accordingly, they abandoned their hermitage, O Nārada. They took with them only the sacred fire leaving the utensils behind for the successful conclusion of the sacrifice. They hastened to Gautamī Tirtha along with the slaughterer.

13. After taking their holy plunge there they eulogized Maheśāna for their protection. With their palms joined in reverence they eulogized the lord of Devas.

The sages said :

14-17. We seek refuge in that Someśvara who sportingly created this universe; who is the creator and dispenser of the destiny of the three worlds; who has the cosmic form and who is beyond both the existing and the non-existing.

Mṛtyu said :

I seek refuge in that Śaṅkara, the lord of Devas, who creates, protects and destroys everything merely by his will.

I shall seek refuge in Śaṅkara who has great strength and

huge body; who has big serpents as his ornaments and who is the lord assuming a huge form.

Brahmā said :

Then the lord said : "What is it that you wish?"

Mṛtyu said :

18. O lord of Devas, a terrible danger has befallen us from the Rākṣasas. Protect our sacrifice. Protect us so that our sacrifice be concluded.

Brahmā said :

19. The lord did so. The three-eyed bull-bannered lord did so. With Mṛtyu as the slaughterer the sacrifice was concluded.

20. The immortal ones slowly came there for their respective shares in Havi offering. The furious sages said to them along with Mṛtyu.

The sages said:

21. Since Rākṣasas had been sent by you for destroying our sacrifice, let the sinful Rākṣasas be your enemies.

Brahmā said :

22-23. Thenceforth the Rākṣasas became the enemies of Devas. Devas and sages crowned Vaḍavā, the Kṛtyā,¹ saying, "You be the wife of Mṛtyu." The holy water that flowed at the time of coronation became the river Vaḍavā.

24-25. The Liṅga installed by Mṛtyu is known as Mahānala. Thereafter, they know this holy centre as Vaḍavā Saṅgama.

That holy centre where the lord is Mahānala yields worldly pleasures and salvation. There are altogether a thousand holy centres on the banks on either side. They give all desired things. By remembering them sins can be washed away.

1. A demoness or evil spirit created by black magic or born of sacrifice for destructive purposes.

CHAPTER FORTYSEVEN

Ātmatīrtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Ātmatīrtha yields worldly pleasures and salvation to men. I shall describe the efficacy of that holy centre where Śiva is called Jñāneśvara.

2. There was a son of Atri known as Datta. He was a favourite of Hara. He was the beloved brother of Durvāsas. He was an expert in all sciences and learning. He went to his father, bowed to him humbly and said.

Datta said :

3-6. How can I realize the Brahman? Whom shall I ask? Where shall I go?

Brahmā said :

On having the words of his son, Atri meditated and said.

Atri said :

Dear son, go to Gautamī and eulogize Maheśvara there. When he becomes delighted you will acquire knowledge from him.

Brahmā said :

Saying "So be it" the son of Atri went to Gangā. He had purity and self-control. With his palms joined in reverence he eulogized Śaṅkara with devotion.

Datta said :

7. O overlord of Devas! As ill luck would have it, I have fallen into the well of worldly existence. I am sunk in the mire of misery by delusion. I am enveloped by the darkness of ignorance. I am not able to realize the supreme soul.

8. I am pierced by the powerful trident of sins. I am torn asunder by the razor of worries and anxieties. I am scorched by the terrible heat of five sense-organs. I am wearied. Redeem me, O Somanātha.

9. I have been bound by the fetters of poverty. I have been damned by the scorching flames of fire of sickness. I have

been attacked by the serpent of Death. I am frightened much. What shall I do, O Śambhu ?

10. I have been extremely distressed by births and deaths, thirst and hunger, Rajas and Tamas. I have been overwhelmed by old age. O lord, see the condition in which I am placed today and be merciful.

11. I have been landed in difficulty severally by lust, anger, jealousy, arrogance, vanity and other faults. I have been pierced by them. O lord, like a true leader ward off these enemies of mine.

12. This is true that somebody will dispel the misery of some fallen fellow. Except from you, O Somanātha, I do not have even a sympathetic word anywhere.

13. It is only as long as I do not utter the words "Obeisance to Śiva" that I have to suffer from these, viz., anger, fear, delusion, misery, ignorance, poverty, sickness, lust and other similar vices and even death.

14. I am not virtuous. I am not devout. I am not discreet. I am not merciful. You are a donor. Hence, O lord, worthy of being sought refuge in, place the word 'Soma' in my mind.

15. I do not earnestly beg for the overlordship of Devas, O Somanātha. I request humbly for the presence of lotus-like feet of Śrīsomanātha in the middle of my lotus-like heart.

16. Even as I have been known to you as a sinner, listen to my submission. Let me be present always where the word "Śiva" is heard.

17. O consort of Gauri, O Śaṅkara, O Somanātha, O lord of the universe, O storehouse of sympathy, O soul of all, where eulogies are offered thus, there some happy and successful person is sure to dwell.

Brahma said :

18. On hearing the eulogy of Dattātreya, Lord Hara was pleased. Bhava, the creator of the universe, said to that Yогin, "I am the bestower of boons".

Atreya said :

19. This is the boon I seek, O lord, worshipped by Devas,

viz. the knowledge of the soul, liberation, vast devotion¹ to you and the greatness of this holy centre.

Brahmā said :

20. "Let it be so", saying this Śiva vanished there itself. Thenceforth wise men know that holy centre as Ātmatīrtha. O Nārada, one shall attain salvation by taking holy dip there and by distributing monetary gifts.

CHAPTER FORTYEIGHT

Aśvattha and other Tirthas

1. There are some other holy centres, viz. Aśvattha, Pippala and Mandatīrtha in the North. Listen to their excellence.

2. Formerly, the saintly lord Agastya of the southern quarter was induced by Devas to make a request to Vindhya mountain.

3-5. Surrounded by one thousand sages he approached Vindhya mountain abounding in trees of various kinds. With enumerable peaks Vindhya was trying hard to excel in height mountain Meru and the Sun. He had risen to a great height. Sage Agastya, the strong-willed husband of Lopāmudrā, was received with great acclaim along with other brahmins. The sage praised the mountain and spoke with the accomplishment of the object of Devas in mind.

Agastya said :

6. I am going on a pilgrimage, O excellent Mountain, along with these sages, the seers of truth. I am going in the southern direction.

7. O lord of mountains, give me the way, I beg of you. Accord me a hospitable welcome. Till I return you should stay thus.

8. It should not be otherwise. "So be it", said the excellent mountain surrounded by sages. Sage Agastya went in the southern direction.

1. The printed word Bhukti (enjoyment of pleasures) does not fit in the context. Bhakti (devotion) seems to be the right word. (Ed.)

9. Slowly and slowly he went to Gautamī and got initiated for the sacrifice. Surrounded by sages he performed the sacrifice for a year.

10. There were two sinful sons of Kaiṭabha. They were Rākṣasas, the source of vexation to the virtuous. They were known in the abode of Devas as Aśvattha and Pippala.

11. Aśvattha disguised himself as the holy fig tree and Pippala assumed the form of a brahmin. Both of them were anxious to destroy the sacrifice.

12. The evil-minded Dānavas assumed the desired forms Aśvattha the form of a tree and Pippala the form of a brahmin.

13. Both of them harassed brahmins daily, O saint. Whoever touched Aśvattha was devoured by that tree.

14. Pippala, the younger Rākṣasa posed, as a chanter of Sāmans and devoured his disciples. That is why even today the chanters of Sāmans among the brahmins are devoid of compassion.

15-16. On seeing the brahmins dwindling in number the sages realized that they were being devoured by the Rākṣasa. The intelligent sages approached Śanaiścara (Saturn), son of the Sun-god, who was performing penance on the southern bank of Gautamī and observing the holy rites. They reported to him the (mischievous) activities of the two Rākṣasas.

17. The son of the Sun-god said to the sages : "I shall kill those Rākṣasas, O brahmins, when I complete my penance. With the penance (as yet) incomplete I am powerless to kill them."

18. Again, the sages said : "We shall give you the benefit of our penance".

On being told thus by the brahmins the son of Sun-god said to them, "It is done".

19. Saturn, the son of the Sun-god, approached the Rākṣasa in the form of a holy fig. Saturn was in the guise of a brahmin. As a brahmin he circumambulated the Rākṣasa.

20. As he circumambulated the Rākṣasa the sinful demon thought that he was an ordinary brahmin. He therefore ate him up by his power of Māyā.

21-23. After entering his body, Saturn looked at his in-

testines. On being looked at by Saturn the sinful Rākṣasa was reduced to ashes like a mountain struck down by thunderbolt.

After reducing Aśvattha to ashes he went to the other Rākṣasa who was equally the abode of sin and who had assumed the form of a brahmin. He approached the Rākṣasa with humility as a disciple would approach his preceptor.

24. As usual Pippala devoured Saturn, the son of Sun-god. When Saturn-entered his body he looked at the intestines in the belly of the Rākṣasa.

25-27. The moment he was looked at by Saturn the Rākṣasa was reduced to ashes. After killing both of them Saturn said : "What remains to be done now ? Let all sages tell me".

Then the sages with Agastya as their head became pleased. They granted boons to Saturn, the slow moving son of the Sun-god.

Being pleased, the powerful Saturn spoke to the brahmins :

Saturn said :

28. The tasks of the people will be accomplished when they touch the holy fig tree on my day after observing all holy rites. They will not have any trouble arising from me.

29. There is another boon : The tasks of the people will be accomplished when they take a holy plunge in the holy centre Aśvattha.

30-33. (The following Mantra is to be recited) "O holy fig tree, subdue immediately the throbbing of my eyes, the throbbing of my arms, the effects of bad dreams, vicious thoughts and suppress my enemies too."

On Saturdays men should get up early in the morning, O divine sage. They should meditate on Śiva. Repeating the above Mantra they should touch the holy fig tree. Thus the evil effects due to adverse planets will be dispelled.

Brahmā said :

Thereafter, they know this holy centre as Aśvattha and Pippala. There are other holy centres known as Saturn, Agastya, Sātriika, Yājñika and Sāmaga. Sixteen thousand and eight holy

centres originated in this manner. A holy plunge therein and distribution of holy gifts yield the benefit of all sacrifices.

CHAPTER FORTYNINE

Somatirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre Somatirtha has also been mentioned by noble men. By taking a holy plunge and by distributing charitable gifts there, the benefit of drinking Soma juice can be had.

2. Formerly, the medicinal herbs were the mothers of worlds. They are honoured by all living beings. They are also my divine mothers. They are prior to all prior ones.

3. Virtue is rooted in them. So also the study of Vedas and sacrificial rites. All the three worlds, and their mobile and immobile beings are sustained by these.

4. All the ailments are undoubtedly cured by them. Food comes from them and all lives are saved by them. These medicinal herbs are worthy of being honoured by the worlds but being free from egoism they spoke to me.

Medicinal herbs said :

5-8. O most excellent Deva, give us a king. Give us our husband.

Brahmā said :

On hearing their words the medicinal herbs were told by me: "All of you will obtain a husband, a king, who will heighten your pleasure".

On hearing the word "king" they said to me again, O sage: "Where shall we go ?"

They were told by me, "May the mothers go to Gautami. If she is satisfied you will have a king worshipped by the world."

O excellent sage, they went to the river Gautami and eulogized her.

Medicinal herbs said :

9. O Gautami, of meritorious waters, O beloved of Śambhū, if you had not come down to the Earth, could the people with miseries arising from their contact with different sins, have found it possible to live ?

10. Who knows the fate of persons on the Earth, O queen of rivers ? O mother Gaṅgā, you are the destroyer of their sins. You are easily accessible to them for ever.

11. O Gaṅgā, worthy of being honoured by the three worlds, O mother of the worlds, does anyone understand your real greatness ? Although his body is closely embraced by Gaurī, lord Śiva holds you on his head.

12. Obeisance to you, O mother, bestower of all desired objects ! Obeisance to you, O destroyer of sins, O goddess identical with Brahman ! Obeisance to you, O river, rising from the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu ! Obeisance to you, O river rising from the matted hair of Śambhu !

Brahmā said :

13-16. Even as they were eulogizing thus the goddess said: "What shall I give you ?"

Medicinal herbs said :

О mother of the universe, give us a husband, a king of excessive splendour.

Brahmā said :

Then the river Gaṅgā spoke these words to the medicinal herbs.

Gaṅgā said :

I am of the nature of Nectar, the medicinal herbs are mothers of nectarous nature. I shall give you Soma (Moon) as your husband as he has nectar within.

Brahmā said :

17-20. Devas, sages, Moon and medicinal herbs accepted that proposal. Thereafter, they went to their respective abodes. Where the great medicinal herbs obtained the king of nectar-

ous soul, the Moon, the dispeller of all distresses and sins, that holy centre is known as Somatirtha. It bestows the benefit of drinking the Soma juice. If a person takes a holy plunge there and distributes monetary (and other) gifts his deceased ancestors will attain heavenly abode.

He who listens to this daily, or reads, or remembers it devoutly obtains a long life. He shall have sons. He shall be rich.

CHAPTER FIFTY

Dhānyatirtha

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Dhānyatīrtha is the bestower of all cherished desires. It yields prosperity and welfare. It dispels all adversities.

2. After getting Moon as their husband, the medicinal herbs became joyous. They spoke these words liked by Gaṅgā and the entire world.

Medicinal herbs said :

3-5. There is a sacred legend in the Vedas which those who are conversant with the Vedas know.

He who, in the vicinity of Gaṅgā, gifts away a land full of plants, the land that is on a par with his mother, nay which is his own mother, shall attain all cherished desires.

If a man gladly and devoutly gifts away to a person in the form of Viṣṇu, Brahmā or Iśa a land full of plants, cows and medicinal herbs he will attain all cherished desires. Whatever is gifted is to be known as one of everlasting benefit.

6-7. The medicinal herbs have the Moon as their king. The Moon is the lord of the medicinal herbs. He who after knowing this gifts away medicinal herbs to a person who knows Brahman attains all cherished desires. He is honoured in the world of Brahmā.

Those very same medicinal herbs who were delighted and who had Moon as their king said again and again :

The medicinal herbs said :

8. O king, you redeem him who gifts us on Gaṅgā. You are the excellent one, O lord of herbs. The mobile and immobile beings are dependent on you.

9. The medicinal herbs conversed with king Soma: "O king you redeem him who gifts us to brahmins.

10. We are in the form of Brahman, we are in the form of vital airs. O king, you redeem him who gifts us to brahmins.

11. O king, you redeem him who successfully performs holy rites and who gifts us away always to brahmins. It is an adoration unto us.

12. Whatever is there in the world, whether mobile or immobile, is pervaded by us. O king, you redeem him who gifts us away to the brahmins.

13. O king, you redeem him who gifts away Havya or Kavya which is nectarous and which is consumed or something which is weightier.

14. O king, you redeem him who devoutly hears, remembers or reads this episode from the Vedic text."

Brahmā said :

15. That place on the banks of Gaṅgā where this episode had been told by the medicinal herbs in the company of Soma, the shining one, is called Dhānyatīrtha.

16. Thenceforth that holy centre is called (by such names as) Auṣadhyā, Saumya, Amṛta, Vedagāta and Mātṛtīrtha.

17. A holy plunge, Japa, Homa, charitable gifts, libation to the Manes and gifting of food performed there are capable of bestowing endless benefit.

18. On both banks there are altogether one thousand six hundred holy centres which dispel all sins and increase wealth.

CHAPTER FIFTYONE

Vidarbha-saṅgama and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. Vidarbha-Saṅgama (the confluence of Vidarbha and Gaṅgā) is holy. So also is Revati-Saṅgama. What happened there I shall narrate. It is what those conversant with the Purāṇas knew.

2. There was a sage known as Bharadvāja. He was superior to others in penance. His sister Revatī was ugly in form. Her voice was disgusting.

3-6. On seeing her deformed and loathsome her brother, the valorous Bharadvāja was extremely worried. He had his splendid hermitage on the southern bank of Gaṅgā where he sat pondering thus : "To whom shall I give this girl, my sister of terrible features. No one will take her, but my sister has to be given away. Oh ! no one should have a girl who is the sole cause of misery, a veritable death at every step even to a living being !"

Even as he was pondering thus, an excellent sage came there to see Bharadvāja, a regular observer of vows.

7. He was a quiet young man of sixteen years with a splendid body. He was a mine of good qualities with subdued sense-organs. He was known by the name of Kaṭha. He bowed down to Bharadvāja.

8. Bharadvāja duly honoured that brahmin Kaṭha. Standing in front of him he asked Kaṭha the purpose of his visit.

9. Kaṭha said to Bharadvāja : "I have come to you as a student seeking learning and as a person desirous of seeing you. What is proper (in this situation) may be done."

10. Bharadvāja spoke to Kaṭha : "Study whatever you desire, such as Purāṇa, Smṛtis, Vedas and the various treatises on Dharma (virtue).

11. I know everything, O highly intelligent one. Speak something sweet. Do not delay. It is only through merits that one gets a disciple who is of noble birth, who is engaged in

piety, who is devoted to the service of his preceptors, who is proud (of his heritage) and who grasps what is heard."

Kaṭha said :

12. O brahmin, teach me, your disciple. I am devoid of sins. I am eager to serve you. I am your devotee. I am of noble birth and a speaker of truth.

Brahmā said :

13. Saying "So be it", Bharadvāja imparted to him all knowledge. After acquiring knowledge, Kaṭha was delighted and he spoke to Bharadvāja:

Kaṭha said :

14. O preceptor, I would like to give you your fee. Tell me what is thought desirable by you, even if it be a very rare thing. Obeisance be to you.

15. Even after acquiring learning if there are persons who, out of delusion, do not give a suitable present to the preceptor, they fall into hell and remain there as long as the Moon and stars shine.

Bharadvāja said :

16. Duly accept this girl. Make my sister your wife; you must treat her lovingly. I ask for this as my fee.

Kaṭha said :

17. A disciple should always be like a younger brother or son to his preceptor. A preceptor should be like a father. How can then there be an alliance here ?

Bharadvāja said :

18. You make my statement true. What I command you should be offered as Dakṣiṇā by you. Remembering everything, O Kaṭha, support and maintain Revatī with your mind directed to her.

Brahmā said :

19-22. Saying "So be it" Kaṭha grasped the hand of Revatī at the instance of his preceptor after she had been duly offered.

On seeing her Kāṭha worshipped Śankara, lord of Devas there itself for the sake of Revatī's beauty as well as Śiva's favour. (As a result of that) Revatī became beautiful with all her limbs very fascinating. In beauty she became incomparable. The water of ablution performed by Ravatī flowed down and joined Gaṅgā. That turned out to be a river named after her. It is reputed as Revatī. It betows beauty and conjugal bliss.

23-26. Again with various kinds of Darbha grass he performed consecration by sprinkling water for attaining holy form and features. That water became the river Vidarbha.

By taking a holy dip in the confluence of Revatī and Gaṅgā with great faith a man is freed from all sins and he is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu.

In the same manner, O sage, if a man takes a holy bath in the confluence of Vidarbha and Gautamī, with full faith, he instantaneously attains worldly pleasures and salvation.

There are altogether a hundred holy centres on the banks of the river. They dispel all sins. They bestow all spiritual achievements.

CHAPTER FIFTYTWO

Pūrnatirtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known as Pūrnatirtha is on the northern bank of Gaṅgā. Even when a man takes bath there without being aware of it he shall attain auspicious good things.

2. Which living being can (fully) describe the greatness of the holy centre Pūrnatirtha where (both) the discus-bearing lord and the Pināka-bearing lord stay.

3-6. Formerly, in the beginning of the Kalpa there was a king, son of Āyus named Dhanvantari. He performed horse-sacrifices as well as other kinds of sacrifices. He made numerous charitable gifts. He enjoyed worldly pleasures in abundance.

After realizing the unsteadiness of worldly enjoyment he experienced highest detachment. Dhanvantari thought : "If one performs penance, Homa or Japa on the top of a mountain, or beyond the ocean or on the banks of Gaṅgā or in the temples of Śiva and Viṣṇu or particularly at any holy confluence all his holy rites will have everlasting benefit."

After coming to realize this Dhanvantari performed a great penance.

7. Dhanvantari who was richly endowed with wisdom and absence of worldly desire and who resorted to the feet of Bhimeśa (the Awe-inspiring lord) performed an elaborate penance at the place where Gaṅgā joined the ocean.

8. Formerly, a great Asura (named Tamas) had been humbled by this king. He had fled from the battle-field out of fear and concealed himself in the ocean for a thousand years.

9. When after king Dhanvantari had gone to the forest his sons had begun to rule over the kingdom and the (old) king became disinterested (in worldly affairs) Tamas came out from the ocean.

10-11. The powerful Asura Tamas came to the banks of Gaṅgā where king Dhanvantari was continuously engaged in Japa and Homa and was eagerly pursuing the knowledge of Brahman. Thinking "I shall destroy my enemy who is performing a penance" Tamas came out from ocean.

12. "I have been ruined many times by this powerful king. I shall destroy this enemy". Thinking thus Tamas came out from the ocean.

13-14. By means of Māyā (power of deception) he had assumed the form of a young maiden of excellent eyebrows and fascinating appearance. Laughing, singing and dancing she came near the king.

On seeing her exquisitely charming in all her limbs for a long time (the king had been attracted by her). She had been quietly devoted to him and faithfully serving him with good behaviour. Then out of sympathy he spoke to her thus.

The king said :

15. O good lady, who are you ? Why are you staying in

this dense forest ? Whose sight makes you appear so delighted ? Tell me who am asking you.

Brahmā said :

16-18. On hearing these words the young lady spoke to the king:

The young maiden said :

When you are here who else can be the cause of my delight ? I am the royal splendour of Indra, O king. On seeing you fully endowed with love I am extremely delighted. Hence I am moving about in front of you again and again. I am inaccessible to all who are devoid of remarkable merits.

Brahmā said :

19-20. On hearing these words the king immediately abandoned his extremely difficult penance. He meditated upon her. He was rooted in her. She became his sole refuge. Then having destroyed his great penance Tamas vanished.

21-24. In the meantime I approached him in order to grant him boons. On seeing that excellent king fallen from the height of penance as though dead and much excited. I consoled him by means of various arguments (I told him) : "Your enemy named Tamas, O king, after having caused your fall from penance is now satisfied and gone away. It does not behove you to bewail. All young women without any difference whatsoever delight as well as harass men. Why then specifically that young woman evolved out of Māyā should not ?"

Then the king freed from perplexity and bewilderment said to me with the palms joined in reverence:

The king said :

25. How will I, O Brahmā, achieve my desired object ? What shall I do ? How can I, O Brahmā, completely realise the fruit of penance ?

Brahmā said :

26-28. Then I replied to him : "Eulogize Viṣṇu the lord of Devas with all efforts. Then you will attain (spiritual) success. Indeed, he is the creator of universe. He is the pri-

mordial lord worthy of being known through the Vedas. He is the bestower of all desired objects. In the three worlds there is none else to bestow this on men".

That excellent king went to the Himālaya, the most excellent mountain. With the palms joined in reverence he devoutly eulogized Viṣṇu.

Dhanvantari said :

29-43. Be victorious, O Viṣṇu. Be victorious, O unimaginable one. Be victorious, O conquering one. Be Victorious, Acyuta (Unswerving one). Be victorious, O protector of cows, O Lord of Wealth. Be victorious, O Kṛṣṇa, O lord identical with the universe.

Be victorious, O protector of living beings, O lord. Be victorious. Victory unto the lord lying on the Serpent. Be victorious, O omnipresent one. Be victorious, O Govinda. Obeisance to the Maker of the universe.

Victory to the enjoyer (Devourer) of the universe. O lord, be victorious. Obeisance to the sustainer of the universe. Be victorious, O lord. You are the Sat (existing) and the Asat (non-existing). Be victorious, O Mādhava. (Obeisance) to the virtuous one.

Be victorious, O bestower of love. You are Kāma (Cupid). Be victorious, O Rāma, Ocean of good qualities. Be victorious, O bestower of nourishment. Be victorious, O lord of nourishment. (Obeisance) to the bestower of welfare.

Be victorious, O ruler of living beings. Be victorious, O lord of living beings. (Obeisance) to the prescriber of honour. Be victorious, O bestower of Karman. You are the Karman. Be victorious, O lord clad in yellow garment.

Be victorious, O lord of everything, you are everything, you are everything. Victory to one of auspicious form. Victory to the overlord of living beings. Be victorious. Obeisance to the knower of Vedas.

Be victorious, O bestower of birth. O (lord) stationed in creatures. O supreme soul, obeisance be to you. Be victorious, O bestower of salvation. You are salvation. Be victorious, O Keśava, the bestower of worldly pleasures.

Be victorious, O bestower of worlds, O lord of worlds. Be victorious, O destroyer of sins. Be victorious, O favourite of devotees, be victorious. Obeisance to the holder of discus.

Be victorious, O bestower of honour. You are honour. Be victorious, O (lord) bowed down to by the world. Be victorious, O bestower of virtue. You are virtue. Be victorious, O (lord) who has crossed the ocean of worldly existence.

Be victorious, O bestower of food. You are food. Be victorious, O lord of speech. Obeisance to you. Be victorious, O bestower of power. You are power. Be victorious, O bestower of boons, leading to victory.

Be victorious, O bestower of Yajñas. You are Yajña. Be victorious, O lord with eyes like the petals of a lotus. Be victorious, O bestower of charitable gifts. You are the charitable gift. Be victorious, O slayer of Kaiṭabha.

Be victorious, O bestower of fame. You are fame. Be victorious, O bestower of forms, O (lord) assuming forms. Be victorious, O bestower of happiness, O lord of happy soul. Be victorious, O sanctifier of sanctifiers.

Be victorious, O bestower of peace. You are peace. Be victorious, O lord born of Śālikara. Be victorious, O bestower of beverages. You are beverage. Victory to (the lord) having the form of blazing flame.

Be victorious, O Dwarf, O lord of wealth. Be victorious, O smoke-bannered fire. Be victorious, O lord of the form of the donor of the entire universe. Obeisance be to you.

You alone are competent for destroying the difficulties of living beings residing in the three worlds, O Śripundarikākṣa (Lotus-eyed one), O storehouse of mercy, O Viṣṇu, place your hand on my head.

Brahmā said :

44. Lord (Viṣṇu) the wielder of conch, discus and club, the bestower of plenty and all cherished desires asked him to choose any boon he pleased as he eulogized thus.

45-47. Dhanvantari became delighted in his mind due to the granting of boon by the discus-bearing lord. The king humbly told Govinda, the lord of Devas who was standing in front of him for granting the boons : "The kingdom of Devas

is desired by me. Once it is granted by you, O Viṣṇu, I shall attain contentment." Viṣṇu who was eulogized and worshipped vanished there itself. Accordingly the king gradually attained the suzerainty of Devas.

48-49. As a result of the fruition of various past Karmans the thousand-eyed lord Indra had been ousted from his post three times :

- (1) once by Nahuṣa after the killing of Vṛtra,
- (2) on the assassination of Sindhusena, and then
- (3) when he outraged the modesty of Ahalyā for some reason.

50. By remembering these different incidents the lord of Devas became grief-stricken and anxious. He spoke these words to Vācaspati :

Indra said :

51-52. For what reason, O lord of speech, am I ousted from my kingdom every now and again ? Having no glory at all is far better for men than being pulled down from exalted positions again and again. Who knows for certain the mysterious ways of Karman of living beings ? None else is competent to know the secret of all living beings.

Brahmā said :

53-54. Bṛhaspati said to Indra : "Go to Brahmā and ask him. He is the knower of past, present and future. He will tell you how this has come about, O highly intelligent one".

Both of these highly intelligent ones came near me and bowed to me. With their palms joined in reverence they spoke to me thus :

Indra and Bṛhaspati said :

55. What is that fault, O lord, whereby the noble-minded husband of Śaci is being ousted from his kingdom ? It behoves you to dispel this doubt, O lord.

Brahmā said :

56. O brahmin, then I meditated for a long time and spoke to Bṛhaspati : "It is on account of the fault of Khanḍa-

Dharma (violation of one's duties) that he has fallen off from his kingdom.

57-60. Violation of one's duty is caused variously by : (1) the defects in place, time etc.; (2) misplacing of faith or wrong utterance of Mantras; (3) non-giving of monetary gifts due to someone; (4) gifting away bad articles; (5) slighting gods and brahmans. Such violation of duties by embodied beings inevitably causes excessive mental distress and loss of status. In regard to the men of disturbed minds even if a righteous action is performed it has harmful effects. It will not be capable of bringing about the fulfilment of tasks and peace of mind. When the performance of duty is imperfect will not the result be harmful ?"

61-63. O sinless one, the earlier incident too was described to them by me, viz., that there was the son of Āyus named Dhanvantari, who was glorious and liberal-minded; how obstacle was created by (the Demon) Tamas and how it was dispelled by Viṣṇu. The incidents of the previous birth and other similar things were also described by me.

On hearing this both of them were surprised. They said to me again :

Indra and Bṛhspati said :

64-67. By what means can that fault be counteracted, O excellent one among Devas ?

Brahmā said :

After meditating once again I spoke to them : "Let the thing that dispels defects and brings about spiritual achievements, that which redeems persons from miserable existence be listened to. It is the refuge of persons of distressed minds. It brings eternal bliss unto the living ones too.

Go to Gautamī, the divine river and eulogize Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śaṅkara. In the three worlds there is no other means of purification than those two (lords) and that (river)."

O excellent sage, both of them went to Gautamī at that very time. They took their bath, visited Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śaṅkara and eulogized them joyously.

Indra said :

68-73. Obeisance to Matsya (Fish), to Kūrma (Tortoise). Obeisance, obeisance to Lord Varāha (Boar). Obeisance, obeisance to Lord Narasīṁha (Man-lion), to Vāmana (Dwarf).

Obeisance be to (the lord) in the form of a horse. O Trivikrama, obeisance be to you. Obeisance be to the lord in the form of Buddha, in the form of Rāma and Kalki.

Obeisance to you, O lord. Obeisance to Ananta (Infinite one). Obeisance to Acyuta, obeisance to Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma). Obeisance to you in the form of Varuṇa and Indra. Obeisance to you in the form of Yama.

Obeisance to the lord, to the supreme lord in the form of three worlds. You are omniscient, holding Sarasvatī in the mouth. Obeisance be to you.

You are Lakṣmīvān (Prosperous), therefore, O sinless one, you hold Lakṣmī in your chest. You are multi-armed, multi-thighed, multi-footed, multi-eared, multi-eyed and multi-headed. You are happy and after attaining you many have become happy.

O Hari, impurity, wretchedness and absence of glory trouble men, only as long as they do not seek refuge in you, the ocean of mercy.

Bṛhaspati said :

74-82. O Iśa, those desirous of liberation speak of you thus: You are the subtle supreme light in the form of the infinite. You are the Omkāra itself which is beyond Prakṛti. You are in the form of knowledge and bliss. You are all.

Even those who have no desire, O Lord, propitiate you by means of five great sacrifices.¹ Those persons who have achieved their desires enter your divine world which is beyond the ocean of worldly existence and which is your cosmic body.

They view all living beings with equality. In the six waves (i.e. the activities of six sense-organs including mind?)

1. According to Manu (3. 69-71), the five great sacrifices to be performed daily by every householder are : Brahmayajña or study/recitation of Vedic texts; Devayajña or sacrifice to the gods; Pitrīyajña or oblation made to the manes; Manuṣyayajña or honoring of guests; and Bhūtayajña or offering of food etc. to animats, birds etc.

they maintain calmness. By means of knowledge they forsake the fruits of action and by means of meditation they enter you, O Śambhu. Neither the pious duties pertaining to the castes nor the Vedas and scriptures, neither the path of meditation nor the practice of abstract contemplation (are suited to me). It is through devotion that I bow down to Lord Soma, Rudra, Śiva, Śaṅkara of quiescent mind.

Even a fool, O Śambhu, shall attain your body of the nature of liberation through devotion to your feet.

The excellent benefit acquired in jñānas, yajñas, penances, meditations and homas of great benefit, is this that one has a perpetual devotion to Someśvara.

O lord, in whom the whole universe dwells, devotion to you constitutes a series of steps to heaven and salvation that is always liked by all living beings and which is the fruit of everything seen and heard.

Wise persons do not mention the series of steps for the acquisition of the fruit in the form of attainment to your feet.

Hence, O merciful one, let me have devotion to you. I do not have the means of serving your form. In conformity with your greatness, O Iśa, have mercy on us, the sinners.

I bow down to Someśvara, the lord who is eulogized by Śrutis and Purāṇas thus : "You are both, the gross as well as the subtle. You are without beginning. You are the eternal one. You are the father and the mother. You are the existing and the non-existing."

Brahmā said :

83-88. Then the delighted Hari and Hara the lord of Devas said :

Hari and Hara said :

Let whatever you desire be chosen, any boon that may be extremely inaccessible.

Brahmā said :

Indra said to the lord of Devas : "My kingdom is every now and again lost and regained. Let that sin be subdued so that I can be stable in my kingdom and everything belonging to me

become steady. If the lords of Devas are well pleased everything will be steady for ever."

Saying "So be it" they approved of the words of Indra and they were extremely delighted. On seeing them (i.e. Indra and Brhaspati) a smile spread over their faces. Their forms were devoid of deficiencies. They stood without any support. They were free from aberrations. They were worthy of being sought refuge in by the worlds. Both of them were the bestowers of worldly pleasures and salvation.

Hari and Hara said :

89-92. This great holy centre has three presiding deities. The river Gautamī is the bestower of whatever is desired. Repeating the Mantra given below take a holy plunge in it with great respect. For the welfare of Mahendra, let Brhaspati perform purificatory ablution. Let him remember us both for the achievement of stability of riches. Here is a Mantra :

"Whatever good and meritorious deeds have been performed in this as well as in the previous birth let them attain perfection and completeness, O Godāvari, obeisance be to you."

If anyone repeats the above Mantra and takes a holy dip in Gautami his holy rite shall attain perfection due to the blessings and favour of us both. He shall be freed from the faults committed in the previous births. He shall become meritorious.

Brahmā said :

93-94. Surendra and Dhīṣaṇa (Brhaspati) said "So be it" and did accordingly with great delight. The preceptor of the heaven-dwellers performed the great ablution of Indra.

The holy river that arose therefrom was called Maṅgalā. Its confluence with Gaṅgā is holy. It is the bestower of auspiciousness.

95-100. Viṣṇu identical with the universe was eulogized by Indra and he became visible. From the lord of the universe Indra obtained an idol as extensive as the three worlds. It is well-known by his name as "Govinda". A cow as extensive as the three worlds was obtained by that wielder of thunderbolt. It was given by Viṣṇu. Therefore, Indra became Govinda (one who got a cow). The kingdom of the three worlds was obtain-

ed by Indra from Hari (Viṣṇu), O sage. Therefore it became stable due to Maheśvara, lord of Devas.

The place where Br̥haspati, the preceptor of gods, eulogized Maheśvara for the stability of kingdom of the noble-souled Devendra, became the holy centre well known as Govinda. The lord there is Siddheśvara and the Linga is worshipped by Devas. The confluence of the Maṅgalā is the holy centre Pūrnatīrtha.

101-105. Beyond that is the holy centre well known as Indratīrtha as well as the centre well known as Bārhaspatya where the lord is Siddheśvara, Viṣṇu and Govinda.

A holy bath, distribution of charitable gifts and any other activity conducive to merit performed in these holy centres must be understood to bear everlasting benefit. They are very dear to the Manes.

He who listens to the greatness of that holy centre, he who reads and he who remembers it everyday regains lost kingdoms.

There are altogether thirtyseven thousand holy centres on both the banks, O the noblest among sages. They bestow all spiritual achievements.

There is no other holy centre yielding great benefit like the Pūrnatīrtha. If any man does not resort to it his birth etc. are fruitless.

CHAPTER FIFTYTHREE

Rāmatīrtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre known as Rāmatīrtha has the power of destroying the sin of brahmin-slaughter. Merely by remembering it, one is freed from all sins.

2-7. There was a king named Daśaratha. He was a Kṣatriya born of the dynasty of Ikṣvāku. Like Indra, the destroyer of cities (of enemies), he was strong, intelligent, heroic and well known in the world. Like Bali he was ruling over the hereditary

kingdom. O highly intelligent one ! he had three queens : Kausalyā, Sumitrā and Kaikeyī. These were of noble birth, blessed and endowed with beauty and excellent features. While that king, the ruler of Ayodhyā, was reigning over the kingdom, while Vasiṣṭha the most excellent one among the knowers of Brahman was his exclusive priest, there was neither sickness nor famine, neither lack of rain nor mental worries. The brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and the Śūdras enjoyed pleasures. Men of all stages of life enjoyed bliss while that leading king, the scion of the family of Ikṣvāku, was ruling.

8. Quarrel arose between Devas and Dānavas for the kingdom. In that quarrel sometimes Devas and sometimes others gained the upper hand.

9-10. While it was going on thus, the three worlds became extremely afflicted, O Nārada. I then spoke to Daityas, Dānavas and Devas. But they did not act according to my advice. Again a great fight ensued between them.

11-14. Devas and Asuras went to Viṣṇu and Isāna identical with the universe and spoke to them. Both of them replied to Devas, Asuras, Daityas and Dānavas, "Be stronger by means of penance and fight thereafter". They said, "So be it" and they went for penance with determination. Again Devas marched against Rākṣasas in a spirit of jealousy and rivalry. A terrible battle ensued. In that battle neither Devas nor Daityas nor Dānavas came out victorious. As the fight was going on, an unembodied voice said.

Ethereal voice said :

15-18. Only they will win to whom king Daśaratha offers help and not others.

Brahmā said :

On hearing this, both of them, Devas and Dānavas went ahead for victory. Vāyu came to the king hurriedly and said.

Vāyu said :

O king, you must come to the battle between Devas and Dānavas. This is well known that victory is there where Daśaratha is. Hence you must be on the side of Devas, so that Devas should be victorious.

Brahmā said :

19. On hearing those words of Vāyu, king Daśaratha said, “O Vāyu, I shall surely come. Go back assuredly”.

20-21. When Vāyu had gone back, Daityas came to the king. They too said, “O lord, it behoves you to help us. O prosperous king Daśaratha, victory depends on you. It behoves you to help the lord of Daityas.”

22. The king said, “I have been requested for help by Vāyu before and I have promised my help to Devas. Let Daityas and Dānavas go back.”

23. The king went to heaven and did accordingly. He fought against Daityas, Dānavas and Rāksasas.

24. Even as Devas were watching, the brothers of Namuci split the carriage-axle of the chariot of king Daśaratha with sharp arrows.

25. In his hurry and flurry the king did not know that the carriage-axle had been split, but Kaikeyī of excellent eyebrows who was by the side of the king noticed it, O Narada.

26-28. This was not intimated to the king by her. After seeing the axle broken, the woman of holy rites put her own hand in the wheel like the axle, O the noblest among sages. It was something very wonderful. Daśaratha, the most excellent among chariot-warriors, conquered Daityas and Danujas through his chariot in which she had placed her hand. He obtained many boons from Devas. Permitted by Devas he returned to Ayodhyā.

29. But in the middle of the way he saw his beloved wife. On seeing what Kaikeyī had done he became surprised much.

30. Then he granted her three boons, O Nārada. After acknowledging what was said by the king Kaikeyī spoke thus :

Kaikeyī said :

31-37. O great king, let these boons granted by you remain with you.

Brahmā said :

The great king gave the queen various ornaments. Accompanied by his beloved queen the victorious king went to his city happily in the chariot. When a proper occasion comes what is it that cannot be given to one's beloved.

Once king Daśaratha was wandering at night in a forest, surrounded by professional hunters. He stopped the flow of a river by discharging arrows. Although he knew that a king should be free from seven vices,¹ he did so under the urging of adverse fate. The king of great powerful arms entered a pit and killed the animals that came there for drinking water by means of his sharp arrows. Listen to the perversity of time.

When the king entered the pit an old man and his wife were speaking to their son. There was an old man on that excellent mountain. He had a son Śravaṇa by name. The Brahmin could neither hear nor see. His wife was also like that. They spoke to their son.

The parents said :

38-40. We are thirsty and the night is dark. Dear son, you, a (mere) child, constitute the entire life of us, old people.

Fie upon the life of blind and deaf old men ! Dear son, fie, fie upon the life of persons whose bodies are shattered due to old age !

Men should live only as long as they have wealth and strong body, as long as they can command without being thwarted. Otherwise, they should die in holy centres or similar places.

Brahma said :

41. On hearing these words of the old people the son who was fond of his parents spoke thus, dispelling their misery with his sweet words:

The son said :

42-43. While I am alive why should you have such misery as this? Of what avail is a son who does not remove the mental agony of his parents through his own excellent conduct ? He

1. Manu (7. 45-48) has given two lists of *vyaṣanas* : (1) those arising from lust and (2) those arising from anger. Under the first he enumerates the following *ten*: hunting, playing the game of dice, sleeping during the day, calumny, promiscuous intercourse, intoxication, singing, dancing, music and idle rambling. Under the second the following *eight* are enumerated: deceit or crookedness of temper, rashness, seeking of other's discomfiture, envy, fault-finding, robbing of other's money or non-payment of just debts, use of abusive language, and inflicting of harsh punishment.

who acts to the contrary brings about grief and affliction to the whole family.

Brahmā said :

44-48. After saying this and pacifying his old parents the noble son bowed to them and placed them on the branch of a tree. The son of the sage took water-pot in hand and started. The sage did not know the king nor did the king perceive the sage. Both of them were in hurry. The brahmin entered the water and began to fill water in his pot bent downwards. The king took him to be an elephant and hit him with sharp arrows. Even a wild elephant should not be killed by kings. Although the king knew this he hit the brahmin thus. What is it that a person deceived by fate does not do? Struck at a vulnerable spot the miserable brahmin spoke these words:

The brahmin said :

49. By whom was this mean act committed causing misery to a good brahmin like me? O my father, I am not guilty of anything whatever.

Brahmā said :

50. On hearing these words of the distressed sage the king was stunned. Without any enthusiasm he went to that place slowly.

51-52. On seeing that excellent brahmin who appeared to be shining with his splendour he too became unconscious as though pierced by thorns. After steadyng himself by his own efforts the king spoke thus:

The king said :

53-54. O the noblest among sages, who are you? Why did you come here? Say this to me who have committed a sin. Tell me the means of expiation.

O extremely intelligent one, the slayer of a brahmin should never be touched, should never be seen, not only by persons of higher caste but by Cāṇḍālas too.

Brahmā said :

55-60. On hearing the words of the king, the son of the sage spoke thus.

The son of the sage said :

My vital airs are about to come out. Hence, I shall say something in brief. Know that your Karmans are bearing fruit after realising your own wanton action.

I do not bewail for my own sake. My parents are very old. Who will assist them? They had me as their only son and they are blind.

Without me how will they live in this great forest? What an unfortunate fellow am I ! There has come a break in my service to my parents.

O fate, what has been done by you by depriving me of my life !

Still, O king, take the pot with you and go there quickly. Give them water to drink lest they should die.

Brahmā said :

61-65. Even as he was saying this his life became extinct. The king threw down his bow and arrows. Taking up the water pot he hastened to the place in that great forest where the old people were staying. At that very time the old couple were talking to each other thus :

The old people said :

(Our son) is grief-stricken or angry. Or he is devoured by some animal. How is it that he has not come back ? He is our only support. What shall we do without him? What will become of us ?

There is no other son like him in this world consisting of mobile and immobile beings. Even when censured he does not disobey us.

Indeed our life is harder than adamant. We do not see him. Our life is entirely in his power. Still our vital airs do not come out quickly.

Brahmā said :

66. The old couple were talking together in that forest in this way. Meanwhile Daśaratha came to the place slowly.

67-71. On hearing the footsteps they thought their son had come.

The old couple said :

O dear son, why have you come after so much delay? You are our eyes. You are our ultimate resort. Why don't you speak, dear son? Are you angry with us, the blind old couple?

Brahmā said :

Grief-stricken as though he had been pierced with thorns, bewailing his own evil action, that great king spoke to them, O Nārada as though he was afraid : "Please drink the water".

On hearing the words of the king (they said) : "This speaker is not our son. Who, are you ? Say that first. We shall drink the water afterwards". Then the king said to them.

The king said :

72-75. Your son is there where there is an expanse of water.

Brahmā said :

On hearing that the distressed couple said : "Tell us the truth and not otherwise."

Thereafter, the king related everything precisely as it had happened.

On hearing this the old people fell down (and cried) : "Take us there. Do not touch us. The sin of touching a brahmin-slayer never perishes.

The excellent king took the old man along with his wife to the place where the son had fallen dead. Touching the dead body of their son they lamented.

The old couple said :

76. Just as our death has been brought about through separation from our son, so also, O sinner, you will meet with your death on account of separation from your son.

Brahmā said :

77-79. Even as they prattled thus, O brahmin, their life became extinct. Then the king cremated the old couple and the son of the sage together.

Thereafter the dejected king went to the city, O sage. He mentioned everything without any omission to Vasiṣṭha.

Indeed Vasiṣṭha was the ultimate resort to the kings of Solar Dynasty. After consulting excellent brahmins Vasiṣṭha mentioned to him the mode of atonement.

Vasiṣṭha said :

80-83. Call together Gālava, Vāmadeva, Jābāli, Kaśyapa and other (experts too) and perform a horse sacrifice with many monetary gifts.

Brahmā said :

King Daśaratha performed many horse sacrifices through brahmins. In the meantime, an unembodied voice said :

The Ethereal Voice said :

“Indeed, the body of king Daśaratha has become pure. He will become worthy of being communicated with. Sons also will be born to him. By the virtues of his eldest son the king will become free from sins.

Brahmā said :

84-88. Then, after a lapse of time through the help of sage Rṣyaśringa sons were born to him. They were comparable to Devas. They were born for the achievement of the object of Devas.

Rāma was born of Kausalyā. Lakṣmaṇa and Śatrughna of Sumitrā and the most intelligent Bharata was born of Kaikeyī.

All of them were intelligent, loved by the king and obedient to the king.

Sage Viśvāmitra came to that king, O highly intelligent one. He begged for Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa for protecting Yajñas. The sage had already known their greatness.

The old king who had obtained the sons after a long time said “No” to him.

The king said :

89-90. Somehow in my old age, due to my good luck, my sons are born, O sage. They yield much pleasure to me. I shall

willingly give up this kingdom along with my body, but not these sons.

Brahmā said :

91-96. Then king Daśaratha was advised by Vasiṣṭha.

Vasiṣṭha said :

Descendants of Raghu have never been taught to deny requests.

Brahmā said :

With great difficulty the king said to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.

The king said :

Both of you protect the sacrifices of Viśvāmitra, the brahmical sage.

Brahmā said :

Saying thus to his sons and heaving hot sighs with withered lips the king who wanted to do what is laid down in scriptures handed over the sons to Viśvāmitra.

Saying "So be it" and bowing down to Daśaratha again and again they went along with Viśvāmitra for protecting his sacrifices.

97-100. Then the delighted sage taught them various arts and science such as the Vidyā of Maheśvara along with the science of archery, the arts pertaining to the use of śastras and astras (ordinary and miraculous weapons), the secular arts pertaining to the use of chariots, elephants, and horses, the arts of wielding clubs, and the discharge of weapons and their recall through Mantras.

After attaining Vidyās, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa killed Tāṭakā in the forest for the welfare of forest-dwellers.

By the touch of their feet they made Ahalyā rid of her curse. They killed Rākṣasas, who had come for destroying sacrifices.

101-108. Both of them who had acquired all learnings protected sacrifices with bows in their hands.

After the sacrifice had been concluded the great sage Viśvāmitra went to visit Janaka along with Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.

Prince Rāma demonstrated his wonderful skill in archery as approved by his preceptor, in the midst of kings.

Pleased with that Janaka gave Sītā who was not born of any womb and who was Lakṣmī herself.

The prosperous king Daśaratha who used to abide by the advice of Vasiṣṭha and others celebrated the marriages of Śatruघna, Bharata and others, O sage.

Then a long time passed. With the permission of his subjects and preceptor, the king decided to give kingdom to Rāma. Kaikeyī became agitated by jealousy and rivalry on being urged by bad luck in the form of Mantharā. She created obstacles by requesting for the kingdom on behalf of Bharata and for (Rāma's) exile to the forest. The king did not grant this. In order to make his father truthful in his statements Rāma entered the great forest along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa.

109-111. By his good qualities he had already won the hearts of good people. When Rāma who had no desire for the kingdom set out with the intention of residing in the forest, along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, the distressed king Daśaratha was overwhelmed by sorrow. He remembered Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā of many good qualities. Recollecting them Daśaratha gave up his life.

112-115. O highly intelligent one, when that king was in the world of mobile and immobile beings he had committed certain evil actions. As a result of the same he was led by the followers of Yama. There are many terrible awful hells, such as Tamisra and others in the abode of Yama. The king was then thrown into several hells one by one. He was cooked out, powdered and pounded. He was dried up, bitten and again and again burnt, O highly intelligent one. In these and other terrible hells the king was tortured.

116. Traversing his forest path Rāma came to Citrakūṭa. Three years elapsed there itself, O highly intelligent one.

117. Again he went in the southern direction to the Daṇḍaka forest. It is well known in the three worlds. Among all the countries that place is the most meritorious.

118-119. He entered that terrible forest frequented by Daityas. It had been abandoned by the sages because they were

afraid of Daityas. By killing Daityas and Rākṣasas he rendered service to the sages and roamed about in the Dāṇḍaka forest. In this connection I shall narrate an incident. Listen attentively, O Nārada !

120-129. Rāma was slowly proceeding ahead (in the forest). King Daśaratha was in the hell. When Rāma reached within five Yojanas of Gautamī Yama said to his servants :

"Rāma, son of Daśaratha, is advancing towards Gautamī. Now pull out of hell the king, the father of that intelligent Prince. Rāma's father should not be tortured in hell as long as he (Rāma) is within five Yojanas after crossing Gautamī.

If the messengers do not carry out these holy words of mine all of you will be sinking in the terrible hell.

Good men say that Gautamī is the great Śakti who is inseparably connected with Śiva. She is in the form of water. She is worthy of being honoured by Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Maheśa and should be saluted. The sin caused by transgressing her cannot be got rid of by anyone. If the son of any sinner were to think of Gaṅgā that sinner is set free from many an impassable hell and attains salvation. Then when the son is stationed near Gautamī, how can the father be tortured in hell by anyone ?

On hearing the words of the Lord of Southern Quarter, the servants of Yama took away from hell the king of Ayodhyā who was being cooked there. They spoke these words to him.

The Servants of Yama said :

130. Blessed are you, O great king, whose son is such a one as this. By whom is a good son who is a place of rest as it were both here and hereafter, obtained ?

Brahmā said :

131-136. After taking rest, the king spoke these words slowly to the servants :

The King said :

I was being cooked again and again in the awful hells. How was it that I have been dragged out of it so quickly ? It behoves you to mention it to me.

Brahmā said :

A certain (messenger) of calm mind from among them said this to the king :

The Messenger of Yama said :

This is a secret of the Vedas, scriptures, Purāṇas etc. kept with great effort. It is being revealed to you. It is the efficacy of the holy centre as well as your son. Rāma, your glorious son, has come to the banks of Gautamī. Hence, O excellent one among men, you have been pulled out from the terrible hell.

If Rāma along with Lakṣmaṇa were to remember you after taking bath in Gautamī, O excellent king, and if he offers balls of rice etc. you will be relieved of all sins and you will go to heaven.

The King said :

137. I shall go there and say to my sons what your excellencies have stated. You alone can be my refuge. It behoves you to accord me permission.

Brahmā said :

138. On hearing the words of the king, the servants of Yama gave him permission out of pity. The king went to his sons.

139-142. The body (that he had at that time) for undergoing torture was awful. He was frequently heaving sighs. Surveying himself and remembering the sinful deeds committed by him he became ashamed. He reached Gaṅgā after wandering about as he pleased.

After reaching the banks of Gautamī, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa along with Jānakī duly took their bath.

On that day, the residents had nothing to eat on the banks of Gautamī.

On seeing it Rāma's brother Lakṣmaṇa became sad and he spoke to Rāma.

Lakṣmaṇa said :

143-146. We are the sons of Daśaratha. Your power is great. But we have no food to eat. The residents on the banks of Gaṅgā too have no food to eat.

Rāma said :

Dear brother, the Karman committed by us cannot be otherwise. When the world is full of food we are desirous of food.

O son of Sumitrā, we have not fed a brahmin.

O Lakṣmaṇa, those persons who, out of contempt, do not propitiate and worship Brahmins remain hungry for ever.

After taking bath and worshipping Devas sacrificial fire has to be lit and sacrifice should be performed. Then the lord will provide us with food at its own time.

Brahmā said :

147-152. While the brothers were talking together thus and observing the way of Karman king Daśaratha came to that place slowly.

Immediately after seeing him Lakṣmaṇa drew his bow in anger and said, "Stop Stop. Are you a Rākṣasa or a Dānava."

On seeing him coming nearer still he said "Go. Go away. The virtuous king Rāma, son of Daśaratha, is staying here. He is devoted to his preceptor. He is truthful. He renders service to Devas and brahmins. He is capable of protecting the three worlds.

Persons like you who commit sins have no entry into the place where Rāma stays. If, O sinner, you were to enter you will be killed."

On hearing these words of his son (the king) again and again meditated upon the result of evil action. With palms joined in reverence he gently called his daughter-in-law and sons and said with his face bent down.

The King said :

153-154. I am king Daśaratha, dear sons. Listen to my words. I have become distressed because I have been surrounded by three sins of brahmin slaughter. See my body split and cooked in hells.

Brahmā said :

Then with palms joined in reverence Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa made obeisance to him. They prostrated before him on the ground and said :

Sītā, Rāma and Laksmana said :

155-164. Dear father, O excellent king, of what action is this the result ?

Brahmā said :

He mentioned the three deaths of brahmins as they had happened.

The King said :

Dear sons, there is no atonement for the slayers of brahmins anywhere.

Brahmā said :

Overwhelmed by great sorrow they fell down on the ground. Remembering all these things such as the king, their exile, mother, father, the onset of sorrow, the course of fate, the fall into hell and similar things the prince fell unconscious. On seeing the king unconscious Sītā said :

Sītā said :

Noble persons like you do not bewail at the onset of sorrow. They think of remedies, supernatural or human. An adversity is never averted by persons who lament even in a thousand Yugas. Wise and far-sighted persons never become perplexed. Why then, O ruler of men, do you feel sad in vain ? Give (unto me) the sin of that slaughter, the terrible one, that occurred first. I shall duly perform the expiation for the sin resulting from the death of that brahmin who was sinless, who was the master of Vedas and Vedāngas, who was a doer of meritorious deeds and who was devoted to his father. I shall perform expiation in accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures. Both of you do not grieve over it. Let Laksmana take up the second sin and you the remaining one.

Brahmā said :

165. These righteous words were uttered with firmness by Sītā. Both of them said 'So be it'. Then Daśaratha spoke :

Daśaratha said :

166. You are the daughter of Janaka, the knower of Brahma-

man. You are not born of any (mortal) womb. You are the wife of Rāma. There is no wonder that you speak befittingly ?

167-169. But you need not undergo the least of strains. By the holy dip, distribution of charitable gifts and offerings of Piṇḍas on Gautami I will be freed from the three sins of brahmin slaughter and I will go to heaven. What is befitting to your family has been uttered, O daughter of Janaka. Ladies of noble family take one across the sea of worldly existence. What is it that is difficult of access if Godāvarī favours.

Brahmā said :

170. Saying "So be it", preparations were made for the offering of Piṇḍas. But the slayer of enemies did not see any eatable thing to be offered as Piṇḍa. Then he spoke to Lakṣmaṇa.

171. Lakṣmaṇa said politely, "Here are Ingudi fruits" and in a moment oil cakes of Ingudi were brought.

172. Rāma sadly hesitated to decide on the offerings of Piṇḍa to his father at Gaṅgā through the oil cakes.

173-175. A divine voice was heard there saying, "O prince, get rid of your sadness. Why ? You are banished from the kingdom. You have come to the forest. You are penniless. You are devoted to virtue and you are not wicked. Hence it does not behove you to bewail.

He who is conceited on account of his wealth and performs religious rites on that basis, is a sinner.

Listen attentively, O Rāma, to what all the scriptures say.

O king, the deities should be propitiated by the same food as the devotee takes."

176-181. When the Piṇḍa was placed on the ground he did not see his father. Where the dead body fell there is the excellent holy centre Śavatīrtha. Even its remembering dispels deadly sins.

The following came there : Guardians of quarters, Rudras, Ādityas, and Aśvins. They were seated in their respective aerial chariots. In their midst their father shone like the sun. He had excessive lustre. He was seated on an excellent aerial chariot. He was being eulogized by Kinnaras. But Rāma did

not see his father. Looking at Devas in their chariots Rāma said with palms joined in reverence, "Where is my father?"

Then a divine voice was heard addressing Rāma and Sītā.

"King Daśaratha is rid of three sins of brahmin slaughter. See him, O dear one, standing alone with Devas."

Devas also said to him :

Devas said :

182-185. You are blessed. You can rest contented. O Rāma, your father has gone to heaven.

Blessed is he who redeems his ancestors from hells. By that blessed one the three worlds are to be decked. See him, O mighty one, he is freed from sins. He has the lustre of the Sun. Even if he is endowed with all riches, a sinner can be compared to a burnt tree. Even a penniless fellow is looked at like the crescent-crested lord if he is meritorious.

Brahmā said :

On seeing his son the king showered blessings on him and said :

The king said :

186. O sinless one, welfare unto you. You can rest contented. I have been redeemed by you. In this world, blessed is that son who is the redeemer of his ancestors.

Brahmā said :

187. Devas said to Rāma, the most excellent among men : "Go, dear, go away happily for achieving the object of Devas".

Then, on hearing their words Rāma said to Devas.

Rāma said :

188-190. O Devas, what duty still remains to be performed by me for my elderly father ?

Devas said :

There is no river equal to Gaṅgā. There is no son equal to you. There is no lord on par with Śiva. There is no Mantra equal to Praṇava.

O Rāma, the tasks for the sake of your elders have been performed by you. O bestower of honour, all your ancestors

have been redeemed by you. All go to their respective places. You too go away happily.

Brahmā said :

191-194. At those words of Devas Rāma, the elder brother of Lakṣmaṇa, became delighted along with Sītā. He was surprised on noticing the greatness of Gaṅgā. He said these words :

Rāma said :

Ah ! the power of Gaṅgā cannot be compared to anything in the three worlds. We are blessed because Gaṅgā, the sanctifier of the three worlds, has been seen by us.

Brahmā said :

With great pleasure Rāma installed Maheśvara. He worshipped Iśāna with the sixteen articles of worship with great devotion. Iśvara had thirtysix Kalās (digits) and requisite coverings. With palms joined in reverence. Rāma eulogized Saṅkara.

Rāma said :

195-206. I bow to Śambhu, the ancient Puruṣa. I bow to the omniscient lord of vast expense. I bow to lord Rudra, that lord of never-ending capacity. I bow to Śarva. I bow with my head.

I bow down to that unchanging great lord. I bow to the consort of Umā, the preceptor of the worlds. I bow to that destroyer of poverty. I bow to that dispeller of sickness.

I bow to the lord of welfare, of unimaginable form. I bow to the lord in the form of the seed causing creation. I bow to that lord who is the cause of sustenance of this universe. I bow to the lord of destruction.

I bow to that unchanging lord fond of Gaurī. I bow to that eternal lord identical with the destructible and indestructible. I bow to the lord in the form of knowledge whose existence is incomprehensible and whose capacity is immeasurable. I bow to that three-eyed lord with my head.

I bow to the lord merciful to the living. I bow to the lord always terrifying. I bow to the donor of desired things. I bow to the lord of Soma, to the lord of Umā at the outset.

I bow to the lord with three Vedas for his eyes. I bow to that lord devoid of three forms. I bow to the meritorious lord beyond existing and non-existing. I bow to the destroyer of sins.

I bow to that lord engaged in the welfare of the universe. I bow to the lord who assumes many forms, who is the protector of universe; and who is the creator of Sat and Asat. I bow to the lord of universe.

I bow to the lord of sacrifices who bestows Havya and Kavya offerings. I bow to that lord who gives everything when propitiated, who is auspicious unto the worlds and who is the (ultimate) goal. I bow to my beloved deity who is fond of charitable gifts.

I bow to the lord of Soma who is not independent (i.e. bestower of fruits based on one's actions). I bow to that consort of Umā. I bow to that lord of victory. I bow to the lord of Vighneśvara and Nandi. I bow my head to that lord who is fond of his sons.

I bow to the lord who destroys sorrow and misery of worldly existence. I bow to the bearer of Moon. I bow to the supporter of Gangā. I bow to Iśa worthy of being worshipped. I bow to the husband of Umā, the excellent one among Devas.

I bow to the lord whose pair of feet are worshipped by Devas and Asuras as well as by Brahmā, the primordial deity, Viṣṇu, Indra and others. I bow to the lord who wished for three eyes in order to see the eye-music of the face of the goddess (?)

I bow to Soma who is worshipped with the articles of worship, viz., mixture of milk, sugar candy, ghee, curds and honey, fragrant incense, lamps, flowers of various colours and different kinds of cooked food.

Brahmā said :

207. Then the lord said to Rāma accompanied by Lakṣmana, "Welfare unto you. Choose the boons". Rāma said to the Bull-bannered lord.

Rāma said :

208. O Śaṅkara, let the undertakings of those persons come to a fruitful end, who devoutly propitiate you by means of this prayer, O excellent one among Devas.

209. Let those Manes, O Śambhu, who are fallen into the ocean of hell be sanctified by the offerings of Piṇḍas and let them go to heaven.

210. Whatever sin one has committed ever since the birth, by thoughts, words and deeds let it be immediately destroyed merely by taking bath here.

211. If, O Śambhu, anyone devoutly gives even a minute particle to the suppliants here, let that be of everlasting benefit to the donors.

Brahmā said :

212-213. The delighted Śaṅkara said to Rāma : “Let it be so”. When the lord, the most excellent one among Devas, had gone, Rāma too, accompanied by his followers, slowly went to that place where Gautamī rose from. Thenceforth that holy centre is called Rāmatīrtha.

214. The place where the arrow fell down from the hand of merciful Lakṣmaṇa became the holy centre “Bāṇatīrtha”. It dispels all adversities.

215-217. The place where the holy bath and the worship of Śaṅkara was performed by Lakṣmaṇa, became Lakṣmaṇatīrtha. So also is the case of Sītātīrtha. It is capable of dispelling sins of different types entirely.

Where Gaṅgā the sanctifier of three worlds, had a contact with the feet of Viṣṇu (i.e. Rāma) and where Rāma took bath that is the holy centre Rāmatīrtha. How can its special excellence be described ? There is no holy centre anywhere equal to that Rāmatīrtha.

CHAPTER FIFTYFOUR

Putratīrtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well-known as Putratīrtha is said to be a meritorious Tīrtha. Even by hearing its greatness one attains cherished desires.

2-3. I shall describe its qualities. Listen attentively, O Nārada. The sons of Diti¹ (Daityas) and the sons of Danu¹ (Dānavas) became week and exhausted. The sons of Aditi¹ became superior to them in every respect. Then Diti became overwhelmed by a spirit of rivalry on account of her misery due to separation from her sons. She approached Danu.

Diti said :

4-5. O gentle lady, our sons have become powerless. What shall we do ? In the world Karman is extremely powerful. See the progeny of Aditi. They are unafflicted. They are excellent. They have a good kingdom with fame and splendour of victory. They have vanquished all enemies. Their renown and virtue are increasing. They are capable of destroying my mental peace and delight. This inequality is in spite of the fact that the same person is our husband, the family is the same and the general features and duties are the same.

6. I will not survive this. I have become shattered on seeing the splendour and glory of the children of Aditi. I am dejected and am experiencing a peculiarly miserable condition on seeing the excessive prosperity of Aditi. Even if we enter the forest fire it is certainly conducive to happiness. The prosperity and glory of a rival should not be seen even in dream.

Brahmā said :

7. Even as the charming lady was saying thus with deep sighs and sad face the son of Parameṣṭhin who had been honoured and whose weariness had gone, said to her after consoling her.

Parameṣṭhin's son said :

8-12. O gentle lady, do not be grief-stricken; what is desired is achieved only by merit. Kaśyapa of noble features knows the means of achieving it. He will tell you, O chaste lady, should you be humble in every respect.

1. According to Mahābhārata, Ādiparvan, Diti, Danu and Aditi were daughters of Dakṣa Prajāpati and were married to Kaśyapa, grandson of Brahmā and son of Marici.

Brahmā said :

Danu said to Diti as she was saying thus, O Nārada.

Danu said :

O gentle lady, satisfy your husband Kaśyapa by your good qualities. If your husband is pleased you will attain your cherished desires.

Brahmā said :

Saying "So be it" she satisfied Kaśyapa in every respect. The holy lord Kaśyapa, the Patriarch, said to Diti.

Kaśyapa said :

13-15. O Diti of good holy rites, what shall I give you ? What is it that you desire ? Choose it.

Brahmā said :

Diti said to her husband that she wished for a son endowed with good qualities, who would be the conqueror of the universe and who would be bowed to by all. She said thus humbly : "O father of Devas, I choose this gift that I shall become a lady with a valiant son in this world through the child that is born.

Kaśyapa said :

16. I shall impart to you a holy rite lasting for twelve years. It will yield good fruits. After the holy rite is concluded, I shall impregnate you, as you desire. Ambitions are realized only when one is free from sins.

Brahmā said :

17-19. On the suggestion of her husband the delighted Diti of wide eyes bowed to him and performed the holy rite imparted by him adhering to the instructions laid down by her husband.

How can living beings who shun visits to the holy centres, who are averse to distribution of charitable gifts to deserving persons and observances of holy rites realize their ambitious desires ?

After the holy rite had been duly performed Kaśyapa impregnated Diti. Again, he spoke to Diti, his beloved wife, in secret.

Kaśyapa said :

20-21. Since even the sages adhering to their penance do not attain what they desire if they disregard the ancillary rites as laid down (in the scriptures), O lady of pure smiles, what is censured should not be done. You must neither sleep nor move about during both the junctions (i.e. dawn and dusk). Do not keep your tresses loose.

22. O fortunate lady, one should not eat, sneeze or yawn during dawn and dusk when hosts of evil spirits gather together (and are very active).

23. These activities should always be pursued, especially laughter, with something to screen it with. You must never stand at the bounding edge of the house during dusk and dawn.

24. My beloved one, neither during the day nor at night should one step over the threshing rod, mortar, winnowing basket, pedestal, scabbard and other things.

25. One should not lie down with the head towards the north, especially at dusk and dawn. One should never utter a falsehood nor frequent other people's houses.

26. No man except one's husband should be looked at wantonly.

If you strictly adhere to these observances a son who will enjoy the riches of the three worlds will be born to you.

Brahma said :

27-30. She promised the same to her husband who is worshipped by the world saying "So be it". Kaśyapa then went away, O brahmin, hither and thither amongst Devas. The foetus within Diti increased in size and strength since it had been meritoriously procreated.

Maya¹ Daitya had known all these things exactly through his miraculous power, Māyā. Maya had intimate and pleasant friendship with Indra. He went to Indra and intimated everything to him in secret, viz. the intentions of Diti and Danu, the holy vow, development of the foetus and its valour and all other things. All these Maya intimated to Indra out of love.

31. If merits of various kinds are acquired, it is possible to

1. The architect and artificer of the non-gods.

have a friend who is the sole abode of confidence, devoid of fear of any calamity.

Nārada said :

32. Maya the very powerful Daitya was the beloved brother of Namuci. How did then Maya become friendly with the slayer of his brother, O lord of Devas ?

Brahmd said :

33. Formerly, there was a very powerful leader of Daityas named Namuci. His enmity towards Indra was terrible. It caused hairs to stand on end.

34. Once Namuci, the heroic leader of Daityas, saw Indra abandoning the battle and going off. Then he pursued him.

35. On seeing him coming Indra became overwhelmed with fear. Leaving off Airāvata, Indra entered the foam in water.

36-40. The thunderbolt-armed Indra instantly killed his enemy through the foam. Namuci was slain and his younger brother Maya performed a great penance as an expiation for the annihilation of the brother's foe. He was able to secure Māyā (deceptive powers) of diverse kinds terrifying to the gods. By means of penance he secured boons from Viṣṇu, the ultimate refuge of all worlds. Then he became an efficient donor and lovingly delightful conversationist. Maya worshipped the sacred fires and the brahmins and waited impatiently for an opportunity to conquer Indra. From Vāyu, Indra knew that Maya was a liberal donor unto the suppliants; that he was eulogized by the bards and that he was his enemy with the power of Māyā. Then Indra assumed the form of a brahmin and approached asura Maya who had started a strategic battle. He spoke to Maya again and again.

Indra said :

41. I am an excellent brahmin, O lord of Daityas. I have come to you as a suppliant after hearing that you are the most distinguished among the donors. Give unto me, a suppliant, the boon sought after.

Brahmā said :

42. Maya took him for a brahmin and said : "It has been given to you by me. When a suppliant is in front, do virtuous persons begin to ponder over (the subject begged for) whether it is too much or too little ?"

43-45. When this was said Indra replied, "I wish for friendship with you". Maya said again to Indra, "Of what avail is this, O excellent brahmin ? I have no enmity with you." Indra then said: "O Hail to Maya." Indra was then advised by the Daitya, "Speak out the truth". Thereupon Indra revealed to the Daitya his own body which was thousand-eyed. Then Maya who was extremely surprised said to Indra :

Maya said :

46-48. What is this ? You are the thunderbolt-armed one ! Friend, this is an action not befitting you.

Brahmā said :

Laughing and embracing him Indra said : "That is enough. Learned men achieve their desired object by any means whatsoever".

Thenceforward, O greatest of sages, Indra had great love for Maya and Maya too acted for the welfare of Indra.

49. Maya went to Indra's abode and intimated everything to him. Indra asked Maya, the expert in Māyā, "What am I to do ?"

50. Out of love Maya gave his Māyā to Indra. Indra was then delighted on acquiring it and said "O Maya, what should I do ? Tell me that."

Maya said :

51-52. Go to the hermitage of Agastya. The pregnant Diti stays there. You remain there for some days waiting on her. Holding the thunderbolt enter her womb and cut the growing foetus till it comes under your control or dies. Then the enemy will cease to exist.

Brahmā said :

53-55. Saying "So be it" and after honouring Maya Indra immediately went to Diti, his step-mother, in great humility. He

began to serve that noble lady, the mother of Daityas. Diti was not aware of the real intention of Indra who was actually inimical. But the living entity that was inside the womb knew the intention of Indra. It was the unfailing splendour of sage Kaśyapa, inaccessible to enemies.

56-58. The thousand-eyed lord Indra was desirous of entering within. Holding his thunderbolt, he waited for an opportunity. Once he saw her sleeping at dusk with her head to the North. The thunderbolt-armed lord said to himself, "This is the opportunity" and he entered the belly of Diti : The living entity that was staying within, saw Indra holding the weapon and desirous of killing him. Then he said to the lord boldly :

The foetus in the womb said :

59. O thunderbolt-armed one, why don't you protect me, your brother. You are desirous of killing me. There is no other greater sin than killing (someone) outside battle.

60. (Killing) except in battle (is never just), O lord of large arms. O Indra, fight (with me) when I come out. Hence this is not proper on your part.

61. You are the person who has performed a hundred sacrifices; you are the thousand-eyed one, you are the husband of Śaci; you are the annihilator of the cities (of enemies); you are the lord of Devas armed with thunderbolt. O lord this is not proper on your part.

62. Or, if you are desirous of a battle, facilitate my coming out. O thunderbolt-armed one, shun this path.

63-64. Great men do not step on the evil path even though there may be an emergency. (I am) devoid of learning; I have no weapon. Nor do I have any collection of implements. O thunderbolt-armed one, you are learned. Aren't you ashamed in attempting to kill me ? Noble men never indulge in a despicable act.

65-68. Do you expect fame or merit by killing me? If brothers staying within the womb are deliberately killed, will it be an act of manliness ! If, on the other hand, you have any eagerness for fighting with me, my brother, (you can have it) undoubtedly.

After saying this he stood up there showing the fist to Indra. (He continued then.) This is the fruit, O Indra, of being a slayer of a brother or committing breach of trust. Why did you attempt to kill me? Does this yield any fame? Is there manliness in this? He by whose command the entire world consisting of mobile and immobile beings, functions has now become slayer of a boy ! He is trying to kill me.

Brahmā said :

69. Even as he was saying thus Indra cut the foetus with his thunderbolt. Neither greedy persons nor those who are blind with anger have any sympathy anywhere.

70-72. (The foetus) did not die. (The pieces) said sadly, "We are your brothers". Again he cut those pieces. They said, "O Śatakratu (one who has performed a hundred sacrifices), do not kill us, your brothers confidently resting in the mother's womb".

There is not even an iota of mercy in the minds of those persons whose intellects are affected by hatred.

He saw seven times seven (i.e. forty-nine) pieces cut apart without any sign of emotion. All of them had hands, feet and life. On seeing this he was surprised.

73-76. The auspicious pieces stationed in the womb had many but similar forms. Those multiformed pieces began to cry. Indra said to them "Māruta" (Do not cry). They therefore became Maruts of extremely powerful splendour. Even while remaining within the womb they consulted one another free from all misapprehensions about Indra. They said to Agastya, the noblest among sages in whose hermitage their mother was staying :

"Our father and your brother esteems your friendship much, O sage. We know that you have a tender feeling for us. The thunderbolt-bearer Indra has done to us what even a Cāṇḍāla does not do".

77-79. On hearing these words Agastya went there in excitement. He roused Diti who was distressed due to pain in the womb. The extremely infuriated Agastya cursed the husband of Śaci.

Agastya said :

O Indra, your enemies will always see your back in battle-field.

If enemies see the backs of self-respecting fighters as they flee from battle-field it is death unto them even though they are physically alive.

Brahmā said :

80-81. Angrily Diti cursed Indra who was within her womb.

Diti said :

O Indra, what has been committed by you is not an act of manliness. Hence this curse will take effect on you. You will be humiliated by women and ousted from your kingdom.

Brahmā said :

82. In the meantime the patriarch Kaśyapa came there. He became distressed on hearing from Agastya about the evil deed of Indra.

Indra who was within the womb spoke to his father like a frightened person.

Indra said :

83-84. I am afraid to come out because of Agastya and Diti.

Brahmā said :

The patriarch Kaśyapa who came near his wife saw the act of his son, his stay within the womb, and heard about the curses of Diti and Agastya. So he became distressed.

Kaśyapa said :

85. Dear son Indra, come out. Why did you commit this sin? Persons born of pure families do not become inclined towards sins.

Brahmā said :

86. The thunderbolt-armed one came out and spoke with his face downwards on account of shame. Physiognomy of men itself speaks out their good and bad deeds.

Indra said :

87-94. Undoubtedly I shall do what is said (by you) as conducive to welfare.

Brahmā said :

Then Kaśyapa came near me along with the guardians of the quarters. He told me everything that had happened and asked me (how to bring about) the normalcy of the womb of Diti, freedom of the thousand-eyed lord from the curse, the friendly alliance of all those (pieces) within the womb with Indra, their freedom from illness, absence of defects for the husband of Śacī and non-effectiveness of the curse given by Agastya, in due order.

Then I spoke these words to Kaśyapa, who was endowed with humility : “O Kaśyapa, O Prajāpati, bestower of honour, go immediately to Gautamī accompanied by Indra, Vasus and guardians of quarters. Take your bath there and eulogize Maheśāna in the company of everyone. Then by the grace of Śiva everything conducive to your welfare shall befall you.”

Saying “So be it” Kaśyapa went to Gautamī then. After taking bath, he eulogized the lord of Devas by these words.

For the removal of all miseries only two things are well-known—the sacred river Gautamī and Śiva the merciful.

Kaśyapa said :

95-100. Protect, O Saṅkara, O lord of Devas. Protect, O lord, bowed to by the worlds. Protect, O sanctifier, protect, O lord of speech with serpents for ornaments.

Protect, O virtuous one seated on the bull. Protect, O lord, with three Vedas as the eyes. Protect, O upholder of the Earth, O lord of wealth and glory. Protect, O Sarva with the elephant’s hide for garment.

Protect, O lord, destroyer of three cities. Protect, O crescent-crested one. Protect, O lord of Yajñas, O lord of Soma. Protect, O lord, the bestower of cherished things.

Protect, O abode of mercy. Protect, O bestower of auspiciousness. Protect, O origin of everything. Protect, O protector, O Indra, lord of wealth.

Protect, O brilliant one. Protect, O lord of wealth bowed to by Brahmā. Protect, O lord of the universe. Protect, O lord of Siddhas. Protect, O perfect one, obeisance be to you.

O Śiva, O ocean of mercy, you alone are the refuge of the embodied beings whose minds are dejected due to the wanderings through the terrible forest of worldly existence.

Brahmā said :

101. Even as he eulogized thus, the bull-bannered lord appeared in front of him. He asked Kaśyapa, the patriarch, to choose a boon as he pleased.

102-103. Kaśyapa spoke these words very humbly to Śiva. He narrated in detail the evil deeds of Indra, the curse, the destruction of sons, the mutual enmity, the incurring of sins and curse by Indra. Then Vṛṣākapi said to Diti and Agastya.

Śiva said :

104-106. The Maruts who are your sons and who number forty-nine shall be fortunate ones taking their shares in the Yajñas. They will always be accompanied by Indra and they will be joyous. Wherever Indra has a share in the Havis offerings in any sacrifice, Maruts will undoubtedly have priority therein.

107. No one will ever vanquish Indra when accompanied by Maruts. He will be victorious always. Stay happy for ever, O Patriarch.

108. From now onwards if persons commit fratricide unjustly they will meet with extermination of their family as well as other calamities for ever.

Brahmā said :

109-113. Śambhu emphatically said to Agastya, the noblest among sages :

Śambhu said :

O sage, do not be angry with the husband of Sacī. O extremely intelligent one, be calm. The Maruts have become immortal.

Brahmā said :

The delighted bull-bannered lord Śiva spoke to Diti also.

Siva said :

You had thought thus : "Let a son be born to me who will be embellished with the riches of the three worlds" and then had strictly pursued the path of penance. That penance has now become fruitful to you. You have now splendid sons with numerous qualities. They have become strong and heroic. Hence cast off your mental anguish. O lady of beautiful eyebrows, be free from excitement and beg for other boons as well.

Brahmā said :

114. On hearing these words of the lord of Devas, Diti bowed to Śambhu with arms joined in reverence and said :

Diti said :

115. The birth of a son is a great event for parents in the world. It shall be particularly endearing to a mother, O lord, worshipped by Devas.

116. If that son happens to be one richly endowed with handsome features, heroism and valour (there is no doubt that he will be more endearing). Even one such son (is endearing). What to say when there are many such (sons) !

117. By virtue of your power my sons will be certainly strong and victorious. They are the true sons of the Patriarch and the brothers of Indra.

118-119. (They are valourous) due to the favour of Agastya and Gaṅgā. There will be auspiciousness, O lord, where there is your favour. What doubt is there in it ? I am contented. Still I shall submit this devoutly. Listen, O lord, to my words and do what is conducive to the welfare of the universe.

Brahmā said :

120-123. When she was told by the Maker of the universe, "Speak out", Diti humbly said :

Diti said :

The acquisition of a child in the world is very difficult, O lord, saluted by Devas. It is particularly pleasing to the mother. What to say if it happens to be a son !

If that son is endowed with good qualities, glorious and long-lived, of what avail is heaven, salvation or the status of

Parameśthin himself? The acquisition of a virtuous son is always welcomed by the living beings desirous of benefits both here and hereafter. Hence let that benefit be conferred if one takes one's holy dip here.

Saṅkara said :

124-126. It is fruit of great sins that one is unable to beget children. If a woman were to be barren or a man to be impotent that defect can be rectified merely by taking bath here. One shall take bath and offer fruits and recite this prayer and then one obtains a son as a result of the bath and charitable gifts performed for three months. A barren woman shall bear a son by taking bath here.

127-128. Any woman who has had her bath after menstruation shall bear a son if she takes her bath here. Within three months after conception a pregnant woman shall devoutly take her bath, offer fruits, visit me and eulogize me with this prayer. She will then give birth to a son who will be equal to Indra.

129. O Diti, listen. If persons do not beget sons due to offences committed against the manes or due to the fault of misappropriation of money, the following is the best atonement.

130. In such cases the person shall offer balls of rice, propitiate manes and gift away a bit of gold. Then he will certainly have a son.

131. The family of these persons does not flourish : those persons who take away or misappropriate money kept in trust, persons who conceal jewels or deny their existence, and those who do not perform the rite of Śrāddha.

132. This (holy river) shall be the resort of such guilty persons after their death. Children deserving praise shall be born to those living persons who perform pilgrimage to the holy centres.

133-136. The devotee shall take a holy bath at the confluence of Diti and Gaṅgā and worship lord Siddheśvara who is beginningless and unageing, who is extensive, whose body consists of existence, knowledge and bliss, who is the great lord served by the chiefs among Devas, sages, Siddhas, Gandharvas and Yogins, who is in the form of Linga, who is brilliant and

who is free from illness. He shall worship everyday with all articles of worship. He shall be devout. He shall perform holy rites with full control over the limbs and sense-organs. He shall eulogize me by means of this prayer on the eighth and fourteenth days of the lunar fortnight. He shall gift away gold in accordance with his capacity. He shall feed brahmins. Whoever does these on the Gangā shall obtain a hundred sons.

137-141. After attaining his cherished desires he shall go to the city of Śiva on death. Whoever eulogizes me by means of this prayer, wherever be he, shall beget a son within six months. Undoubtedly it is so even if she happens to be a barren lady.

Brahmā said :

Thenceforth that holy centre is cited as Putratirtha. By taking bath there, by distributing charitable gifts and performing other similar rites there one shall attain all cherished desires.

The place where friendship with the Maruts took place is called Mitratirtha. Since this holy centre rendered Indra sinless it is called Śakratirtha.

Where Indra obtained his glory, that holy centre is named Kamalatirtha. All these holy centres are the bestowers of all cherished desires.

“All will happen” saying this Śiva vanished. All (those assembled there) went away in the manner they had come, with contentment.

It is well known that there are a hundred thousand holy centres there that bestow merit.

CHAPTER FIFTYFIVE

Holy centres Yamatirtha etc.

Brahmā said :

1-2. The holy centre well known as Yamatirtha is the enhancer of the satisfaction of the Manes. It is sacred. It

bestows all desired things seen and unseen. It is resorted to by all holy men. I shall recount its power that destroys all sins.

There was a powerful Pigeon well known as Anuhrāda.

3. His wife was a she-bird named Heti who could assume any shape she liked. Anuhrāda was the grandson of Mṛtyu and Heti his granddaughter.

4. As time passed on they begot sons and grandsons. His enemy was the powerful king of birds named Ulūka (owl).

5. His sons and grandsons were fiery and powerful. Between these two (sets of) birds there was a long-drawn enmity.

6-8. The hermitage of Pigeon was on the northern bank of Gaṅgā. The king of birds named Ulūka was on its southern bank. He resided there along with his sons and grandsons, O excellent brahmin. Those two strong sets of birds were antagonistic to each other. Surrounded by their strong sons and grandsons those powerful birds fought for a long time. Neither the owls nor the pigeons won or lost.

9. By propitiating Yama and his grandfather Mṛtyu, the Pigeon obtained miraculous Yāmya weapons and became superior to all.

10. Similarly, the owl propitiated Fire and became strong. A terrible fight ensued between them as they became excessively arrogant on account of their boons.

11-12. The owl discharged towards the pigeon a Fiery arrow. The pigeon hurled the noose of Yama at his enemy. He discharged the thick rod as well as the nooses of Mṛtyu. Again a fight ensued between them like the one between Ādi (a kind of bird) and Baka (crane) formerly.

13-14. On noticing the fire closely approaching her husband in the course of that great battle, the chaste lady Heti, the she-pigeon, became extremely distressed. On seeing her sons being particularly enveloped by the fire, Heti approached the Fire-god and eulogized him through various utterances.

Heti said :

15-17. His mode of granting gifts and his form are not invisible. All the objects are his soul(?) It is through him that Devas partake of Havyas (sacrificial offerings). I bow down to that husband of Svāhā, to that enjoyer of Yajñas.

I seek refuge in that lord who is the mouth of Devas, who is the carrier of Havyas, who is omniscient, who is the performer of Homas on behalf of Devas, who is the messenger of Devas, who is the primordial lord and who has bright light as his asset. Inside the body he dwells in the form of vital airs and outside he is the bestower of cooked food. He is an instrument for the performance of Yajñas. I seek refuge in that Fire-god, the conqueror of wealth.

Agni said :

18. O she-pigeon, this miraculous weapon of mine that has been discharged in the course of the battle is infallible. Where should it be made to rest, O chaste lady. Tell me that.

The she-pigeon said :

19. Let the miraculous weapon rest in me—neither in my sons nor in my husband. O lord of Havyas, be truthful in speech. O Jātavedas, obeisance be to you.

Jātavedas said :

20-21. I am delighted at your words, O chaste lady, as well as at your devotion to your husband. O Heti, I shall bestow happiness on you and on your husband and sons. This miraculous fiery weapon of mine will not scorch you, your husband or your sons. Therefore, O she-pigeon, go happily.

Brahmā said :

22. In the meantime she-owl saw her husband encircled by the nooses of Yama and struck by his rod. Being distressed and frightened she approached Yama.

The she-owl said :

23. People sympathise (with others) because they are frightened by you. Afraid of you they practise celibacy. Afraid of you, they do good actions. Afraid of you, they scrupulously cling to their duties.

24. It is because they are afraid of you that they refrain from destructive acts as they rush to the forest from the village; afraid of you they adopt gentleness; afraid of you they imbibe Soma juice; afraid of you steadfastly they hold on to the prac-

tice of distribution of charitable gifts of cooked food and cows; afraid of you they expound the principles of Brahman.

Brahmā said :

25-30. While she said this the lord of the southern quarter said to her :

Yama said :

Welfare unto you. Choose a boon. I shall give you whatever pleases your mind.

Brahmā said :

On hearing these words of Yama, that chaste lady said to him :

The she-owl said :

My husband is encircled by your nooses and struck by your rod. Hence, O excellent one among Devas, save my sons and husband.

Brahmā said :

Becoming sympathetic on hearing her words Yama said again and again :

Yama said :

O lady of splendid face, tell me a befitting place for the nooses and the rod.

Brahmā said :

31. She spoke to lord Yama : "O lord of the universe, let the nooses hurled by you enter me. Let the rod penetrate me."

Thereupon lord Yama sympathetically spoke to her again.

Yama said :

32-33. Let your husband and sons, let all of them come out alive and free from ailments.

Brahmā said :

Yama stopped the nooses and the Fire-god stopped the fiery missile. The two gods made the pigeons and owls happy. They said to the birds : "Let the desired boon be chosen".

The birds said :

34-40. Under the pretext of our hostility we have been able to have a view of both of you which is usually very difficult to achieve. We birds are sinful ones. O excellent ones among Devas, of what avail is a boon? If you two lovingly decide that a boon has to be given, we do not, for our own sake, request for the same. One who begs for one's own sake should indeed be pitied, O great Devas. Fruitful is the life of that person who always acts for the welfare of others. Fire, water, sun, earth and different kinds of food grains—all these exist for the sake of others. Good people too exist similarly for the sake of others. Brahmā and others are linked with death, and when this is realized, O lord of Devas, eagerness for the realization of one's own interest becomes fruitless. What has been fixed by Brahmā at the time of a man's birth can never be otherwise. Therefore creatures strain themselves in vain. Hence, we two shall beg for something auspicious for the welfare of the worlds, what is conducive to the good of all. Both of you may be pleased to agree to it.

Brahmā said :

41. For the acquisition of virtue and fame and with a desire for the welfare of the worlds, the two birds spoke to the lords well known in the world.

The birds said :

42-43. O lords of the worlds, let the two hermitages of us both be in the holy centres on either side of Gaṅgā. This is our foremost boon.

Whether the holy dip, charitable gifts, Japa, Homa and worship of the Manes are performed by a meritorious person or a person of evil actions, even if these are performed in a haphazard manner—let everything be meritorious and everlasting; this is our second boon.

The Devas said :

44-45. Let this be so. We are delighted to say another thing also.

Yama said :

There shall be no untimely death for seven generations in

the families of those persons who recite Yama's prayer on the northern bank of Gautamī.

46. The man who conquers his soul and recites everyday the prayer of Mṛtyu shall be the recipient of all riches.

47-49. He will never be tormented by eighty-eight thousand varieties of ailments. In this holy centre, O excellent birds, a pregnant chaste lady shall take holy dip for seven days within three months and a near-barren lady within six months. That lady shall give birth to a heroic son. That son will live for a hundred years. He shall be rich, intelligent and heroic. His sons and grandsons will flourish. By offering balls of rice and distributing charitable gifts the manes will attain liberation. By taking holy dip a man shall be free from sins committed by thought, speech and deeds.

Brahmā said :

50-53. Immediately after the statement of Yama the Fire-god said to the birds :

Agni said :

I shall bestow good health, prosperity and beautiful form on those persons who observe sacred rites and recite my prayer on the southern bank.

If this prayer is recited by anyone at any place and if this prayer is written down and kept in the house there can be no fear from fire.

If a pure person takes his holy dip and performs charity in the holy centre of Agnitīrtha, he will undoubtedly derive the benefit of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice.

Brahmā said :

54-56. Thenceforth learned men know that holy centre variously as Yāmyatīrtha, Āgneyatīrtha, Kapotatīrtha, Ulūkatīrtha and Hetyulūka Tirtha.

There are three thousand three hundred and ninety holy centres there. Everyone is conducive to the attainment of salvation.

Those man who take their holy dip in them and practice charity become purified even after their death. They will be endowed with riches and sons. They will become splendid and attain heaven.

CHAPTER FIFTYSIX

The holy centre Tapastirtha and others

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known as Tapastirtha excessively increases Tapas (power of penance). It bestows all cherished desires. It is sacred. It increases the happiness of the manes.

2. Listen to what happened in that holy centre. It is destroyer of sins. There arose a controversy amongst the sages as to the greatness of waters versus fire.

3. Some considered waters the most superior. Others considered fire the most superior. The controversy among the sages on the subject of fire versus water proceeded thus.

4-8. Without fire where can life exist ? It is so because fire is the very essence of life. It is the soul. It is offerings. Everything is born of fire.

The world is sustained by fire. Fire illuminates the world. Hence there is no greater deity than Fire-god. He alone is the inner light. He alone is the great flame. Nothing exists without fire whose abode is the entire set of three worlds. Therefore, there is nothing other than Fire-god which has the superiority over all other living beings. The semen deposited by a man in the womb of a woman has more power than its physical form. That power is of fire and not anything else. Indeed fire is the mouth of Devas. Hence they know none superior to this.

9-12. Others who expound the Vedas advocated the superiority of water. Indeed food is produced from water. Fire is produced from water. Everything is sustained by water. Waters are remembered as mothers. Those who know the ancient lore say that water is the very life of the three worlds. Nectar is produced from water. Medicinal herbs are possible only through water.

Thus some said that the Fire-god is superior. Others said that Waters are superior. Those expounders of Vedas, those sages who were voicing mutually opposed views approached me and said.

The sages said :

13-17. Tell us whether fire or water is superior. You are the lord of the three worlds.

Brahmā said :

I too said to all those sages, the regular performers of holy rites who came there : "Both of them are worthy of being worshipped in the world. The world is evolved out of both. Havya, Kavya and Amṛta are produced from both. Life in the world is sustained by both. The sustenance of the body (is through both). There is no special difference between the two. Their superiority is considered equal. This is my emphatic pronouncement that neither is superior to the other.

But the excellent sages considered that one of them must be superior. They were not satisfied with my words. Those sages went to Vāyu (the Wind-god).

The sages said :

18-22. Who is the superior of the two, O Vāyu? You are the vital air. Truth is rooted in you.

Brahmā said :

Vāyu said : "Fire is superior. Everything is founded on fire". Saying "No" amongst themselves those sages went to the Earth.

The sages said :

Speak the truth, O earth, as to who is superior. You are the support of the mobile and immobile beings.

Brahmā said :

The Earth humbly said this to the sages who came there.

Bhūmi said :

The waters, the eternal goddesses are the supports even unto me. Everything is born of waters. Hence superiority is well established in waters.

Brahmā said :

23. After saying 'No' amongst themselves the sages went to

the lord lying down in the ocean of Milk. By uttering prayers they eulogized the lord holding conch, discus and iron club.

The sages said :

24-27. We seek refuge in that true entity which knows the entire universe, future, present and that which is hidden in the cavity and which the entire set of three worlds of diverse and variegated forms enter on death. We seek refuge in that truthful entity which is imperishable, permanent, and immeasurable, which the sages mention as one that is comprehensible through the Vedas and those resorting to which obtain what they desire. The Yogins do not get the form of Viṣṇu which is (identical with) the elements and which is the most important entity in the universe consisting of the great elements. We, the sages, have come here to say it. O abode of the universe, tell us the truth. You are the immanent soul of all the embodied beings. You alone are everything, O lord, everything is in you. Still alas, no one anywhere knows you on account of the influence of Prakṛti (i.e. Māyā). No one knows you though you are within, without and everywhere and you convert yourself in the form of the universe.

Brahmā said :

28-29. Then the divine voice, the unembodied one, the support of the universe spoke.

Divine voice said :

Let both these (i.e. water and fire) be propitiated by means of penance, devotion and regular observances. That element can be said to be superior; from which one attains fulfilment first.

Brahmā said :

30-31. Saying "So be it" the sages worshipped by the worlds went away. They were weary, inwardly depressed and extremely detached.

All of them went to Gautamī, the sole mother of all the worlds, the sanctifier of the three worlds, for performing penance. They observed holy rites with self-control.

32. Then they were ready for the worship of the Water-god and Fire-god. Some were the worshippers of Agni and

some adhered to the worship of waters. Then the divine voice, Sarasvatī, the mother of the Vedas, spoke.

The Divine voice said :

33-35. Waters are the source or origin of fire. Purity, cleanliness are obtained through water. Without water how can the worship of fire be accomplished? When water is made ready one becomes authorized to perform holy rites. A man becomes impure, dirty and unfit for holy rites till he faithfully plunges into cool waters, even if he be a scholar of the Vedas. Hence waters shall be the superior ones since they are remembered as mothers. Therefore, the superiority belongs to waters since they are the mothers particularly of fire.

Brahmā said :

36. Those sages, the expounders of the Vedas, heard these words. Thereupon they came to the conclusion that the superiority must be of the waters.

37. The holy centre where this happened, O Nārada, is called Tapastīrtha. The holy centre where the two Satras of the sages took place is called Satratīrtha.

38-40. It is also called Agnitīrtha. So also they know this as Sārasvata (Tīrtha). A holy plunge and the distribution of charitable gifts there is splendid and it bestows all cherished objects.

There are one thousand and four hundred holy centres there. They are the bestowers of merit. A holy plunge and distribution of charitable gifts here bestow heavenly pleasures and salvation.

The place where the doubts of the sages were dispelled by the divine voice is the source of the river Sarasvatī which flows into Gaṅgā. Who indeed could fully describe the glory of that confluence!

CHAPTER FIFTYSEVEN

Holy Centre Ārṣṭiṣenatirtha etc.

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known as Devatirtha is on the northern bank of Gaṅgā. I shall describe its power that destroys all sins.

2. There was a king well known as Ārṣṭiṣeṇa. He was endowed with all good qualities. The name of his wife was Jayā. She was just like another Lakṣmī.

3. His son was named Bhara. He was intelligent and a favourite of his father. He was an expert in the science of archery and the Vedas.

4-5. His wife was a beautiful lady well-reputed as Suprabhā. Thereafter king Ārṣṭiṣeṇa placed the responsibility of the kingdom on his son and took initiation for a horse sacrifice through the chief priest. He intended to perform the horse sacrifice on the banks of Sarasvatī.

6-10. The king was initiated by Ṛtviks and important sages devoted to (the study of) Vedas and scriptures. In the presence of the brahmans and the sacred fires, Mithu the valiant king of Dānavas, an evil-minded spirit of great exploit, destroyed the sacrifice and abducted the king, his wife and priest, O sage, and went hurriedly to the nether rigions.

When the excellent king was thus taken away and the sacrifice was destroyed the immortal ones and the Ṛtviks went away to their respective places. The son of the king's priest was a boy well known as Devāpi. The boy saw his mother but could not see his father. He was surprised and excessively distressed.

11-12. He asked his mother : "O mother, where has my father gone ? I would not like to live without him. Dear mother, tell me the truth. Fie, fie upon the life of those persons of evil deeds, bereft of their fathers. Dear mother, if you do not tell me I will enter water or fire".

13. The mother said to the son : "The king, his wife and the priest, your father, were taken away by a Dānava to the nether worlds."

Devāpi said :

14. Where was he taken? By whom was he taken? How was he taken? In which rite? Who were all watching it? What is the abode of the Dānava? Tell me.

The Mother said :

15. While Devas were watching, in the presence of the sacred fires and the brahmins, Mithu the Daitya abducted the king who had been initiated in the sacrifice to the nether worlds along with his wife and the priest.

Brahmā said :

16-17. On hearing those words of his mother Devāpi remembered his duty : "I will see Devas, fire, Rtviks and Asuras. My opinion is that my father should be sought among these and not elsewhere."

After deciding thus Devāpi spoke to Bhara the son of the king :

Devāpi said :

18-20. All those who have been taken to the nether worlds should be brought back by me through the power of penance, celibacy, holy rites, and sacred observances.

Of what avail is that wretch, whether alive or dead, who does not retaliate when a terrible insult has been inflicted. Rule over the entire Earth like your father Ārṣiṣena. O king, my mother should be protected by you till my return after fulfilling my task. O Bhara, permit me to go.

Brahmā said :

21-23. After a careful deliberation Devāpi was addressed thus by Bhara.

Bhara said :

Achieve your purpose. Go happily. Do not have the least of worry.

Brahmā said :

Devotedly meditating on the feet of the king of immortals, Devāpi searched out the Rtviks and bowed to them severally. With the palms joined in reverence the boy Devāpi said.

Devāpi said :

24-26. The sacrifice should have been saved by you all. The sponsor of sacrifice who had been initiated therein, the priest and the wife of the initiated one should have been saved by you all. Even while you were all watching, O Ṛtviks, the king and others have been abducted by him after destroying the sacrifice. This is not proper. Still, I consider this (necessary). It behoves you all to return them devoid of all ailments. O leading brahmins, otherwise you will deserve a curse.

The Ṛtviks said :

27-28. In a sacrifice, the Fire-god should be worshipped at the outset. It is Agni who is the presiding deity here. Hence, we the servants of the sacrificial fires do not know (these things). That carrier of the Havyas (offerings) (i.e. the Fire-god) is the donor, the enjoyer, the remover and the maker.

Brahmā said :

29. Turning his back upon the Ṛtviks and worshipping the Fire-god, Devāpi duly intimated it to the Fire-god. (Then the Fire-god replied.)

Agni said :

30. Just like the Ṛtviks I too am a servant of Devas. I carry Havya to Devas. They are the enjoyers (and therefore) they are the saviours too.

Devāpi said :

31. I shall call Devas and carefully distribute their shares in the Havis to each. Hence, you go hurriedly towards them.

Brahmā said :

32. Devāpi approached Devas and bowed to each of them. He then intimated to them the statement of Ṛtviks, of the Fire-god and (his own threat of) curse.

Devas said :

33. When we are invoked by the Vedic Mantras by the Ṛtviks in the proper order we partake of our shares in the Havis. We are not otherwise free, O excellent brahmin.

34. Hence, we are the perpetual followers of the Vedas. We are induced by the Vedas. O brahmin, we are dependent. Therefore, intimate this to the Vedas.

Brahmā said :

35-36. Devāpi cleaned himself and then invoked the Vedas with care. He was endowed with (the power of) meditation and penance. The Vedas appeared before him.

Bowing down to them again and again he spoke to the Vedas. He intimated to them the statement of the Rtviks, the statement of Agni and the statement of Devas.

Vedas said :

37-41. We too are dependent, O dear one. We are the followers of Iśvara and subject to his control. He is the support of the entire universe, but he is not supported by anyone. He is unsullied. He is the sole abode of all power. He is the storehouse of all riches. He is the great god, the maker. He is Maheśvara, the annihilator. We are in the form of words and sounds, O brahmin. We speak, we know. It is our duty that we speak (i.e. explain) what you ask. We know by whom they were taken away. We know his name, his city and his power. We know that they have been eaten but they are not destroyed. We also know how you can acquire the capacity to get them back again, whom to propitiate and where (for the same purpose).

Brahmā said :

42-46. On hearing this he pondered for a long time and spoke to the Vedas.

Devāpi said :

O Vedas, be pleased to speak this alone immediately, entirely and truthfully. I shall get back all those who had been taken to the nether worlds. Adequate obeisance to them all. Obeisance be to you all.

The Vedas said :

O Devāpi, go to the Gautamī. There eulogize Maheśvara. The merciful lord (when) pleased will surely bestow on you what you desire. (When) eulogized lord Śiva will be pleased.

This is true, O extremely intelligent one. King Arṣṭiṣenā, Jayā his chaste wife and Upamanyu your father—all of them stay in the nether worlds devoid of ailments, due to the boons bestowed by lord Śiva. Due to the boons bestowed by lord Śiva you will kill Rākṣasa Mithu and attain fame and virtue. This is possible. It is not otherwise.

Brahmā said :

47. At the instance of the Vedas the boy Devāpi went to Gautami. The brahmin took his bath and having got the proper opportunity eulogized Maheśvara.

Devāpi said :

48. O lord of the chiefs of Devas, I am a mere boy. You are the preceptor of preceptors. I have no power to eulogize you befittingly. Obeisance be to you, O Śambhu.

49. The Vedas do not know you. Neither Devas nor sages. Neither Brahmā nor Viṣṇu. As you are so you are. Obeisance be to you.

50. You protect, O Maheśvara, those who are sinning souls, who are helpless, who are miserable, who are poor and who are sickly.

51. The heaven-dwellers who are worshipped by penance, holy rites and Mantras will give them the benefit ordained by you, O lord of the worlds.

52. (Even) beggars will turn out to be donors. Whatever they desire is not wanting at your door. You are the cause of this unique situation.

53. O preceptor of the universe, O lord, at the mere utterance of the word Śiva, you protect ignorant persons, sinners and those who are immersed in the ocean of hell.

Brahmā said :

54-56. Even as he was eulogizing thus, the three-eyed lord appeared in front of him and said.

Śiva said :

Tell me what boon (you wish to have), O Devāpi. Enough of your despondency, O boy.

Devāpi said :

O lord of the universe, I wish to redeem the king, the king's wife and the preceptor who is my father. I wish for the death of my enemy.

Brahmā said :

57. On hearing the words of Devāpi the lord of the universe said "So be it". At the behest of Śaṅkara, Devāpi got everything.

58. Calling Nandin, one of his Gaṇas, the merciful lord Śambhu sent him with his Spear, O Nārada.

59. Nandin went to the nether worlds and killed Mithu and the leading Asuras. Bringing his father and others he handed them over to them (Devāpi).

60. The horse sacrifice of the self-possessed Ārṣiṣeṇa was performed there. The Fire-god, Ṛtviks, Devas, Vedas and sages said :

Agni and others said :

61. Where Śambhu, the lord of Devas, the lord of the universe, favourably disposed towards his devotees appeared personally, O Devāpi, that place has become the holy centre Devatīrtha.

62-64. This holy centre shall be conducive to the destruction of all sins; it shall bestow all spiritual achievement; it yields merit and your fame shall be perpetual.

Brahmā said :

When the horse-sacrifice was concluded Devas granted them boons. After taking their bath they became contented and went to heaven. Thereafter fifteen thousand and hundred and eight holy centres cropped up on both the banks. Let it be known that a holy dip and distribution of charitable gifts there bestow excessive merits.

CHAPTER FIFTYEIGHT

Holy Centre Tapovanatirtha etc.

Brahmā said :

1-2. The holy centres on the southern bank of Gautamī well known as Tapovana, Nandini Sangama, Siddheśvara and Sārdūla are very holy. Listen to their details by merely listening to which one is rid of all sins.

3. Agni (Fire-god), Hotṛ was formerly the carrier of Havyas unto Devas. He got as his wife the beautiful daughter of Dakṣa named Svāhā.

4. She was childless in the beginning. She performed penance for a son. The Fire-god said to his wife Svāhā, the uncensured lady who performed elaborate penance and delighted the Fire-god.

Agni said :

5-8. Children will be born, O splendid lady; do not perform penance.

Brahmā said :

On hearing the words of her husband she desisted from penance. Excepting the words of husband nothing else fulfils the cherished desires of women anywhere.

Some time passed by. Terror from Tāraka increased. Kārttikeya was as yet unborn, although Maheśvara and Bhavānī had been indulging in amorous dalliance in secret for a long time. Devas became frightened and approached Agni. The heaven dwellers spoke to him thus for realizing the task of Devas.

Devas said :

9. O highly fortunate one, go to lord Śambhu worshipped by the three worlds. Inform Śiva that there is danger from Tāraka.¹

1. A powerful demon who by the performance of severe penance had secured a boon from Śiva and had later became a great terror to gods; killed by Skanda who as a result of a divine planning was born to Śiva and Pārvati.

Agni said :

10. One should not go to that place where a couple remain in secret communion. This is a general rule. What then with regard to the trident bearing lord ?

11. There is no deliverance from hell to that person who overhears the conversation of a passionate couple who remain in an isolated place indulging in frank carefree talk.

12. He is the master of all the worlds. He is Mahākāla wielding trident. By whom can he be looked at while he is staying in a secret place along with Bhavāni.

Devas said :

13. This is justifiable when a great danger is overshadowing us. What is the rule to be followed and mentioned elsewhere ? (i.e. This is an extraordinary situation) when there is great danger from Tāraka you are the Tāraka (redeemer).

14. The life of good men is meant for others especially (when they are immersed) in the ocean of great danger and terror.

Or you can go in another form (in disguise) and speak the words befitting (the role).

15. After intimating to Śambhu the words of Devas come back quickly. Then, Fire-god, we shall offer you worship (on behalf) of the two worlds.

Brahmi said :

16-18. At the instance of Devas the Fire-god assumed the form of a parrot and went to the place where the lord of the worlds was sporting with Umā. Then the Fire-god went ahead timidly in the form of a parrot. The carrier of the Havyas (Fire-god) could not go through the doorway. Then he went to the window sill and remained there with face turned down and trembling. On seeing him Śambhu in that secret place laughingly said to Umā.

Śambhu said :

19-22. See, O gentle lady, the parrot that is the Fire-god himself who has come here at the instance of Devas.

Brahma said :

Pārvatī bashfully said to the lord, "O lord, enough". The lord of Devas called the Fire-god moving about in front of him, in the form of a bird and said, "O Agni, you have been recognised through various ways. Do not speak anything. Open your mouth. Take this in and carry it with you." After saying this lord Śambhu discharged a great deal of semen into the mouth of Fire-god.

With this semen within him Agni could not at all go.

23-27. Utterly tired, Agni sat down on the bank of Gaṅgā. He then discharged a greater portion of that semen into Kṛttikās wherefrom Kārtika was born.

The remaining portion of the semen of Śambhu that had been within his body, Agni split into two and deposited into his beloved wife Svāhā who was particularly eager to have a child. Formerly, she had been assured by saying "You will have children." Agni remembered this now and deposited the semen of Śambhu. Excellent twins were born of that semen discharged by Agni. They were Suvarṇa and Suvarṇā, unrivalled in the world in handsome features and beauty. It was pleasing to Agni and it perpetually increased the pleasures of the worlds.

28. Out of love Agni gave Suvarṇā (in marriage) to the intelligent Dharma. He made Samkalpā the beloved wife of his son Suvarṇa. Thus Fire-god performed the marriages of his son and daughter.

29-34. Due to the fault of the mutual intermixture of the semen both the children of Agni (became lax in sexual behaviour). The son Suvarṇa who could assume many forms, assumed the forms of the excellent Devas and indulged in sexual intercourse with the wives of Indra, Vāyu, Kubera, Varuṇa and the leading sages. If any lady was fond of any particular person he assumed the form of that person and indulged in amorous dalliance with that lady. In some places the son of Agni who had splendid form assumed the forms of husbands of chaste ladies and sported about with them fully satisfying (Cupid). On account of his action Suvarṇa became contented.

Although she was the wife of Dharma, the daughter of Svāhā named Suvarṇā became an adulteress. If any person had a beautiful wife pleasing to his mind, Suvarṇā assumed that form

and sported about with those husbands whether human beings, Asuras, Devas or sages. She indulged in sexual sports with these and others endowed with beauty, munificence, stability and majesty and having the brilliance of her father (Agni). If any wife of any Deva gained his approbation, she used to assume the form of that lady and sport with him. By means of diverse ways and activities she used to attract his mind and achieve the fulfilment of her love.

35. On seeing these (amorous) activities of Suvarṇā and Suvarṇā, the son of Agni as well as the daughter of Agni, Devas and Asuras became angry and they cursed the son and daughter of Agni at that time.

Devas and Asuras said :

36-37. Since this act involving transgression (of moral laws) has been committed, since this sinful deed marked by deceitful behaviour has been done, O Havyavāha (the carrier of Havyas), your son shall become one of infidels and one going everywhere.

Similarly, Suvarṇā too shall not be steadfast to any single person. She shall not be satisfied with any one person. She will resort to many ignoble embodied beings of different species. This shall be the defect of your daughter.

Brahmā said :

38. On hearing these words of imprecation Agni approached me with great fright and spoke, "Tell me the mode of expiation for the children".

39-41. Then I said : "O Agni, go to Gautamī, After eulogizing Śaṅkara, O large-armed one, intimate to the lord of universe (everything).

O Agni, such a child as this has been born to you due to the semen of Maheśvara deposited in your body. Hence intimate to the lord these imprecations of Devas. For the protection of his own progeny Śambhu will do something conducive to their welfare.

42. Eulogize the lord and the goddess. Śiva will be pleased with your devotion. Then you will get the fulfilment of cherished desires in regard to your children.

43. Then at my instance, Agni went to Gaṅgā and eulogized Maheśvara by means of laudatory statements equal to the Vedas in importance.

Agni said :

44-47. He is the creator of the universe. He has the cosmic form. He is unsullied. He is the primordial maker and the self-born. I bow down to that lord of the universe.

I bow down to that three-eyed lord who becomes fire and annihilates; who is the creator in the form of water and who protects in the form of the Sun.

(Obeisance) to the lord who is the cause of satisfaction to Devas in the form of the (sponsor of sacrifice) and to the living beings by making neat arrangement in the form of Vāyu (wind); who protects in the form of Śiva; who is conducive to perpetual happiness (in the form of) Viṣṇu, and who accords space to the living beings in the form of firmament.

Brahmā said :

48. Then the delighted lord Śiva, the unchanging and the endless, asked Agni, worshipped by Devas to choose any boon he liked.

49. Humbly he said to Śiva, "Your semen is stationed in me. Due to that the handsome son Suvarṇa well known throughout the worlds was born.

50-51. Similarly, the daughter Suvarṇā was also born from it, O lord of the universe. On account of the defect of mutual interchange of semen, O Śiva, both the children have become defective due to the transgression of moral laws. Devas have cursed them. O lord, quell it."

On hearing these words of Agni Śiva said the following that is conducive to the outcome of auspiciousness.

Śiva said :

52-56. Due to my semen Suvarṇa of great exploit was born of you. Complete magnificence and all accomplishments will be bestowed upon this Suvarṇa by me. O Agni, listen to my words. He will become the sanctifier of the three worlds. He alone is the nectar in the world. He alone is the beloved of Devas. He

alone is the enjoyment of worldly pleasures and salvation. He alone is Dakṣinā (monetary gift) in the sacrifice. He alone is the beautiful feature of everything. He is the preceptor of the preceptors. One should know that the excellent semen from me is the most excellent thing. Especially that which is deposited in you. What worry can there be in regard to that ? Without it everything is deficient. Due to it riches are perfect.

57. Men without Suvarṇā are dead though (physically) alive. A rich man though devoid of good qualities is worthy of being honoured, but not so a poor man though endowed with good qualities.

58. Therefore, there is nothing greater than Suvarṇā. So also this Suvarṇā though restless and fickle shall be excellent.

59-61. Everything deficient, if glanced at by her will become perfect. She is to be attained in the three worlds by means of penance, Japas and Homas. O Agni, her power and excellence is recounted a little. She will stay everywhere. She will wander about after coming there. Suvarṇā, Kamalā, shall be holy. From now onwards the merit of your children who loiter as they please shall be one like which has neither been nor will ever be.

Brahmā said :

62. After saying thus Śiva assumed the form of a Liṅga and remained there manifest with a desire for the welfare of the worlds.

63-65. After acquiring boons Agni became delighted along with his children, the son and the daughter. Suvarṇā, the daughter of Agni, remained joyous along with her husband Dharmā. His son also remained jolly along with Saṁkalpā.

In the meantime O sage, Śārdūla, the lord of Dānavas, attacked and defeated Dharmā and fraudulently abducted Suvarṇā, the daughter of Agni, the abode of fortune, conjugal felicity and graceful charms.

66-67. Suvarṇā well known throughout the world was taken to the nether worlds by him. Agni the carrier of Havyas and Dharmā the son-in-law of Agni eulogized again and again Viṣṇu, the lord of the worlds, and intimated to him the matter

on hand. They intimated to the powerful lord the matter on hand.

68-69. Lord Viṣṇu cut off the head of Śārdūla with his discus. The divine lady Suvarṇā, the most beautiful women in the world, was brought by the lord. She was the daughter of Maheśvara as well as the beloved (daughter) of Agni too. Viṣṇu showed her to Maheśvara, O Nārada. Maheśvara became pleased and embraced her again and again.

70-74. The place where the discus that shone brilliantly and cut off Śārdūla's head was washed is well known as Saṅkara Tīrtha as well as Vaiṣṇava Tīrtha and Siddha Tīrtha.

In the place where Agni and the eternal Dharma attained great delight, in the place, O excellent sage, where tears of delight fell down a river named Ānandā and Nandinī arose. Its confluence with the Gaṅgā is sacred. Śiva is present there. In the very same confluence, Suvarṇā is manifestly present even today.

75-77. She is also well known as Dākṣāyaṇī, Śivā, Āgneyī, Ambikā, Kātyāyanī, Iśvari and Jagadādhārā (support of the universe). She is the perpetual bestower of the cherished desire of the devotees. She adorns both banks. The place where Agni performed penance is the holy centre Tapovana. There are these and other holy centres on both sides. O sage ! A holy dip and the distribution of charitable gifts in them is auspicious and it bestows all cherished desires.

78. There are fourteen thousand holy centres on the northern bank and sixteen thousand holy centres on the southern bank.

79. In different places, the holy centres have special marks of recognition. They have separate names as well. It has been briefly mentioned by me.

80. Whoever listens to this, reads or remembers this, will be perfect in all desirable respects.

81. If a man knows this and performs holy dip etc. there, he remains rich always and particularly righteous.

82-84. The holy centre to the west of Abjaka is known as Śārdūla. It is superior to all holy centres such as Vārāṇasī.

He who takes his holy bath there, salutes Pitṛs and Devas

and performs libations, becomes rid of all sins. He is honoured in the world of Viṣṇu.

Between Tapovana and Śārdūla there are many holy centres. The greatness of each and every one cannot be described by anybody.

CHAPTER FIFTYNINE

Holy Centres Indratirtha etc.

Brahmā said :

1-2. A holy bath and distribution of charitable gifts in these holy centres prevents return to the worldly existence. The holy centres are Indratirtha, Vṛṣākapatirtha, the confluence of Phenā where there is the holy centre of Hanūmanta, and the holy centre Abjaka where the lord is Trivikrama.

3. I shall mention what has transpired on the southern bank of Gaṅgā. On the northern bank there is the holy centre named Indreśvara. Listen with devotion observing holy rites with controlled senses.

4. The excessively arrogant enemy of Indra named Namuci was very strong. He fought with Indra. Indra removed his head with Phena (watery foam).

5-7. That foam of waters assumed the form of Vajra (thunderbolt) and it cut off the head of his enemy Namuci. Thereafter, the foam fell on the ground on the southern bank of Gaṅgā. After piercing the Earth it entered the nether worlds. The sacred water of Gaṅgā originating from the nether worlds came to the Earth's zone through the path pointed out by the thunderbolt. That water followed the river Phenā called after the name Phena, i.e. foam.

8. Its confluence with Gaṅgā is holy and well known throughout the worlds. It is conducive to the destruction of all sins like the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā.

9-11. The holy centre where the step-mother of Hanumān became free from the state of a cat merely because of a holy

dip there due to the grace of Viṣṇu is called Mārjāra. This has been previously recounted to you. It is also called Hanūmanta. The narrative has been mentioned before. It is also called Vārṣākapa and Abjaka. Listen to it with attention.

There was a strong ancestor of Daityas well known as Hiranya.

12. By performing penance he became invincible to all Devas. He became very terrible. His son also was very powerful, difficult to be conquered by Devas.

13-16. He was known as Mahāṣani. His wife was Aparājītā. A long-drawn continuous battle ensued between him and Indra. On all occasions Mahāṣani of great virility used to conquer Indra in the battlefield along with his elephant and hand him over to his father. After binding him he used to see him devoid of strength and forsake cruelty and hand him over to Hiranya. The father of Mahāṣani was superior to Devas and he used to put Indra in the nether worlds under surveillance.

17. After conquering Indra Mahāṣani marched against Varuṇa in order to conquer him. Varuṇa of great intellect offered his daughter to Mahāṣani.

18. Varuṇa gave his own abode in ocean to Mahāṣani. Friendship was generated between Varuṇa and Mahāṣani in this way.

19-20. Varuṇa's daughter Vāruṇī married Mahāṣani. In all the three worlds Mahāṣani the great Daitya was incomparable in virility, fame, heroism and strength. When the universe was devoid of Indra, Devas had mutual consultation.

Devas said :

21. Viṣṇu alone shall be the person to restore Indra. He alone is the slayer of Daityas. He alone shall be the seer of Mantras. He will create another Indra.

Brahmā said :

22-23. After having consultation together thus, Devas intimated this to Viṣṇu.

Saying, "Mahāṣani, the great Daitya, cannot be killed by me" Viṣṇu went to the lord of waters, Varuṇa, his father-in-law.

After going to Varuṇa, Keśava said to him about the defeat and discomfiture of Indra.

24-26. (He said) "You must do something whereby Indra comes out". At those words of Viṣṇu, O sage, the lord of the waters hurriedly went to the valorous Mahāśani, the husband of his daughter, and the son of Hiranya. Lord Varuṇa was excessively honoured by his son-in-law. The Daitya then humbly asked his father-in-law (the reason of) his arrival. Varuṇa mentioned to the Daitya the reason of his arrival.

Varuṇa said :

27-28. O mighty-armed one, give me Indra who has been conquered by you before. Dear friend, the overlord of Devas has been imprisoned in the nether worlds. He is worthy of our honour always. O slayer of enemies, give him to me. If the enemy is released (voluntarily) after being imprisoned, it will confer great glory on good men.

Brahmā said :

29-30. With very great difficulty the lord of the Daityas said "So be it" and gave to Varuṇa Indra, the husband of Śaci, along with his elephant. He appeared excessively majestic in the midst of Daityas. With diverse ways and modes of worship Mahāśani honoured Indra in the presence of the lord of Waters (Varuṇa).

Mahāśani said :

31. By whom have you been created, O Indra? Your valour is useless. Wherefore do you boast so much? You are being tormented by enemies in the battlefield. Still you continue to be Indra. This is ridiculous.

32. If any woman is imprisoned by a man it is proper on the part of her husband to set her free. Women are always dependent on men (So are you). O my good Indra, you shall also be a man!

33. You have been caught and imprisoned by me in the battle along with your vehicle. Your miraculous weapon (Thunderbolt) of uncontrollable power has been (cast off) somewhere. Fie upon your life! After being set free through the intercession of the lord of waters you still wish to live despite

the fact that you have lost the costly jewel, Cintāmaṇi, the park Nandana, the celestial damsels, fame, strength and everything that could be enjoyed by the lord of Devas.

34. "That which is the storehouse of fame is life, that which is antagonistic to fame is death"—even after knowing this, O Indra, how did you get yourself released through the intercession of the lord of Waters? Why don't you feel ashamed?

35. You were staying in heaven surrounded by Devas fanned by your beloved wife and eulogized by the celestial damsels. I think, indeed, bashfulness is afraid of you.

36. "You are the slayer of Vṛtra, killer of Namuci, breaker of cities; with the thunderbolt in your hand you have split the mountains". Thus Devas honour you. Hence, O victorious one! abandon all these.

37. How is it that the maker of people like you, the lord born of the imperishable lotus, did not get his heart broken? People like you continue to live, continue to mix with the people of the world even after getting insult and injury from enemies.

Brahmā said :

38. After saying this, the lord of Daityas gave Indra to the noble-souled Varuṇa. Thereafter, he said these words again.

Mahāśani said :

39. From now onwards Indra shall be the disciple and Varuṇa the preceptor—Varuṇa who is my father-in-law and through whom, O Indra, you have attained freedom.

40. In the same manner you shall behave like a servant unto Varuṇa. Otherwise, I will be obliged to imprison you and hurl you into the nether worlds.

Brahmā said :

41. After rebuking Indra thus and laughing again and again he took leave of Varuṇa and said (to Indra) "Go, go".

42. Indra then reached his abode completely overwhelmed by shame. He told his wife the details of his defeat and discomfiture at the hands of the enemy.

Indra said :

43. I have been told thus and treated thus, O lady of splen-

did face. O fortunate lady, tell me whereby I can console my soul.

Indrāṇi said :

44. O Indra, the slayer of Bala, I know the origin of Dānavas, their Māyā, mortification, grant of boons as well as their death.

45. Hence, I shall say for your satisfaction everything necessary for the death or defeat of that demon.

46. He is the heroic son of Hiranya. He is the powerful son of my paternal uncle (Puloman). Hence, he is my brother (cousin). He became arrogant due to the boons granted to him.

47. He propitiated Brahmā by means of penance and observances. He acquired a great power like this. What is it that cannot be achieved by means of penance?

48. Hence, no undue worry or wonder should be entertained by you. Listen. This must be pursued as it is overdue.

Brahmā said :

49-52. After saying thus, the daughter of Puloman said to Indra in great humility.

Indrāṇi said :

There is nothing which cannot be achieved by penance. There is nothing which cannot be achieved by sacrificial rites. There is nothing which cannot be achieved by devotion to Viṣṇu and Śiva, the lord of worlds. Again dear husband, this extremely splendid thing has been heard by me. O overlord of Devas, only women know the nature of women. Hence, O lord, there is nothing which cannot be achieved by the Earth and waters. It is through them only that penance or sacrificial rite can take place.

53. There too you shall go to that land which has become a holy centre. There you will attain all cherished desires by worshipping Viṣṇu and Śiva.

54. Again this has been heard by me. Only those women who are chaste ladies know everything. The world consisting of the mobile and immobile is sustained by them.

55. The forest of Dāṇḍaka is in the middle of the Earth and is its essence. Gaṅgā, the mother of the universe flows there. O lord, worship Śiva there.

56-57. Or worship Viṣṇu, lord of the worlds, the lord who dispels the agony and the grievance of the wretched and the distressed. The sole refuge of helpless men who are drowned in the ocean of misery is lord Śiva or lord Viṣṇu or Mother Gaṅgā. There is no other refuge anywhere. Hence by all means satisfy these with mental purity and concentration.

58. By means of devotion, penance or prayer perform the rite of propitiation along with me. Then you will attain welfare by the favour of lord Śiva and lord Viṣṇu.

59. If a man performs a good rite unknowingly the lord gives him as much benefit as he deserves; but if he performs it knowingly it shall be hundred times more beneficial. If a man performs a holy rite along with his wife it has everlasting benefit.

60. In every performance of a man it is the wife who assists him. Even if the tasks are very small they are not fruitful without her.

61. If a man does anything alone he gets only half the benefit, but if he does it along with his wife, O lord, the man gets abundant benefit.

62. This idea occurs in the Vedas too, which say that one who has understood holy rites very well takes the help of his wife.

It is heard that there is one excellent river Gautamī in Dāṇḍaka forest.

63. It subdues sins entirely. It bestows all cherished desires. Hence, go there along with me. Perform meritorious rites yielding great benefit.

64-66. Then you will get profuse happiness after slaying the enemies in battle.

Brahmā said :

Saying "So be it" the lord of hundred sacrifices went to Gaṅgā well known as Gautamī along with his wife and preceptor. He went to Gautamī, the mother of the universe, flowing in the middle of Dāṇḍaka forest. The delighted Indra went there

with an intention to perform penance unto Śambhu, the lord of Devas.

67. At the outset he bowed down to Gaṅgā. After taking the holy bath he joined his palms in reverence. Seeking sole refuge in Śiva he recited the following prayer :

Indra said :

68. May that Pināka-bearing lord be pleased with us—the lord who creates, protects and devours the entire universe consisting of the mobile and immobile beings through his own Māyā but does not get entangled in it; who is single, who is independent and who is of the nature of non-dual knowledge and happiness.

69. May that consort of Pārvati be pleased with me, the lord whose reality even Sanaka and others conversant with the esoteric doctrine of Vedānta, do not know; who is the bestower of all cherished desires and who is the enemy of Demon Andhaka.¹

70. The self-born lord created Brahmā and saw his terrible head. He plucked it off with the tips of his nails. He hurled it when it stuck to his nails and from it the three objects² of worldly existence, viz., virtue, love and wealth, originated.

71. Sin, poverty, greed, begging, delusion and adversity were born therefrom. Many other endless things also took shape from them. They became influential. They had the features of worldly misery. This entire visible world is pervaded by them.

72. On seeing everything, the lord of Devas became bewildered and said to the goddess : “The whole universe is crumbling down. O goddess of the worlds, protect it. O mother of the worlds, the sole refuge, O gentle lady, O fortunate one.

1. A demon with a thousand arms and heads, two thousands eyes and feet, so called because he walked like a blind man; killed by Śiva when he attempted to carry off the Pārijāta tree from Svarga.

2. *Trivarga*, i.e. the three supreme objects desired by worldly persons, viz., Dharma, Artha and Kāma. The fourth is Mokṣa or ultimate deliverance from the world of transmigration. All the four together are known as *caturvarga* i.e. four kinds of highest objects or *Puruṣārthacatuṣṭaya* i.e. four supreme objects of human endeavour.

73. O bestower of boons, the foundation of the universe, be victorious. You are the enjoyment of worldly pleasures, you are the concentration, you are the highest liberation. You were Svāhā, Svadhā, Svasti (hail), the primordial spiritual achievement, the speech and the intellect, O immortal goddess, devoid of old age.

74. At my behest you accord protection to the three worlds. They shall be created by you alone as variegated and wonderful as the one created by Prakṛti."

75. On being told thus by lord Śiva, the beloved wife of the lord became eager to embrace and chat lovingly to the lord. When she became tired she closely clung to half of the body of Śiva and discharged drops of sweat from the tips of her fingers.

76-78. From that, Virtue (Dharma) was the first to appear; then followed Lakṣmī, Dānam (charitable gift), good rain, the animals of rich variety, lakes, grains, flowers, fruits, the articles conducive to conjugal felicity, good bearing, dress and demeanour, great medicines linked with amorous toilet and sport, dances, songs, nectar, Purāṇa, Vedas, Smṛti texts, polity, food, beverages, weapons, scriptures, domestic utensils etc., miraculous arrows etc., holy centres, forests, sacrifices, social services, auspicious vehicles, splendid ornaments and elegant seats.

79-81. Due to contact with Bhava and on account of your fire, laughter, excellent perspiration, gentle talk and other secret activities and modes the world consisting of the mobile and immobile beings became devoid of sins, O goddess. Everything born therefrom also became so.

Happiness is abundant. Auspiciousness shines perpetually. This is because of your feelings, O goddess. Hence, O mother of the universe, O chief of the worlds, save me. I am afraid of worldly existence. There are some people who become silly due to abstruse arguments. Others get merged there. I bow down to that non-dualistic beautiful body of Śiva and Śakti.

Brahmā said :

82-86. Even as he was eulogizing thus, Śiva appeared in front of him.

Siva said :

O Indra, what is that thing you desire and seek from me? Tell me the best thing that you require.

Indra said :

My enemy is very powerful. He appears like thunderbolt. I have been imprisoned, abducted, taken to the nether worlds and harassed in many ways. I have been pierced by words sharp like arrows. This endeavour of mine is for the purpose of killing him. For that purpose, O lord, O lord of worlds, give me that virility whereby I will be able to conquer my enemy. Grant me other things too which will destroy the enemy. If that person from whom defeat and discomfiture had been experienced, is destroyed, I will consider myself born again. Renown is better than victory and splendour.

Brahmā said :

87-93. Śiva said to Indra thus :

"Your enemy cannot be slain through me alone. Hence you propitiate Viṣṇu, the unchanging lord also. With your intellect concentrated on nothing else, propitiate lord Janārdana Nārāyaṇa, the sole refuge of the three worlds. Propitiate him along with your wife. Then, O Indra, you will acquire what is pleasing to you through him and through me".

Lord Maheśvara, the primordial Maker, said again :

"Practice of Mantras, penance and Yogic exercises bestow spiritual achievement even if they are carried on at any confluence. The sages know it. What then if these things are practised at the confluence of Gautamī with the ocean ! or in the caves of mountains or at the confluence of rivers !

There is a brahmin, a great sage named Āpastamba on the southern bank of Gaṅgā. His mind remains fixed on the feet of Mukunda. I am pleased with him also, O slayer of Bala. Therefore you propitiate the club-bearing lord along with your wife."

Brahmā said :

94-95. After taking bath in the sacred confluence of Phenā and the Gaṅgā he eulogized the lord on the southern bank of Gaṅgā along with Āpastamba. With great purity of mind he

eulogized lord Janārdana by reciting various kinds of Vedic Mantras. He propitiated him through penance also.

96. Then Viṣṇu became pleased and spoke, "What should be given?"

Lord Indra said :

"Give me a slayer of my enemy".

97-99. Janārdana said to him, "Know that it is already granted."

By the grace of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Gaṅgā a person rose up from the water. He had the form of Śiva and Viṣṇu. He was having trident and discus in his hands. He went to the nether worlds and killed Mahāśani, the enemy of Indra. He is called Abjaka. He is Vṛṣākapi. He became a friend of Indra.

100. Though he was a resident of heaven, Indra used to follow Vṛṣākapi always. Seeing him attached to another person, Śacī became angry due to her love. The lord of hundred sacrifices laughingly consoled Śacī and said thus :

Indra said :

101. O Indrāṇī, I do not seek refuge except in my friend Vṛṣākapi. Either libation of water or the Havis offering in fire had been my favourite always.

102. I do not go anywhere else. My beloved one, I swear so by your body. O beautiful lady, it does not behove you to think suspiciously about me.

103. You are a chaste lady and my beloved one. You assist me in the performance of holy rites and advise me (on important matters). You have children. You are of noble birth. Who else can be my beloved ?

104-106. Hence, at your suggestion I reached the great river Gaṅgā. By the favour of the discus-bearing Viṣṇu, the lord of Devas, by the favour of Śiva, the lord of Bhūtas, by the favour of Vṛṣākapi, my friend Abjaka who was born of water and who is well known in the world. I have overcome my miseries, O fortunate lady. I am Indra here, the unfallen one. What cannot be achieved if a wife acts according to her husband's wish !

107. It may be difficult to attain liberation there (in a

householder's life) but, O splendid lady, the three things beginning with wealth (i.e. wealth, virtue and love) are possible. A wife who desires welfare in the two worlds is the greatest friend.

108. If she is of noble birth, if she always speaks pleasing words, if she is chaste, if she is richly endowed with good qualities and beauty and if she has equanimity during affluence and adversity, what is it that cannot be achieved by her in the three worlds!

109. It is because of your ideas that, my beloved wife, this auspicious thing has happened. Hereafter, I have to do only what is ordered by you and nothing else.

110. For practice of piety and attainment of other world there is nothing equal to a good son. To a distressed man there is no other curative remedy than his wife.

111. There is nothing like Gaṅgā for the attainment of salvation as well as for relief from sins. Listen to another thing also, O lady of splendid face.

112. There is nothing other than the realization of non-difference of Śiva and Viṣṇu for the achievement of virtue, wealth, love and salvation and for getting rid of sins.

113. Hence, O chaste lady, due to your intellect all these mentally cherished things have been obtained by the grace of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Gaṅgā.

114. It is on account of this that my position as Indra has become stable again by the power of my friend, I think. O beautiful lady, Vṛśakapi who was born of waters and is my friend.

115. You are my perpetual dear companion. There is nothing more endearing to me.

Among holy waters Gautamī and Gaṅgā are the best and among Devas Hari and Saṅkara are the best.

116. Hence, by the grace of all these I have acquired everything desired by me. This holy centre well known in the three worlds is pleasing to me.

117. Hence, I will request Devas for only this : Let them in due order permit this. Let the sages, Gaṅgā, Devas, Hari and Saṅkara permit this.

118. O Devas, on either bank of the river, there is Saṅkara in Indreśvara and lord Janārdana in Abjaka on the other side.

119. Viṣṇu, Trivikrama, directly sanctifies the Dāṇḍaka forest. Whatever holy centres are in between are the bestowers of everything meritorious.

120-124. Merely by taking bath here all of them will attain liberation along with their ancestors of five generations. If anything is given to the suppliants here, even if it be as little as a sesamum seed, it accords everlasting benefit to the donors. It bestows all cherished desires. It yields salvation. The narrative of Viṣṇu and Śambhu is conducive to the attainment of wealth, fame, longevity, health and merit. It yields salvation through knowledge and holy dip. Those who read or listen to the glory of this holy centre shall acquire merit. They will attain the power of memory of Śiva and Viṣṇu that causes the total destruction of all sins. It is this, that even the sages who have conquered their sense-organs and mind, seek.

Brahmā said :

125-127. Devas and sages spoke to him, 'It will be so'.

There are, on the northern bank of Gautami, seven thousand holy centres that bestow salvation and that are worthy of being resorted to by Devas, sages and Siddhas. Similarly, on the southern bank there are eleven thousand holy centres. Abjaka is mentioned as the heart of Godāvarī by great sages. It is the abode of rest of Iśa, Viṣṇu and Brahmā.

CHAPTER SIXTY

Āpastambatīrtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known as Āpastamba is famous in the three worlds. A mere remembrance of it is capable of destroying all sins completely.

2. There was a highly intelligent sage of great fame named Āpastamba. His wife named Akṣasūtrā was devoted to the pious activities of her husband.

3. His son named Karki was extremely intelligent and was a knower of truth. The excellent sage Agastya came to his hermitage.

4. After worshipping Agastya the wise great sage followed by his disciples began to ask.

Apastamba said :

5-6. O excellent sage, among the three Devas who is the one deserving worship ? From whom can we have worldly pleasures and salvation ? Who is the bestower of food ? Who is the infinite one, O brahmin ? Who is the deity of Devas? Which lord is worshipped by means of Yajñas ? Who is being sung about in the Vedas ? O great sage Agastya, speak out to dispel this doubt of mine.

Agastya said :

7. In the matters of virtue, wealth, love and liberation scriptures are said to be the authority. And among scriptures Vedas are considered to be the greatest authority.

8. The Puruṣa sung about by the Vedas is greater than the greatest. That which is destructible is Apara (not great)—The Amṛta (non-destructible) is called Para (great).

9. That which is Amūrta (unembodied) is Para and the Mūrta (embodied) is Apara which is of three kinds according to the distribution of attributes—Satva, Rajas and Tamas.

10. The very same entity is called in three forms as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. The greatest entity, the sole one, is the object to be known by the three Devas.

11. The spreading of the single one into many is due to difference in attributes and activities. The three forms arise for the good of the worlds.

12. Only he who knows the highest truth (or principle) is the learned one and not the other. He who speaks of difference (in the three forms) is called Liṅgabhedin (the splitter of Liṅga).

13. There is no atonement for that person who speaks of (real) difference between them. There is difference in the physical forms of the three Devas.

14. The Vedas are our authority in respect of the separate physical forms. The one that is formless is superior to them.

Āpastamba said :

15. By this (statement) I have not come to any fixed conclusion. In this respect too, let the secret doctrine be elaborated upon and explained quickly. That secret doctrine should be free from doubts and alternatives and it should be (important enough so as) deserving all riches.

Brahmā said :

16-18. On hearing this the holy sage Agastya spoke these words.

Agastya said :

Although there is no difference amongst these Devas, still the achievement of everything is possible only through Śiva of the nature of happiness. Śiva is that excellent brilliance which is the cause of the universe. O sage, propitiate that lord alone with the utmost devotion. The annihilator of all sins is in the Dāṇḍaka forest on Gautamī.

Brahmā said :

19-20. On hearing these words of the sage, he attained great pleasure. He asked : Which one yields worldly pleasures ? Which one yields salvation ? Is it the (one with form) or the one without form ?

Which is the form for creation ? Which is the form for protection ? Who is the donor ? Who kills everything ? What is it where all these things come to an end ?

Agastya said :

21. The form Brahmā has the characteristics of the creator, the form Viṣṇu is the protecting one, the form Rudra is destructive.

Brahmā said :

22. Āpastamba went to Gaṅgā and took his bath there. With self-control and holy observances he eulogized lord Śaṅkara, O Nārada, by means of this prayer.

Āpastamba said:

23-31. (Prayer)

I seek refuge in that Somanātha who is present in all living beings and who is fire in wooden pieces, fragrance in flowers, the future tree in seeds and gold in stones.

I seek refuge in that Somanātha who sportingly created this universe, who is the maker and dispenser of the destiny of the three worlds, who has the cosmic form and who is beyond both Sat and Asat (the existing and non-existing).

I seek refuge in that Someśvara by remembering whom an embodied being is not affected by the great curse of poverty, sickness etc. and those who resort to him obtain everything desired.

I seek refuge in that Someśvara by whom, after taking into consideration the Trayīdharma (the righteous activities laid down in the three Vedas), Brahmā and others had been assigned duties, by whom the body has been divided into two.

I seek refuge in that Somanātha to whom the obeisance sanctified by Mantras proceeds, to whom the Havis offered in the fire and the worship performed also go. It is the Havishanded over by him that Devas partake.

I seek refuge in that Someśvara than whom there is no greater or more excellent one, than whom there is nothing subtler and who is greater than the greatest.

I seek refuge in that Someśvara at whose behest the whole of this universe follows as if in a single action, the universe which is variegated and diversified, which is great and whose form is unimaginable.

I seek refuge in that Someśvara in whom there is superhuman power, the overlordship of everything, the states of being the maker and the donor, greatness, love, fame, happiness and the primordial virtue.

I seek refuge in that Someśvara who is perpetual refuge for all, who is worthy of being worshipped by all, who always loves a person who seeks refuge, who is always auspicious and who is the form of everything.

Brahmā said :

32-34. Then the delighted lord said to the sage, O Nārada, “(Seek anything) for your own sake or for others.”

Āpastamba said to Śiva :

“Those who take their bath and visit lord Iṣvara, the lord of the worlds should obtain their cherished desires”.

“Let it be so”, said Śiva to the sage. Thenceforward that holy centre is cited as Āpastambatīrtha. It is capable of dispelling the darkness of Avidyā that is beginningless.

CHAPTER SIXTYONE

Holy Centres Yamatīrtha and others

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre Yamatīrtha is well known as the increaser of pleasure to the Manes. It subdues sins entirely. Listen to what happened there.

2. Here is the story. It is an ancient legend. There was a divine bitch, O sage, famous by the name Saramā.

3. She had two extremely excellent dogs as sons. They always followed people. They had four eyes. They had only the air for their food and they were the favourites of Yama.

4. She used to keep watch over the cows of Devas as well as the animals set apart for Yajñas. The Rākṣasas, Daityas and Dānavas followed her while she was watching.

5-6. The highly intelligent Rākṣasas tempted that bitch, the mother of the dogs, who was guarding (the cows), by means of agreeable words and gifts. The splendid cows kept as the sacrificial animals were taken away by the sinful Rākṣasas. Then the bitch gradually came to Devas and said.

Saramā said :

7-11. The Rākṣasas bound me with nooses and hit me with blows. The cows and the animals kept apart for the completion of Yajñas, O Devas, were taken away by them.

Brahmā said :

Immediately after hearing her words, Br̥haspati said to Devas.

Br̥haspati said :

This (bitch) has deformed features. I see her sin. Those cows have been taken away only with her connivance and not otherwise. This sinful bitch appears like a virtuous one by her bodily movements.

Brahmā said :

At the words of his preceptor, Indra hit the bitch with his foot. On account of that kick milk flowed out of her mouth.

Indra said :

O bitch, milk has been drunk by you. It has been given to you by Rākṣasas. Therefore, our cows have been taken away by them.

Saramā said :

12-13. It is not my fault, O lord. Nor is it the fault of anyone. O lord of Devas, there is neither guilt nor negligence on my part. It is on your arrival that the cows were taken away by them. Are you then to be blamed. O lord ? Your enemies are very powerful.

Brahmā said :

14-17. Then the preceptor of Devas meditated and understood her misconduct. (He said) "O Indra, it is true that she is to be blamed. She has sided with our enemies".

Then Indra cursed her : "O sinful woman, become a bitch in the mortal world; you have become a sinner but you committed this sin out of ignorance."

Then on account of the curse of Indra she was born in the mortal world due to her sin. As cursed by Indra she became very terrible.

The lord of Devas attempted to bring back those cows which were taken away by the Rākṣasas. He intimated this to Viṣṇu.

18-21. Viṣṇu got ready to kill Daityas, Danujas and Rākṣasas who had taken away the cows. He took up his great bow

Śārṅga which is famous in the three worlds and which is the destroyer of Daityas.

Lord Viṣṇu who had conquered his enemies and who is worshipped by Devas and who is the lord of the universe stood in the Dandaka forest with the bow Śārṅga in his hand. Viṣṇu killed the powerful Daityas, Danujas and Rāksasas who were there and by whom the cows had been taken away. There the lord is well known as Śārṅgapāṇi.

22. Then Viṣṇu fought with the sons of Diti and the Rāksasas. Frightened of Viṣṇu they went to the southern quarter, O great sage.

23-26. Then Viṣṇu the great lord followed them. He overtook them by Garuḍa, his vehicle. With the arrows as swift as mind discharged from the Śārṅga, Viṣṇu killed them on the northern bank of Gaṅgā. The enemies of Devas were annihilated by the powerful Viṣṇu. By the arrows of great velocity, having good sound and well-inspired by means of magical and mystical words, discharged from the Śārṅga those enemies of Devas were annihilated. The place where the cows were recovered is called Bāṇatīrtha. It is well known in the worlds as Vaiṣṇava and Gotīrtha.

27. In the southern bank of Gaṅgā the cows were set apart as the sacrificial animals. These cows had fled and the Devas herded them together on Gaṅgā.

28. In its middle they caused an island to be made as the place of rest for the cows. Through those cows the Yajña of Devas was celebrated on Gaṅgā.

29. The island of cows in the middle of Gaṅgā is called Yajñatīrtha. That spot of sacrifice of Devas is the splendid bestower of all cherished desires.

30. The (Divine power) of Gaṅgā assumes an embodied form, O sage of great splendour. It is a raft that takes one across the ocean of worldly existence which is worthless but boundless.

31. She is the Yogamāyā, the goddess of the universe, the bestower of freedom from fear on devotees. Beyond that, on the southern bank of Gaṅgā is the holy centre of Gorakṣa.

32-33. The two dogs, the sons of Saramā and the favourites of Yama, with four eyes each described to Yama the details of their mother's guilt and the (subsequent) curse.

After intimating this duly they asked Yama as to what they should do to bring about happiness and the removal of the curse.

34-36. The son of Sun (Yama) went to his father accompanied by them and related to him (everything). On hearing it the Sun said to his son: "Dear son, O excellent Deva, take your bath duly in the Gautamī Gaṅgā, the sole sanctifier of the three worlds in the Daṇḍaka forest. Take your bath with full faith, due concentration and mental purity. With great devotional feelings eulogize Brahmā, Viṣṇu, me and Iśa in due order. Your servants will attain satisfaction."

37-38. On hearing the words of his father, Yama was delighted in his mind. For pleasing him, Yama delighted in his mind, went to Gautamī for propitiating the two gods. With mental purity and concentration he propitiated the excellent Devas in Gautamī Ganga, the dispeller of sins.

39-40. Accompanied by the dogs the glorious lord of the southern quarters propitiated Sun-god and Brahmā on the southern bank. By himself the valorous Dharma propitiated Iśāna and Viṣṇu on the northern bank. He prayed to them for many boons which would do good to the worlds. They granted the excellent boon removing the curse of Saramā.

Yama said :

41. O Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, those who take their holy dip in these holy centres shall obtain their splendid desires for their own good as well as for others' good.

42. Those who take their holy bath in the Bāṇatīrtha and remember Śāṅgapāṇi Viṣṇu will never experience the miseries of poverty for ages.

43-45. If anyone with self-control and holy observances takes his holy bath in the Gotīrtha or Brahmatīrtha, bows down to Brahmā and circumambulates the island, it is as fruitful as the circumambulation of the Earth consisting of seven continents and holding rich resources within its bowels. If he gives a little sun to a brahmin and if he performs Homa with anything in the holy fire after reaching Devayajana, he shall attain plenty of benefit of horse sacrifice and other Yajñas.

46. If a man recites but once Gāyatrī, the mother of Vedas,

it is as much fruitful as though all the Vedas have been read by him. The person who has no desire (while performing all these holy rites) becomes worthy of liberation.

47. By taking holy bath in the southern bank and by worshipping goddess Śakti devoutly and duly one shall attain all cherished desires.

48. The Śakti of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa is the mother in the form of the three Vedas. (One who worship her) attains all cherished desires. He shall be endowed with sons and riches.

49. If a man with self-control takes bath in the southern bank and sees Sun-god it is as fruitful as performing Yajñas with various monetary gifts.

50. He who takes his holy bath in the northern bank of Gaṅgā, bows down and sees Viṣṇu, attains the great region of Viṣṇu.

51-52. A man of self-control shall take bath in the Yamatīrtha and see the honoured Yameśvara. He shall then make the merit of Pitṛs everlasting, yielding benefits and conducive to the increase of their fame. By means of holy dip, charitable gift, Japas and eulogy even the manes of evil actions shall attain liberation.

Brahmā said :

53-58. There are eight thousand and three holy centres such as these, O Nārada. A performance of holy bath and charitable gift there yields everlasting merit.

The remembrance of these (holy centres) is meritorious and conducive to the destruction of sins of many births. By listening to their glory one's liberation shall be achieved along with that of the Pitṛs, and a reading of their narrative shall liberate one along with all the members of one's family. Their awful sins too will be destroyed at my behest.

The devotee shall perform holy bath and other rites there. He shall offer as charitable gift something with the soul under control. Then he shall perform the rites offering balls of rice to the ancestors. He shall bow down to these Devas. He shall obtain wealth, grains, fame, valour, longevity, health, riches, sons, grandsons, and a beloved wife. He shall obtain other desired objects also. He shall never be separated from his rela-

tives. He shall be delighted in his mind. He will be honoured by his kinsmen. He shall redeem even the Pitrs staying in hells. He will sanctify his family members. Accompanied by his beloved ones he shall remember Viṣṇu and Śiva at the time of death. Then he shall attain the blessed state of liberation as stated by those lords.

CHAPTER SIXTYTWO

Holy Centres Yakṣinīsaṅgama etc.

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre named Yakṣinī-Sangama yields all benefits. By taking bath and offering charitable gifts there one shall obtain all cherished desires.

2. One shall obtain the benefit of Satrayāga¹ merely by taking bath at the place where the lord is Yakṣeśvara who bestows worldly pleasures and salvation by granting his vision.

3-5. There was a sister of Viśvāvasu² named Pippalā. She went to the Satra of the sages residing on the bank of Gautamī. On seeing the sages there feeble and emaciated she laughed with great arrogance. She had (the temerity) to laugh at her elders. She repeated the Mantras firmly : "Let there be Vauṣat. Let there be Śrauṣat". She had repeated the Mantras with a wrong accent. Therefore, they cursed her: "Be a flowing river" Then she became the river famous as "Yakṣinī".

6. Then Viśvāvasu worshipped the sages and the three-eyed lord. Making the river join Gautamī he made it free from curse.

7-9. Thereafter that holy centre is remembered as Yakṣinīsaṅgama. By performing the rites of holy bath there and by giving charitable gifts one obtains all cherished desires. The place where Śambhu accompanied by Śivā became pleased with Viśvāvasu is the greatest holy centre Śaiva (pertaining to Śivā). It is well known as Durgātīrtha also.

1. Soma sacrifice lasting for more than twelve days.

2. A Gandharva chief.

It dispels all sins. It destroys all evil destinies and adversities. O great sage, it is the essence of all important holy centres. It is a holy centre praised by excellent sages. It bestows all spiritual achievements on men.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Suklatirtha and other Holy Centres

Brahmā said :

1. The holy centre well known as Śuklatirtha is the giver of success in all endeavours to men. By merely remembering it one shall attain all cherished objects.

2. There was a sage named Bharadvāja who was extremely righteous and well-known. His wife was Paithinasi by name. She was the ornament of a noble family.

3. That chaste lady sat on the bank of Gautamī and prepared sacrificial offerings for Fire-god and the Moon as well as for Indra and Fire-god.

4. When the Puroḍāśa was being cooked a terrible demon was born out of the smoke. He was a terror unto all the three worlds. He was desirous of devouring the Puroḍāśa.

5. "Who are you destroying my Yajña out of anger ?" The sage Bharadvāja, the excellent brahmin, asked him immediately. On hearing the words of the sage the Rākṣasa replied to him.

Rākṣasa said :

6. O Bharadvāja, know me as (the demon) well known as Havyaghna. I am the eldest son of Sandhyā and Prācina-Barhiṣ.

7. This boon has been granted to me by Brahmā : "Devour Yajñas as you please." My younger brother Kāli is strong and extremely terrible.

8. I am black. My father is black. My mother is black. So also my younger brother. I will destroy the sacrifice. I will cut off Yupa (sacrificial post). I am the destroyer.

Bharadvāja said :

9. Let my Yajña be saved by you. Performing Yajña is my

favourite and eternal duty. I know you are a destroyer of Yajñas (but) save my sacrifice along with the brahmin (priest).

Yajñaghna said :

10. O Bharadvāja, understand this brief statement of mine. Formerly, I was cursed by Brahmā in the presence of Devas and Dānavas.

11-12. Then the lord, the grandfather of the worlds, was pacified by me. (He said) "When the excellent sages sprinkle you with Amṛta (Nectar), O Havayaghna, you will be free from the curse and not otherwise". O brahmin, if you do this whatever you desire you will get. This is not at all false.

Brahmā said :

13-15. Bharadvāja said again : "You are my friend, O highly intelligent one. Tell me that whereby my sacrifice can be saved. I shall do that. Devas and Daityas joined together and churned the milk ocean. They obtained nectar with great effort. How can that be easily accessible to us ? Please, if you are favourably disposed tell me that which is readily available."

On hearing the words of the sage the Rākṣasa said happily.

Rākṣasa said :

16-17. The water of Gautami river is called Amṛta. Gold is called Amṛta. Ghee produced from cow's milk is also Amṛta, and Soma juice too is Amṛta. Sprinkle and shower me with these or at least with these three, viz. the water of Gaṅgā, ghee and gold. The water of Gaṅgā is superior to all. It is divine Amṛta.

Brahmā said :

18-23. On hearing this the sage experienced great pleasure. He took in his palm with great respect, the Amṛta, the water of the Gaṅgā and sprinkled the Rākṣasa with it. He sprinkled everything connected with the Yajña such as the sacrificial post, sacrificial animal and the circular platform of the sacrifice. When the noble-souled sage sprinkled, everything became white. The Rākṣasa became white. He who was dark in colour before became white in a moment. Bharadvāja the valorous one concluded his Yajña, bade farewell to the Ṛtviks and cast off the

38-39. The embodied soul who takes holy plunge there, in the confluence of Godāvari and the sea, is meritorious. He redeems his ancestors from the terrible hell and goes to the city of Śiva.

Bhimanātha is the Brahman itself which is to be understood through the Vedas and which should be prayed to, bowed to, and meditated upon. When he is seen the embodied beings never enter again the worldly scene of terrible misery.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR

The Confluence of Gaṅgā with Sea

Brahmā said :

1-5. That Gaṅgā who is worthy of being respected and honoured even by the gods joined the eastern sea, followed by all the Devas and eulogized by the sages and Maruts and Vasiṣṭha, Jābāli, Yājñavalkya, Kratu, Aṅgiras, Dakṣa, Marīci, Vaiṣṇavas (devotees of Viṣṇu).

Śātātapa, Śaunaka, Devarāta, Bhṛgu, Agniveśya, Atri, Marīci, Dakṣa, Manu, Gautama and others along with Kauśika, Tumbaru, Parvata and so on had their sins destroyed completely.

Agastya, Mārkaṇḍa etc. devoted to yogic practices, along with Gālava, Pippala and others, including Vāmadeva, descendants of Aṅgiras and Bhṛgu who were proficient in Smṛtis and agreeable due to their knowledge of the Vedas went to the divine river Gautamī. All of them were fully conversant with the subjects treated of in the Purāṇas. Indeed they knew many things. They began to pray by reciting Mantras and many Vedic passages of lovely nature. They were contented and pleased in their minds.

On seeing the river in confluence Śiva and Hari revealed themselves to the sages.

6. The immortal ones began the eulogy of the two lords, the dispellers of the distress of everyone, while they were being (respectfully) watched by the Manes.

7. The Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Maruts, the Guardians of the

Quarters—all these joined their palms in reverence and prayed to Hari and Śaṅkara.

8. O Nārada, these two lords are ever established in the seven well known confluences as well as the meeting place of the ocean and the Gaṅgā.

9. It is the place where lord Maheśvara is called Gautameśvara. There Mādhava is ever present along with Ramā (Lakṣmi).

10. Śiva well known by the name Brahmeśvara has been installed by me for helping all people and for my own reasons.

11. The lord well known as Cakrapāṇi was eulogized by me in the company of the Devas. Viṣṇu is present there along with the Devas and the groups of Maruts.

12-13. A certain Tīrtha is well known as Aindratiṛtha. The Tīrtha is otherwise called Hayamūrdhaka. Viṣṇu is (installed) there as Hayamūrdhan (Horse-headed). The Devas too are on the top thereof. There is (another) Tīrtha well known as Soma-tīrtha, where Śiva is called Someśvara. For the sake of Indra whose renown was on a par with that of Soma, Soma (Soma juice, Moon) was formerly prayed to by the Devas and the sages with the Rk Mantras ending with *Indrāyendo Parisrava* (O Indu—Soma juice, moon—flow out everywhere for the sake of Indra).

14. (3rd Mantra, 114th Sūkta of the IX Maṇḍala) (Tr. According to Sāyaṇa) “O Soma, protect us with all these, viz. the seven Diks (quarters) (excluding that of which Soma is the lord, i.e. north) presided over by different suns, the seven Hotṛs (Vaṣṭkartṛs), the seven Rtviks, the seven dazzling sons of Aditi (excepting Mārtāṇḍa who was thrown up, according to RV X. 72-8). O Indu, flow out everywhere for the sake of Indra.”

15. (4th Mantra, 114th Sūkta, IX Maṇḍala) “O Rājan (Lord as the person making them work) Soma, protect us by means of the Havis cooked for your sake. Let not the inimical assailant kill us nor destroy anything (wealth etc.) belonging to us. O Indu, flow out everywhere for the sake of Indra.”

16. (2nd Mantra, IX-114) “O Sage (self-address by the seer of the Mantra) Kaśyapa, adore the king Soma making your eulogies come up flourishing, thanks to the Sūktas of the seers of the Mantras. That Soma has become the lord, protector of

the creepers. O Soma, Indu, flow out everywhere for the sake of Indra."

17. (3rd Mantra, IX-112) "I am the composer of the Sūktas. Hence I am the father and son. I am the physician, Brahmā of the Yajña. This lady who makes the groats, gruel etc. is the mother or daughter. All of us of diverse mental predilections and activities are desirous of wealth and like cows we serve the world. O Indu, flow out everywhere for the sake of Indra."

18. By saying thus (i.e. by eulogizing Soma thus) the Soma was obtained for the Vajra-wielding Indra. By giving (the same Soma) to them Indra got his hundred sacrifices complete.

19-21. Hence that Tirtha is called Somatīrtha. Āgneyatīrtha is in front. Agni performed great Yajñas and having pleased me thereby obtained what he desired by my favour. I am stationed there for ever for the sake of helping the world. Similarly Viṣṇu and Śiva too are stationed there. Hence the Tirtha is called Āgneya. Beyond that is the Āditya Tirtha where the Sun full of the Vedic Mantras, comes everyday for adoration.

22. He comes in some other guise at midday in order to see me, Śāṅkara and Hari. There, at midday, all people should be bowed to always.

23. That is because it is not certain in what guise Savitṛ (Sun) comes there. Hence it is called Āditya Tirtha. Thereafter comes the Bārhaspatya Tirtha.

24. It is said that Bṛhaspati was worshipped by the gods in that Tirtha. He also performed different Yajñas there. Hence they know this Tirtha as Bārhaspatya.

25. Merely by remembering that Tirtha, propitiation of (malignant) planets can be achieved. Another Tirtha is on the excellent mountain Indragopa.

26. For some reason the great Liṅga was installed there by Himālaya. Hence it is called Adritīrtha.

27-28. Ablution therein and offering gifts yield auspicious results fulfilling cherished desires.

Thus that Gautami Gaṅgā originated from Brahūnādri and proceeds towards the ocean. A few of the Tirthas there have been mentioned by me. These are auspicious and holy secrets.

29. O Nārada, who has the power to narrate in full that

highly powerful Gautamī that is famous in the Vedas and Purāṇas and revered by the sages and all the people.

30. There can be no offence if the description by one prompted by devotion is inadequate. There is no doubt about it. For the sake of the benefit of the world certain features of that river have been indicated with very great difficulty.

31-33. Who is competent to describe Gautamī's power in every Tīrtha? Perhaps Viṣṇu, lord of Lakṣmī, and Śiva Someśvara may be. Only in due course of time, do some Tīrthas somewhere become meritorious, O highly intelligent one. But Gautamī is always so unto men. It is meritorious everywhere and always. Who can fully narrate her good qualities? Hence it is but proper to offer obeisance to her.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND FIVE

The Benefits of listenings to the Purāṇa

Nārada said :

1-2. O lord of Suras, O master of the Suras, you say that the holy Gaṅgā has three presiding deities. She had been brought down by a Brahmin and she is a splendid river sanctifying the Universe. On both of her banks at the beginning, middle and end she is pervaded by Viṣṇu, Iśa (Śiva) and you, O most excellent one among the Suras. Narrate once again succinctly. I have not been fully satisfied.

Brahmā said :

3-4. At the outset she was stationed in a Kamaṇḍalu (waterpot). Then she flowed from the feet of Viṣṇu. Thereafter she was stationed within the mess of the matted hair of Maheśvara. It is bowed to by all. Thanks to the Brahminical power, it was brought to the holy mountain after propitiating Śiva assiduously. Thereafter she proceeded towards the eastern sea.

5. Proceeding thus the divine river joined the sea. She has all the Tīrthas (on her banks) and fulfils all the desires of men. Her power is unique.

6. I do not think that there is any Tīrtha superior to it in

all the three worlds. Whatever thing one cherishes in one's heart can be realized by her own power.

7-8. Till today her greatness has not been adequately described by anyone. Whatever little is mentioned is out of devotion. This is my opinion that there will not be any Tīrtha greater than this river which is virtually Brahman (Supreme Absolute) itself. There cannot be any propriety in comparing her with another Tīrtha.

9. Wherefore has the intellect of everyone not been rendered completely calm even after hearing the eulogy of the Gaṅgā through the nectar-like statements of mine? O sage, this appears to be the most mysterious thing in all the three worlds.

Nārada said :

10-12. You are fully conversant with piety, wealth, love and salvation and hence competent to advise thereon. The Vedas with their secrets, the Purāṇas and the Smṛtis and whatever there is besides—all these are rooted in your utterance. O lord, kindly mention which is the best and foremost among the Tīrthas, Dānas, Yajñas, Tapas', services to the deities and practising of the Mantras. O lord, whatever you say with devotion should necessarily be so and not otherwise.

13. O Brahman, it behoves you to dispel this doubt of mine.

On hearing from him what had been lurking within his mind Brahmā was surprised and he said :

Brahmā said :

14. Listen, O Nārada. I shall tell you the secret of the excellent Dharmā.

The Tīrthas are of four kinds. The Yugas also are as many.

15. The Guṇas are three, the Puruṣas are three and the eternal deities are three. The Vedas in combination with the Smṛtis are enumerated as four.

16. The aims of human life are four; speech is of four kinds. The Guṇas too are four along with Samatva (equilibrium), O Nārada.

17. Dharma (piety, righteousness) is universal everywhere because virtue is eternal. That too is considered to be of

various kinds inasmuch as the Sādhiya (what is to be attained) and Sādhana (means of attaining) are different.

18. Its basis always is of two kinds—place and time. Dharma with the time as the basis waxes and wanes for ever.

19. In accordance with the Yugas it wanes quarter by quarter, O highly intelligent one. Dharma stands in need of Deśa (Place) in both respects.

20. Dharma based on time is ever firmly established in Deśa. When the Yugas wane Dharma does not wane in the Deśas.

21. If it were to be wanting in both Dharma would have been totally non-existent. Hence Dharma based on Deśa has the full complement of the four quarters.

22. That Dharma abides in the Deśas in the form of Tīrthas. In the Kṛta Yuga Dharma leans on the prop of Deśa and Kāla and settles down.

23. In the Tretā Yuga Dharma is deficient in one Pāda but has the full complement of the four quarters in respect to Deśa. In Dvāpara the deficiency is half in respect to Time but in Deśa it is fully present.

24. In the Kaliyuga Dharma moves about unsteadily on one leg (having only a quarter of itself). But it does not wane for one who comprehends Dharma in this way.

25. The differences in castes are maintained in accordance with the power of the Yugas. Dharma is of diverse nature as it follows Gunas and those who work according to Gunas.

26. It is in accordance with the Gunas that the Tīrthas, Varnas, Vedas, heaven and salvation take their origin or lose their power.

27. By virtue of such a form and activity Dharma becomes unique. Kāla is said to be Abhivyāñjaka (that which makes something manifest) and Deśa is said to be Abhivyāngya (that which is manifested).

28. Whenever Kāla assumes Abhivyakti (manifestation) that itself, O Brahman, is its token. Hence there is no doubt in this respect.

29. The form of the Devas and the Vedas shall be in accordance with the Yugas. Those of Karmans (rites), Tīrthas, castes and stages of life too (are in accordance with the Yugas).

30. A Tīrtha having three presiding deities is adored in all the worlds in the Satyayuga; in the other Yuga (i.e. Tretā) that with two presiding deities; and in the Dvāpara Yuga one with a single presiding deity.

31. It should be known that there is no such thing in Kaliyuga. Now listen to another thing. In the Kṛtayuga a Tīrtha is Daiva (of divine significance). They know that the same in Tretā is Āsura (of Asura significance).

32. It is said to be Ārṣa (of the saintly significance) in Dvāpara and Mānuṣa (of human significance) in Kaliyuga. I shall henceforth mention another reason. Listen, O Nārada.

33-35. What you have asked in respect to Gautamī, I shall explain to you in detail. O great sage, ever since the Gaṅgā came to the matted hair of Hara's head she had become the great favourite of Śambhu. Umā, the goddess of the three worlds, the mother and benefactress of the universe, well known as the quiescent Śruti, the bestower of enjoyment of pleasures and salvation, knew this mental proclivity of the lord and said so to the elephant-faced one (Gajānana).

Brahmā said :

36. On hearing those words of his mother the elephant-faced one spoke :

Gajavaktra said :

37. What is to be done ? Tell me my mother. Undoubtedly I shall do so.

Brahmā said :

38. Umā said this to her son, "Gaṅgā is stationed in the matted hair of Maheśvara and as such has truly become the favourite of Iśa. Just make her come down.

39. Further this is surprising that Iśa occupies that place always, O son. Where Śiva stays, the Suras and the eternal Vedas too stay.

40. The sages too stay there itself, so also all the men and the Manes. Hence make Iśāna, Maheśvara the lord of the Devas, leave the place.

41. When the lord is turned away from Gaṅgā, they too

are turned away. Listen to these words of mine. Turn Śaṅkara away from her in every respect."

Brahmā said :

42. On hearing those words of his mother, Ganeśvara said once again :

43-46. "Lord Śiva cannot be turned away from her by me. In case Śiva is not turned away from her the Devas too cannot be turned away, O mother of the Universe. There is another reason too. Formerly Gaṅgā was made to come down by Gautama, the noble-hearted sage, worthy of being worshipped by the entire world and the benefactor of all the three worlds. It was through the means suggested by me and adopted at your instance that the venerable Brahminical splendour propitiated the lord of the Devas, Bhava by means of austerities and prayers. At that time, that Gautama was told thus by the delighted Śaṅkara."

Śaṅkara said :

47. O highly intelligent one, choose as boons all good and pleasing things that you cherish in your heart. I shall grant you everything that you may desire.

Brahmā said :

48. When Gautama was told thus by Śiva, he said thus, even as I was listening: "O Śaṅkara, to me who beg of you give the meritorious Gaṅgā enmeshed in the matted hair. Of what avail to me is another boon?"

Brahmā said :

49. Śambhu, the benefactor of all the worlds, said to him once again :

Sambhu said :

50. Something that is to your own benefit has not been mentioned. Hence request for something very difficult.

Brahmā said :

51. With palms joined in reverence Gautama said to Bhava with his spirit undepressed :

Gautama said :

52. This itself is the most difficult thing that I have been able to see you. O Śaṅkara, by your grace, that has been achieved by me today.

53. Noble-minded persons become blessed and contented merely by remembering thy feet. What to speak when, Thou, the great Lord, have been seen directly ?

Brahmā said :

54-56. When this was spoken by Gautama, Bhava said to the Brahmin with great delight: "Request has been made by you for helping the three worlds. O highly intelligent one, not for yourself. (Now) ask something for your own self".

On being told thus the Brahmin thought it over and begged Śiva with great humility and devotion with undepressed spirit. He made the request once again for rendering help unto all the worlds. Even as the guardians of the quarters were listening Gautama said thus :

Gautama said :

57. Inasmuch as the divine river extending up to the ocean has been released from Brahmā's mountain, O bull-bannered one, it is incumbent upon thee to stay thereon everywhere and always.

58. O lord of the worlds, thou alone art the giver of the fruit unto those who desire benefits. O lord of the Devas, other Tirthas are auspicious only in certain places.

59. They know that place alone to be the yielder of auspiciousness where thy presence is constant. It is the place where Gaṅgā stationed in the crown of thy matted hair has been handed ever. O Śaṅkara, thou being present everywhere there are Tirthas (everywhere).

Brahmā said :

60. On hearing those words of Gautama, Śiva said again with delight :

Śiva said :

61-64. A devotee may give away anything anywhere but

that should be given with excessive devotion. He may offer libation unto the (departed) ancestors, he may listen to sacred stories, he may recite or remember them, O Gautama. Whatever the man does on the Gadāvarī with due observances of vows bears ample fruit. Merely by remembering Gautamī one acquires that piety and virtue that one obtains by gifting away the entire beautiful earth adorned with Dharma and consisting of mountains, forests and parks and decorated with gems and handed over with all medicinal herbs and the oceans too. O brahmin, the earth near the river Godāvarī is mentioned to be of this sort.

65-67. O excellent brahmin, by performing holy ablution, Dāna etc. devotedly in the great river Gautamī, worthy of the veneration of the entire universe, a man obtains more merit than what is acquired by a wise devotee when he observes all the vows in my presence at the time of the solar or lunar eclipse and gifts away beautiful cows adorned with everything unto Viṣṇu or a king along with their calves at a confluence famous all over the world.

68. Hence the Gaṅgā Godāvari led by you shall become the destroyer of all sins and the bestower of everything desired.

Ganeśvara said :

69. O mother, this has been heard by me directly from Śiva who was speaking to Gautama. For this reason Śambhu is invariably present in the Gaṅgā.

70-72. O mother, who can make that ocean of mercy leave the place ? Still, Mother, this can be done. Fettered by the nooses of hindrances (i.e. due to unexpected obstructions,) men may not go to the Godāvarī though it is nearby. They may not bow down to Śiva nor remember the lord and eulogize him. However, Mother, I will do something for your satisfaction, for there is distress in disobeying what you say. Forgive me.

Brahma said :

73-74. Ever since then, Vighneśa creates some obstacles in regard to men. He who devoutly goes to Gautamī ignoring the obstacles gets his purpose fulfilled. No further duty remains for him.

75. To the base man many obstacles do occur even as he desires to set off from his house. If he goes to the Gaṅgā after setting his foot firmly over it does he not obtain any benefit from it ?

76. Who can describe its power (completely) should he be even Sadāśiva himself? Everything has been succinctly narrated by me closely following the tradition and mythology.

77. In the extensive mythological legends there is everything conducive to the attainment of piety, wealth, love and liberation in the entire world consisting of mobile and immobile beings.

78. The Purāṇa has been narrated for the benefit of all the worlds. It consists of many pious rites. If perused carefully it contributes to the good of the worlds. It contains everything mentioned in the Vedas. It consists of all the secret doctrines of the Śruti-s. The very name (Purāṇa) indicates that it is the cause of everything excellent.

79. If anyone devoutly listens to or recites one verse or one word out of this or utters 'Gaṅgā', 'Gaṅgā', he shall obtain the spiritual benefit thereby.

80. The word Gaṅgā uttered or the water of the Gaṅgā imbibed becomes excellent. It is capable of destroying the stigma of Kali age. It is auspicious. It gives splendour and all Siddhis (super-natural powers). It is worthy of veneration in the world. It grants desired things.

81. Well done, O Gautama ! Welfare unto you. Who else is equal to you ? It is you who eagerly brought this Gaṅgā to the Daṇḍaka forest.

82. He who utters 'Gaṅgā Gaṅgā' even from hundreds of Yojanas away becomes rid of all sins : He goes to the world of Viṣṇu.

83. In all the three worlds there are thirtyfive millions of Tīrthas. When Jupiter is in the sign of Leo, all these Tīrthas come to the Gaṅgā for a bath.

84. Holy ablution in the Bhāgirathi for sixty-thousand years is equal to a single bath in the Godāvarī when Bṛhaspati (Jupiter) is in Siṁha (Leo).

85. O son, this Gautamī grants salvation unto all men who bathe therein anywhere at any time. That is due to Śiva's bidding.

86. Merely by listening to it one gets that benefit which is obtained by performing thousands of Aśvamedhas (Horse-sacrifices) or hundred of Vājapeya sacrifices.

87. O Nārada, if this Purāṇa narrated by Brahmā is kept in the house by anyone he need not be afraid of the Kali age.

88-90. This excellent Purāṇa should not be narrated to anyone and everyone. This should be recited only to a noble-hearted devotee of Viṣṇu who is calm and has great faith. This accords worldly pleasures and salvation. It destroys sins. Merely by listening to it a man becomes contented and his desires are fulfilled. If one copies this and gives the book to a Brahmin he gets rid of all sins. He never enters a womb thereafter.