

30. The gods too call it the golden lotus. Seeing the Brahma-padma with Hari within it in the Mānasa lake, one attains the supreme Brahman from where he does not return.

31. O king, there is another reason also for your becoming leprous. The sun remains within this lotus.

32-33. He is really the eternal Supreme self. You thought of wearing that on the head thinking you would become famous thereby and so sent the charioteer to fetch it. That very moment you became afflicted by leprosy.

34. Therefore, O king, you also perform this vrata and by its power you will be cured of leprosy.

CHAPTER SIXTYTHREE

Putraprāptivrata

Agastya said:

1. O king, now listen to the brief account of the Putraprāptivrata. I am going to give you.

2. This Putraprāptivrata (the vow for getting a son) is to be performed fasting on the Aṣṭamī tithi in the dark half of the month of Bhādrapada.

3. The *San̄kalpa* should be made on the Saptamī day and the worship to Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa lying in Devakī's lap surrounded by the mothers, should be conducted on Aṣṭamī.

4. On the Aṣṭamī day, early in the morning, Viṣṇu should be worshipped with full concentration of mind.

5. Then homa should be performed with barley, black sesamum, ghee and curd. Brahmans should be fed and given dakṣiṇā.

6. Then the performer of vrata may take food, first Bilva leaves, and then with oils and other items.

7. Doing in this way on the Kṛṣṇapakṣa Aṣṭamī every month, an issueless person begets children.

8-10. It is known that in ancient times the valiant king Śūrasena who was issueless, performed penance in the Himālayas, and the Lord himself told him about this vrata, and accord-

ingly he performed it and got a son Vasudeva by name who later on performed many sacrifices. And the saintly king (Śūrasena) gained salvation.

11. Thus, O king, I have told you about Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī. (In this Vrata), at the end of the year, a pair of cows should be gifted to a Brahmin.

12. Such is the Putravrata narrated to you. By performing it one gets freed from all sins.

CHAPTER SIXTYFOUR

Śauryavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you about another vrata called Śauryavrata (the vow for valour) by which even a timid man becomes valiant all of a sudden.

2. On the Navamī day in the month of Āśvayuja one should undertake absolute fasting. Taking the *saṅkalpa* on the Saptamī day and remaining without food on Aṣṭamī, on the Navamī day flour should be taken first in all reverence.

3. Feeding the Brahmins, goddess Durgā who is Mahāmāyā, Mahābhāgā and Mahāprabhā should be worshipped.

4-5. Observing in this way for one whole year, at the end of the vrata, young girls should be fed, and, according to means, given golden garments. The goddess should then be implored saying, "May the goddess be pleased with me".

6. By performing thus, a deposed king gets back his kingdom, the ignorant man gets knowledge and the fear-stricken man gets valour.

CHAPTER SIXTYFIVE

Sārvabhaumavrata

Agastya said:

1. I shall now tell you briefly about the Sārvabhaumavrata (vow for emperorship) by performing which properly, a king can become an emperor.

2-4. On the Daśamī tithī in the bright half of the month of Kārttika, one should take food only in the night and offer pure *bali* to the different quarters with flowers of various kinds, after offering worship to Brahmins, and pray with devotion to the quarters saying, "May you all be favourable to me in life after life". So saying *bali* should be offered to them with pure mind.

5. Food should not be taken in the night, but well-cooked food with curd may be taken before and after.

6. He who performs so, for one year, gains victory in different quarters.

7. If he performs this in the prescribed manner without food starting from Ekādaśī in the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa and continues for one year, Kubera gets pleased and grants abundant wealth.

8. It is a great vrata relating to Viṣṇu if on Ekādaśī, whether in the bright half or dark half of the month, one fasts and takes food on Dvādaśī day.

9. Such observance destroys even great sins.

10. Then there is Dharmavrata, which should be started in the night of Trayodaśī in the bright half of the month Phālguna. It is Raudravrata starting in Caturdaśī in the dark half, from the month of Māgha and continuing for one year.

11. It is Pitṛvrata when it is performed on the Amāvāsyā day. All these have been now told to you.

12. If one continues these vratas for fifteen years, one gets reward according to their intensity.

13. O king, performing them according to the prescribed rules, is equivalent to performing thousands of Aśvamedha and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices.

14-15. Even a single vrata is capable of destroying all sins. A king who performs all of them gets the whole universe under his control and finally attains the celestial region called Virāja.

CHAPTER SIXTYSIX

*Nāradya Pañcarātra**Bhadrāśva said:*

1. I am eager to know whatever wonder you have seen or heard. Please tell me.

Agastya said:

2. Lord Janārdana is himself of the nature of wonder. The wonders I have seen about him are many and varied.

3. O king, when sage Nārada once went to Śvetadvīpa he saw there many effulgent men bearing the conch, disc and lotus.

4. Seeing them he began to ponder over as to who was Lord Viṣṇu among them.

5. He was unable to know who was the Lord Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) with conch, disc and mace, to whom he could offer worship.

6. Baffled thus, he began to meditate on lord Kṛṣṇa, the great Nārāyaṇa.

7. By this meditation for a thousand divine years, the lord became pleased with him.

8. He appeared before him and asked him what boon He could give him.

Nārada said:

9. I have meditated on you for a thousand years. If you are pleased with me, tell me how I may attain you.

The great lord said:

10. O sage, those who perform sacrifice with Puruṣasūkta and those who learn the Vedic Texts attain me.

11. In the absence of Vedas and Śāstras, those who do sacrifice in the manner ordained in the Pāñcarātra attain me.

12. The Pāñcarātra is for Brahmins, Kṣatriyas and Vaiśyas For Śūdras and others what is laid down is going to the temple and utterance of my names but not my worship.

13-14. O sage, I declared this in the most ancient times for the multitude. Any one who follows it and becomes my devotee,

will retain this in his mind when the fruits of his actions disappear.

15. Others who are engulfed by the feelings caused by Rajas and Tamas, become indifferent towards me.

16. In Kṛta, Tretā and Dvāpara yugas, those with the *sattva* element (predominating) reach me, but in Kali people have a preponderance of Rajas and Tamas.

17-18. Listen to me Nārada, now, I give you another boon. This rare Pañcarātra doctrine of mine will fully dawn upon you by my blessing. You need have no doubt in this matter.

19. I can be attained through the Vedas, Pāñcarātra, Bhakti and Yajña, but not by anything else even if resorted to for crores of years.

20. Telling this to Nārada, the great lord disappeared, and Nārada too went to heaven.

CHAPTER SIXTYSEVEN

The Wonder of Viṣṇu

Bhadrāśva said:

1. Who are the two women in this world, one black and the other white, and who is both black and white?

2. Who is this pure person, who became sevenfold? Who is the lord who is twelve-fold and who has two bodies and six heads?

3. How was conjugal unity brought about through the rising sun? How was this world expanded?

Agastya said:

4. The white woman and the black woman are sisters. The woman who is of the dual colour, black and white, is the night.

5. The person who being one became sevenfold, is the ocean which is seven in number.

6. He who is twelve-fold and has two bodies and six heads is the year and the two bodies are the two movements (northward and southward), the six faces are the six seasons and thus the person is verily the year.

7. The conjugal unity is the day and night brought about by the sun and the moon, and from this dual god arose the propagation of the world.

8-9. O king, Viṣṇu should be considered the Supreme God. One who does not do the rites ordained by the Vedas, can never see him.

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

Yugadharmā

Bhadrāśva said:

1. How should this great lord, the omnipresent Supreme Soul, be known in four yugas?

2. What are the practices to be observed in each yuga by the castes? How can a Brahmin who contacts a woman not his own, can get himself purified?

Agastya said:

3. In the Kṛtayuga the earth becomes connected with Devas by Vedic rituals. In the Tretāyuga the same is accomplished through sacrifices.

4. In the Dvāparayuga by the mingling of Sattva and Rajas, the king reigns according to the extent of his righteousness. In Kaliyuga Tamas predominates.

5-6. In the Kali age Brahmins stray from the path of righteousness and the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras become mostly lowcastes without truth and purity. Then the world gets spoiled and the dharma of the castes begins to disappear.

Bhadrāśva said:

7. How can a Brahmin, Kṣatriya, (Vaiśya) and Śūdra purify himself if he happened to have sexual connection with a prohibited woman. Is such a connection tolerated at all?

Agastya said:

8. A Brahmin can cohabit with (women of all) the four

(castes), a Kṣatriya with three (avoiding Brahmin), a Vaiśya with two (avoiding Brahmin and Kṣatriya) and Śūdra with his own (only).

9. To the Kṣatriya the Brahmin woman is prohibited, to the Vaiśya the Brahmin and Kṣatriya women are prohibited and to the Śūdra all these three.

10. Manu has declared that to a man in the lower caste a woman of the higher caste is prohibited; so too the mother, mother's sister, mother-in-law and brother's wife.

11. To one in the lower caste, a woman in the higher caste is fully excluded; so too the daughter-in-law, daughter, the friend's wife and grand-daughters.

12-13. The women of the washerman class and similar others are also of the prohibited category. Cohabiting with a woman of the prohibited category produces great sin.

14. The atonement for a Brahmin for such prohibited cohabitation is *prāṇāyāma* (control of breath in the prescribed form) for a hundred times.

15-16. The sin acquired by a Brahmin by prohibited association with the woman of a different caste, even during a long time, disappears by reciting the *Gāyatri mantra* with *praṇava* ten times and by *prāṇāyāma* three hundred times. Even the sin of killing a Brahmin (disappears by such a practice), then should we say about the other (less grave) sins?

17. It may also be noted that the Brahmin who is able to realise the Supreme god by meditation and worship is not touched by sin.

18. The learner of the Vedas is not affected even if he happens to commit numerous sins.

19. By meditating on Viṣṇu, learning the Vedas, giving gifts and performing sacrifices for Hari, a Brahmin always remains pure and gets over all obstacles.

20. I have thus told you all that you asked me about. I have briefly stated what has been said by Manu and others in detail.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Wonder of Nārāyaṇa

Bhadrāśva said:

1. O Sage, be pleased to tell me what happened to you in your body that you are long-lived.

Agastya said:

2. O king, this body of mine is associated with many interesting things. It is purified by Vedic knowledge and it will remain for numerous kalpas.

3. Wandering over the whole world, O king, I once went to the great land Ilāvṛta near mount Meru.

4. There I saw a beautiful lake, near it a great hermitage and within it a frail sage performing penance.

5. Seeing him who was reduced to a skeleton and was wearing torn bark garment, I was wondering who he was.

6. In order to gain his confidence, I exclaimed: "O sage, I have come to you, please give me something".

7. The sage said: "Welcome to you, O great Brahmin, please remain here. I shall show hospitality to you".

8. At these words of his, I entered the hermitage and saw the sage glowing with lustre.

9. Seeing me standing on the floor, the sage hummed and immediately there arose splitting the earth five virgins.

10. One of them took a golden seat and offered it to me. Another held water in her hand and a third began to wash my feet with it.

11. Two others holding fans stood on my sides. The sage again hummed.

12. As a result, a large golden canoe appeared in that lake beautifully floating.

13. In that canoe were hundreds of virgins holding golden pots. Seeing them the sage told me:

14. "O Brahmin, all this is for your bath. Please enter the canoe and have your bath".

15. Then I entered that canoe, but soon the canoe sank into the lake.

16. When I was thus immersed in water, I saw that place, that sage and myself at the top of mount Meru.

17. O king, I then saw the seven oceans, the seven principal mountains, and the seven islands constituting the earth.

18. Even now I remain thinking of that glorious world and how and when I could get there (again).

19. I have now satisfied your curiosity regarding the great lord and what happened to my person. What else do you wish to ask?

CHAPTER SEVENTY

Rudragītā I

Bhadrāśva said:

1. O sage, what Vrata, Tapas or Dharma was done by you to get at that world again?

Agastya said:

2. No one can think of getting at those worlds without worshipping Viṣṇu with devotion. When once he is worshipped, all of them are easily attainable.

3. Thinking, thus, O king, the eternal Viṣṇu was worshipped by me with sacrifices in which dakṣiṇā was liberally given.

4. As I was worshipping him in his form as sacrifice for a long time, Devas who were invoked in the sacrifice came there together with Indra.

5-6. When Indra and the other gods were remaining in their positions in the sky, the great god Rudra arrived there. He too stood in his position.

7-9. Seeing all the gods, sages and great serpents arrive there, the sage Sanatkumāra, son of Brahmā, came there in a very minute aerial car resembling the sun and he, a great yogi who could know the past, present and future, prostrated before Rudra.

10-11. At the sight of these Devas, sages like Nārada, and Sanatkumāra and Rudra, I asked who among them was the

greatest to whom sacrifices could be offered. Then in the presence of gods, Rudra told me:

Rudra said:

12. Listen to me all of you Devas, Devarṣis, Brahmarṣis, and you intelligent Agastya in particular.

13-14. He for whom sacrifices are to be performed is the great and omnipresent lord Nārāyaṇa from whom the entire universe has arisen and in whom it is dissolved along with Devas.

15-16. That great lord put himself to a three-fold transformation. With Sattva predominating in him, he associated himself with Rajas and Tamas, and created out of his navel Brahmā seated in the lotus. Brahmā associated himself with Rajas and Tamas and created me.

17-18. Lord Hari is Sattva and he is the ultimate. Brahmā, the four-faced god, who arose from the lotus is Sattva and Rajas. That which is with Rajas and Tamas is no doubt, myself.

19. There is the trio constituted of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Sattva is of the nature of Nārāyaṇa and all living beings are liberated by it.

20. By Rajas associated with Sattva arises this creation which has got Rajas predominating. This is well known as the creation of Brahmā.

21. The actions not laid down in the Vedas but are, however, based on Śāstras, are called Raudra (pertaining to Rudra) and that is not commended for people.

22. Actions not out of Rajas, but purely out of Tamas, lead people to ruin both in the present world and in the world beyond.

23. Sattva pertains to Nārāyaṇa and living beings have Sattva as the means of liberation, and Nārāyaṇa is considered as of the nature of sacrifice.

24. In the Kṛtayuga, Nārāyaṇa is worshipped in his pure and minute form. In the Tretāyuga he is worshipped in the form of sacrifice and in the Dvāpara yuga according to Pāñcarātra.

25. In the Kaliyuga he is worshipped in the manner laid down by me in various Tāmasic forms and with the motive of animosity.

26. There is no god above him in the past, present or future.

He who is Viṣṇu is Brahmā and he who is Brahmā is Maheśvara too.

27. Men who are learned in the three Vedas and adepts in sacrifices have declared that he who draws a distinction among us three, is sinful and wicked and faces downfall.

28. O Agastya, listen. I shall tell you about the early times when people were not having devotion to Hari.

29-30. In olden times, the people of the Bhūloka (Earth) performed sacrifice to Janārdana, and went to the Bhuvanloka, and from there worshipped Him and attained heaven being liberated in the gradual manner.

31. (Even) after being thus liberated, everyone began to meditate on Hari, and He being present everywhere, appeared before them.

32. He asked them all as to what he might do for them. They then bowed to him and said:

33. "O great god, all people have been now liberated. How then will creation proceed and who will go to hell?"

34. Thus asked by Devas, lord Janārdana told them: "During the (first) three yugas, most people reach me.

35. But in the last yuga (Kali) those who attain me will be few. I then create the force of stupefaction which deludes people.

36. O you Rudra, you produce the Mohaśāstra (the science of stupefaction). With a little effort you produce delusion".

37. So saying, the great lord concealed himself and I was made very manifest.

38. From then onwards people became more interested in the śāstras which I promulgated.

39. Following the Vedic path, (worshipping) lord Nārāyaṇa and finding unity (in all the three gods), people get liberation.

40. Those who consider me as different from Viṣṇu or Brahmā, are driven to do sinful deeds and reach hell.

41. It is for the delusion of those who are outside the Vedic fold that I introduced the śāstra called Naya, Siddhānta etc.

42. This is the rope (Pāśa) that binds men (Paśu) and that should be snapped. Therefore, it is the Pāśupata śāstra which is Vaidik.

43. O sage, my body is of the Vedas. This truth is not known by those who propound other śāstras.

44. I am to be known through the Vedas and particularly by the Brahmins. I am the three yugas and also Brahmā and Viṣṇu.

45. I am the three guṇas Sattva, (Rajas and Tamas), the three Vedas and the three fires, and three worlds, the three Sandhyās¹ and the three Varṇas.²

46. I am the three savanas³, the three bonds in the world.

47. He who knows this and also knows me as Nārāyaṇa, the lotus-born Brahmā and myself as one made different by the qualities (has right knowledge). I am essentially one, it is ignorance that produces the sense of difference.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

Rudragītā II

Agastya said:

1. Said thus by Rudra, all the gods and sages bowed to him; I too did the same.

2. After bowing thus, when I looked at him, I saw in his body Brahmā.

3. I also saw in his heart lord Nārāyaṇa in an extremely minute form glowing like the Sun.

4. Seeing this all the sacrificing sages were wonder-struck and hailed him uttering the Sāma, Ṛk and Yajurvedas.

5. Then they asked Parameśvara (Rudra) how in one and the same god all the three gods are seen.

Rudra said:

6. O learned men, whatever is offered in the sacrifice for me, is shared by all the three of us.

1. Morn, noon and evening.

2. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya

3. Vedic rites to be performed in the morning, noon and evening.

7. O great sages, there is no diversity among us, and discerning people do not find any such thing”.

8. Thus said by Rudra, O king, all the sages asked him about the purpose of Mohaśāstra (which deludes people).

The sages said:

9. You have produced a separate śāstra to stupefy the world. Be pleased to tell us why you have done this.

Rudra said:

10. There is in Bhāratavarṣa a forest called Daṇḍaka. There a Brahmin named Gautama was performing severe penance.

11. Brahmā was very much pleased at this, and he asked the ascetic to seek a boon from him.

12. Thus asked by Brahmā, the creator of the worlds, he requested, “Give me abundance of crops and grain”. And Brahmā granted it.

13-14. Getting this boon, the ascetic built a large hermitage at Śataśṛṅga and there he used to reap every morning the ripe grain and cook it at noon and offer sumptuous food to Brahmins.

15. He was doing this for a long time, but once a severe drought occurred which lasted for twelve years.

16. Distressed at this drought and very much famished, all the sages in the forest went to Gautama.

17. Seeing them all in his hermitage, Gautama bowed to them and asked them to stay there.

18. They remained there eating a variety of food till the drought was over.

19. Then those sages felt a desire to undertake a pilgrimage.

20. Knowing this the great sage Mārīca spoke to the sage Śaṇḍilya.

Mārīca said:

21. “O Śaṇḍilya, I say for your good that sage Gautama is like your father. Without telling him we should not leave here for penance”.

22. When told thus, the sages laughed and said, “Have we sold ourselves to him by taking his food”?

23. Again they spoke of leaving the place. They also created a magical cow and left it at the hermitage.

24. Seeing that cow wandering in the hermitage, Gautama took some water in his hand and splashed it on its body (to drive it out).

25. Then that magical cow fell down like a drop of water.

26. Seeing it thus hurt, he turned to the sages starting to leave and asked them with reverence:

27. "O Brahmins, please tell me why you are going leaving me, your devotee".

The sages said:

28. "O sage, so long as the sin of killing the cow remains in you, we shall not eat your food".

29. Told thus, Gautama who knew what was righteous, asked them to tell him what was the atonement for the sin of having killed the cow.

The sages said:

30. "This cow is not dead but has only become unconscious. Bathed in the water of Gaṅgā, it will doubtless rise up.

31. The atonement is only with regard to one that is killed. So penance may be performed. Please don't be angry". So saying they all left.

32. When they were gone, Gautama went to the great mount Himālaya to perform severe penance.

33. For one hundred and one years I was worshipped, and, being pleased by that, I asked him to seek a boon.

34. He sought me the river Gaṅgā in my matted hair to be made to follow him.

35. I then let off the river from one part of my head and Gautama led it to the place where the cow was lying.

36. Washed by that water the cow rose up, and the river became great with holy water and sacred spots.

37. Seeing that great wonder, the seven sages came there in aerial cars saying "Well done, well done.

38. Blessed you are O Gautama, who is there equal to you in that you have brought this Gaṅgā to this Daṇḍaka (forest)".

39. Then Gautama was wondering as to how he became the cause for hurting the animal.

40. He realised then that it was all the result of the magic adopted by the sages (who were living in his hermitage) and cursed them who were sages only in appearance.

41. "You will all be outside the three Vedas and ineligible to perform Vedic acts".

42. Hearing the curse of Gautama thus pronounced on those sages, the Seven Sages told him: "Although your words will have due effect, you should not mean it for all time.

43. In the Kali age let these Brahmins become such as to be ungrateful to those who do them good.

44. But, burnt by the fire of the words of your curse, let them in the Kali age become devotees.

45. But let them be outside the fold of Vedic rites. Let this river also have the secondary name Godāvārī.

46. In Kaliyuga those who come to this river and give gifts of cows and other materials according to their capacity, will delight themselves with the gods.

47-48. If at the time when Jupiter is in Leo one takes bath there and propitiates the manes according to the rules, they will go to heaven even if they have fallen in hell, and those who are already in heaven will get final release.

49. You will attain great fame and gain eternal liberation".

50. Then the seven sages went to Kailāśa where I was with Pārvatī and told me:

51. "In the Kali age many will have your form with crown of matted hair assuming by themselves ghostly forms and wearing liṅgas.

52. For their sake, give a śāstra to all these people under the influence of Kali".

53. Requested by them thus, I produced a Saṁhitā which contained rules for Vedic rites as well.

54. This Saṁhitā was named Niśśvāsa, and Bābhavya and Śaṅḍila were absorbed in it.

55. Deluded by me, people out of selfish motives, will promulgate their own śāstras in Kaliyuga.

56. The *Niśśvāsasaṁhitā* with a lakh of verses alone is authoritative and that gives the discipline regarding Pāśupata.

57. This follows the path of the Vedas, and whatever is outside its scope should be considered as impure.

58. The Vedāntins in Kaliyuga resort to Rudra. Fickle-minded people frame their own śāstras, but I don't remain with them.

59-60. In yore, I assumed the fierce Bhairava form for the sake of the gods and for the annihilation of the wicked demons and laughed terribly.

61. Out of my tears which fell then on the earth, arose innumerable terrific beings.

62. They were fond of flesh and wine and women and were out to create terror in the world.

63. The Brahmins cursed by Gautama will be born in their clan. Among them those who follow the rules I have laid down and are of good conduct, will attain heaven and get liberation.

64. Those who doubt the doctrine I have laid down, ridicule my followers and go to hell.

65. Formerly burnt by the fire of Gautama and now by my words they go to hell and we need not doubt this.

Rudra continued:

66. Told thus by me, the sons of Brahmā (the seven sages) went away. Gautama too returned to his abode.

67. I have thus told you what Dharma is. He who is averse to this naturally is prone to do only wicked things.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Determination of Prakṛti and Puruṣa¹

Varāha said:

1. Agastya asked the omniscient Rudra; "Who is the most ancient one and the creator of everything?"

Agastya said:

2. Yourself, Brahmā and Viṣṇu constitute a trio and the three Vedas. Like the flame of the lamp (you illumine everything) and permeate all śāstras.

1. Actually the chapter deals with the identity of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

3. O god, tell me at which time are you Rudra, at which time Brahmā and at which time Viṣṇu.

Rudra said:

4. Viṣṇu is the Supreme Brahman and in Vedas and śāstras he is spoken of as having three forms. But this is not known to the ignorant.

5. From the root *viś* meaning 'to enter' with the Nominative singular suffix we get the word 'Viṣṇu'. He is the eternal and the supreme among all gods.

6. This Viṣṇu who is spoken of as having a tenfold form as well as of a single form is the Āditya with all yogic powers.

7. The great god for the sake of Devas assumes human form in every yuga and praises me.

8. For the sake of the world as well as gods, I worship these two forms of the lord (divine as well as human) in the Śveta-dvīpa (white island) in Kṛtayuga.

9. At the time of creation, I extol the fourfaced (Brahmā) and become time. And in that Kṛtayuga, Brahmā, Devas and Asuras extol me always.

10. People who seek pleasures sacrifice to me in my form as liṅga (phallus), and those who seek liberation sacrifice to me mentally in my form as the thousand-headed. It is to this form that the universal god Nārāyaṇa himself offers sacrifice.

11. Those who perform Brahmajajña daily propitiate Brahmā, because the Veda is Brahmā.

12. The Supreme Brahman is enshrined in the names Nārāyaṇa, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Śaṅkara and Puruṣottama.

13. For those who perform Vedic rituals, we Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara are the spirits of the mantras. There need be no doubt in this matter.

14. I am Viṣṇu as well Brahmā with the eternal Vedas. The three (gods) are really one and the wise men should not consider them as different.

15. He who considers otherwise is a sinner and he goes to the terrible hell.

16. I am Brahmā and Viṣṇu and the Vedas Ṛk, Yajus and Sāman. The difference is only in this manner.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

*Vairājavṛtta**Rudra said:*

1. O great Brahmin, listen to another interesting wonder.
2. I was created by Brahmā and ordered to create beings, but being unable to do it, I immersed myself in water.
- 3-4. There, while for a moment I was fully absorbed in contemplating on the great lord in the size of the thumb, there arose from the water eleven persons blazing like fire at the time of deluge and heating the water with their radiance.
5. I asked them who they were thus come out of the water and imparting to it much heat and where they were going.
6. Though asked thus, those great beings did not speak anything, but simply went away.
7. Then came an effulgent person cloud-like in complexion and with eyes like the lotus.
8. I asked him who he was and who the other persons were and also the purpose with which they came.

The man said:

9. The effulgent persons who came out here and went away are Ādityas who appeared at the meditation of Brahmā.
10. Brahmā performs creation and they are for the protection of the created.

Śambhu (Rudra) said:

11. "Please tell me, O lord, how I can know this great Person".
- 12-13. Asked thus by Rudra, the Man replied: "I am the eternal lord Nārāyaṇa reposing in water. You are given a divine eye, and see me with that carefully".
14. Told thus, when I looked at him, I found him to be the same as the lord of the size of the thumb (whom) I was meditating on) with a lotus in his navel.
15. I saw Brahmā (in that lotus) and myself near him. Seeing that great Being I was full of pleasure.
- 16-17. O great Brahmin, I had then an urge to extol him, and I accordingly praised that Universal Soul with the following hymn.

Rudra said:

18. I bow to that eternal being, the pure soul, with numerous forms and thousand hands, the foremost among the effulgent, extensive in body and pure in action.

19. I bow to that great Śambhu, resplendent like a thousand suns and blazing like the fire, the remover of all ills of the world, the holder of all knowledge, the bearer of the disc, and praised by all Devas.

20. I bow to you always, the originless and eternal, reposing on the serpent Śeṣa, great lord, lord of all beings, the chief of Maruts, the master of all, the lord of the world, the master of the entire universe.

21-22. O Nārāyaṇa, lord of water, the bestower of good to the whole world, lord of the universe, the universal eye, the moon, the sun, the eternal, with form to be inferred, the embodiment of ambrosia, the eternal, with effulgence excelling fire, the omnipresent, protect me always who have sought refuge in you, O remover of the perils of Devas.

23. I see your innumerable faces and in their midst Brahmā, the creator of the worlds. I bow to you, O my grandfather.

24. O the first and great god, you are resorted to by those with mind purified by following the path of knowledge after numerous births in the cycle of saṁsāra. I bow to you.

25. He who understands you to be the one beyond Prakṛti (Matter), is not subject to the activity of the Guṇas (the three qualities Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) and realises you in the extensive as well as the minute aspects.

26. You are the root of speech, but you are without organs. You are without action, but you have not given up action. You are not one in Saṁsāra, but you have a body of pure abstracts.

27. You in your four-armed form are known by those who perform sacrifices, but it is a matter for wonder that your supreme form is not known even by Devas.

28. Therefore, gods like Brahmā contemplate on your avatāras. Even Brahmā does not know your ultimate form.

29. But I, having been purified by penance, am able to know you, the most ancient. And my father Brahmā has become known to many Purāṇas.

30. Even those like me cannot know you except through

penance. But you, who cannot be known even by those like Brahmā, can be known by continuous meditation on you.

31. Those who know the Vedas gain superior mental power through your grace and they alone know you.

32. To him who has realised you, manhood or godhood is not delectable. You are of universal form. You are minute as well as big.

33. You are expensive as well as minute. O God, still you are quite attainable. Those who keep out from you fall in hell. When you, the lord, are there, why speak of Vasus, Ādityas, Maruts and Bhūmi ?

34. My praises are all for you who are extensive and supreme soul, and so, O eternal one, be pleased to accept them from me, a staunch devotee.

35. O Viṣṇu, give me omniscience when you command me to perform creation.

36. Four-faced (Brahmā) or crore-faced, only he who is pure of mind will be able to narrate your countless qualities.

37. He who with pure mind contemplates on you unswervingly, in his mind you remain. I bow to you.

38. O lord, this hymn thus came out of my mind. Be pleased to purify me, fear-stricken by the course of saṁsāra.

Varāha said:

39. Thus praised by the great Rudra, Lord Viṣṇu was pleased and spoke in a voice majestic like thunder.

Viṣṇu said:

40. O God, husband of Umā, everything is well for you. Please seek a boon. There is no difference between us. We are one and the same.

Rudra said:

41. I am engaged by Brahmā, O lord, to perform creation. Give me for that the threefold knowledge required.

Viṣṇu said:

42. "You are the abode of all knowledge. You are doubtless omniscient and worshipped by Devas always".

43-44. Told thus, Rudra said again, “O lord, give me another boon by which you will take a form with which you will worship me and bear me and get a boon from me, and as a result of that you will become the most worshipful among gods.

Viṣṇu said:

45. “For the sake of gods, I will take incarnations and then I will worship you and you will give me boons.

46. As for bearing you, O lord of Umā, I shall bear you for a hundred years assuming the form of a cloud”.

47. So saying, Viṣṇu became a cloud, drew up Rudra from the water, and said:

48. “The eleven persons who came out earlier, are Vairājas and they have gone to the earth with the name ‘Ādityas’.

49. The twelfth part of mine has descended on earth with the name ‘Viṣṇu’ and will worship you”.

50. So saying, Nārāyaṇa, out of his own part produced a divine cloud full of sound, and it is not known where he disappeared.

Rudra said:

51. Thus this great Hari who is omnipresent and omnipotent, became a giver of boon to me in yore, as a result of which I am supreme among gods.

52. There is no god above Nārāyaṇa in the past or future. This is the secret propounded by the Vedas and Purāṇas.

53. I have thus told you how Viṣṇu is to be propitiated.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Cosmology

Varāha said:

1. The sages then asked the ancient, eternal and omnipresent Rudra, three-eyed and holder of the trident.

The sages said:

2-3. You are beyond us and the Devas. So we ask you a

question. O lord of Umā, be pleased to tell us about the magnitude of the earth and the position of mountains in detail.

Rudra said:

4-5. In the Purāṇas this earth is considered to be the world. So I shall briefly describe this earth. Please listen.

6. The great Nārāyaṇa who pervades all over the worlds, who is atomic, unknowable, pure and whose ultimate form can be known by Supreme knowledge alone, who is indicated as broadchested, wearing yellow garment and holding the earth, and who is spoken of as beyond the three qualities Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and as neither long nor short, neither big nor small etc., and who is of the nature of pure knowledge, created water. Having created that, the primordial man Nārāyaṇa, who pervades the entire world, and is of the nature of all gods, sacrifices and water, produced from his navel a lotus during his yogic slumber. In it arose the creator Brahmā, the great god, the repository of the Vedas. He produced the repositories of knowledge like Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanatkumāra, and then Svāyambhuva Manu and those from Marīci to Dakṣa. From Svāyambhuva Manu created by the lord, further creation began to proceed. He had two sons, Priyavrata and Uttānapāda.

7. Priyavrata had ten sons, Āgnīdhra, Agnibāhu, Medhas, Medhātithi, Dhruva, Jyotiṣmān, Dyutimān, Havya, Vapuṣmān and Savana. Priyavrata established seven of his sons in seven islands. Āgnīdhra was made the lord of Jambūdvīpa, Medhātithi the lord of Śākadvīpa, Jyotiṣmān the lord of Krauñca, Dyutimān the lord of Śālmali, Havya the lord of Gomeda, Vapuṣmān the lord of Plakṣa and Savana the lord of Puṣkara. Savana, the lord of Puṣkara had two sons Mahāvīti and Dhātaka. Their regions were known after their names. Thus Dhātaka had Dhātakakhaṇḍa and Kumuda had Kaumuda.¹ Jyotiṣmān, the lord of Śālmali², had three sons, Kuśa, Vaidyuta and Jīmūtavāhana. Their regions came to be known after them. Dyutimān had seven sons, Kuśala, Manugavya, Pīvara, Andhra, Andhakāraka, Muni and Dundubhi and seven regions in Krauñca came to be known after them.

1. Kumuda seems to be another name for Mahāvīti.

2. This contradicts with the earlier statement that Dyutimān is the lord of Śālmali.

8. Jyotiṣmān, the lord of Kuśadvīpa,¹ had seven sons, Udbhida, Veṇumān, Rathapāla, Manas, Dhṛti, Prabhākara and Kapila and they had regions with their names. Medhātithi, the lord of Śaka, had seven sons, Nābhi, Śāntabhaya, Śīsira-mukha, Udama, Nanda, Śivakṣemaka and Dhruva. They had regions with their names. Nābhi had Hemakūṭa, Kimpuruṣa, Naiṣadha, Harivarṣa, Merumadhya, Ilāvṛta, Nīla, Ramyaka, Śveta, Uttarakuru, Mālyavān, Bhadrāśva, Gandhamādana and Ketumāla. This is the division of the earth in Svāyambhuva Manvantara. In every aeon seven kings each thus rule the earth. This happens in every aeon.

9. I shall now narrate the creation by Nābhi. Nābhi begot in Merudevī the son named Ṛṣabha, his son was Bharata. To Bharata his father gave the region to the South of Hemādri called the great Bhārata. Bharata's son was Sumati. Bharata gave his kingdom to Sumati and retired to the forest. Sumati's son was Tejas, his son Indradyumna, his son Parameṣṭhī, his son Pratihartā, his son Nikhāta, his son Unnetā, his son Abhāva, his son Udgātā, his son Prastotā, his son Vibhu, his son Pṛthu, his son Ananta, his son Gaya, his son Naya, his son Virāṭa, his son Sudhīmān.

10. Sudhīmān had hundred sons and by them was the population increased. The Bhāratavarṣa with its seven islands is occupied by them.

11. This earth is enjoyed by their descendants. There are seventyone aeons like Kṛta, Tretā etc.³

12. Incidentally I have given an account of Svāyambhuva Manvantara. Know this well.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Jambūdvīpa and Meru

Rudra said:

1. I shall now tell you in detail about the Jambūdvīpa and the number of oceans and islands in it.

1. Earlier Jyotiṣmān is spoken of as lord of Krauñca.

2. The Yugas are generally given as only four, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.

2. Also the number of regions in it, the different rivers etc, and again their extent and the movements of the sun and the moon.

3. It is not easy to describe thousands of islands within the seven major ones by which the whole universe is filled.

4. I shall say about the seven islands and also about the sun and moon, about which people propound logical authority.

5. But it is not possible for logic to accomplish what is unthinkable. And what is beyond nature is really unthinkable.

6. I shall, therefore, describe Jambūdvīpa as it is and the dimensions of its different regions.

7. It is one hundred and one thousand yojanas¹ in extent and is strewn all over with human settlements.

8. It is full of Siddhas and Cāraṇas² and is beautiful with mountains full of rocks and minerals.

9. It has numerous rivers arising from the mountains and is globular.

10. In this remains the great lord surrounded by nine (creators?). It is encircled by the saline ocean.

11. In the expansive Jambūdvīpa there are six broad and long mountains.

12. There are oceans on the east and west. There is Himavān full of snow and Hemakūṭa full of gold.

13. There is the big mountain Niṣadha which gives pleasure in all its parts and the mount Meru which is of four (main) colours and contains gold.

14. It (Meru) is round and uniform in shape and has variegated colours. It has in it groups of Prajāpatis.

15. It arose from the navel of the great Brahmā. It is white in colour on the eastern side and this represents the Brahmin.

16. On the southern side it is yellow and this represents the Vaiśya.

17. On the western side it is black like the bee and this represents the Śūdra symbolising service.

18. On the northern side it is red in colour and this represents the Kṣatriya. This is the division according to colour.

1. One Yojana is equal to eight miles.

2. Siddhas and Cāraṇas are semi-divine beings.

19. The blue parts contain Vaidūrya stones, the pale white parts contain gold. The parts with the colour of peacock feathers contain highly pure gold.

20. These mountains have Siddhas and Cāraṇas in them. Their internal extent is nine thousand (yojanas).

21. In the middle is the region Ilāvṛta on which stands Meru. It spreads thousands of yojanas on all sides.

22. Mahāmeru stands in the middle like smokeless fire. It is half a Vēdi in extent on the northern and southern sides.

23. There are six regions there each with a mountain. The periphery of each region is one yojana.

24. Two each of these are for the thousands of Kṣatriyas. Their extent is that of Jambūdvīpa.

25. Occupying one hundred thousand yojanas are two mountains, Nīla and Niṣadha.

26. Smaller than these are the white Hemakūṭa and the peaky Himavān, Niṣadha has the same dimension as Jambūdvīpa.

27. A twelfth part of it is the dimension of Hemakūṭa and Himavān has the dimension of a twentieth part of Hemakūṭa.

28. An eighth part of Himavān lies between the east and west. Because of the expansive nature of the island, there appears increase and decrease.

29. In the regions, just as there are mountains, there are settlements of people.

30. It is not easy to go from one settlement to another since each is surrounded by steep mountains and rivers.

31. Different kinds of beings live there. In the region of Himavān, the people are the Bhāratas.

32. In Hemakūṭa the people are Kimpuruṣas. After Hemakūṭa is Niṣadha. The settlement there is Harivarṣa.

33. After Harivarṣa is Ilāvṛta. After Ilāvṛta is the well known Ramyaka which is blue.

34. After Ramyaka is the well known Hiraṇmaya which is white. After Hiraṇmaya is Śṛṅgavān where we get Kuru.

35. Like a bow are two regions in the south and north. Of the four islands, Ilāvṛta is square-shaped.

36. Half a Vēdi of Niṣadha on the southern side is low and half a Vēdi on the northern side is peaky.

37. On this southern side are three regions and there are three on the northern side too. Between these, where the Meru stands, is Ilāvṛta.

38. Its extent is thirtyfour thousand yojanas. On its eastern side is the mountain Gandhamādana.

39. In its length, breadth and height it is similar to mount Mālyavān. In the middle is the golden mount Meru.

40. It is full of gold and has four colours. All the vital elements and living beings arose from it.

41. Taking the original indefinite form of earth as a lotus, Meru may be considered as its pericarp, and from it to have evolved the four major (outer) petals and the definite form with five qualities.

42. Then arose all activities and men of virtue living for several kalpas.

43. The best of Men (the Lord), who is the great yogin, the great God to be contemplated upon by the whole world, is attained by the great men who have realised the self.

44. His form is imperishable, endless and pervades the whole universe and he does not possess body constituted of bones, flesh and marrow.

45. He is all-pervading and bears all forms because of his being a yogi and the great Master. Because of him there arose in the world the great lotus.

46. In that great lotus arose the great lord, the four-faced (Brahmā).

47. He is the chief of the creators and the overlord of the whole world. The seeds of creation have arisen from him.

48. The creation is now explained in detail. That water full of gems is the body of Viṣṇu.

49. The earth arose in the form of the lotus with forests and lakes. It is this world lotus that expanded itself.

50. I shall recount this expansion in its order, please listen O Brahmins.

There are four regions in it.

51. There is the mighty mountain Meru. It has different colours. On the eastern side it is white.

52. It is yellow on the south, black on the west and red on the north.

53. The white part of Meru is for the clan of kings. It shines like the rising sun and like fire without smoke.

54. It is eightyfour thousand yojanas in height, sixteen thousand yojanas deep and sixteen thousand yojanas in length.

55. It has a table-land thirtytwo thousand yojanas in extent. The area of its expanse is thrice this.

56. One division of it has ninety thousand yojanas.

57. Beyond that is one of six thousand yojanas more.

58. This mountain is divine and is full of celestial herbs. The houses (built) in it are all of gold.

59. In this big mountain, groups of Devas, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas and Apsarases delight themselves.

60. All round the Meru are auspicious abodes. There are four regions on its four sides.

61. They are Bhadrāśva on the east, Bhārata on the south, Kctumāla on the west and Kuru on the north.

62. The pericarp of this lotus covers several thousand yojanas.

63. It has fifteen stamens each a yojana long and their interspaces (at the bottom) occupy eightyfour yojanas each.

64. The stamens pervade a space of thirty thousand yojanas.

65. The length is one hundred thousand and the breadth eighty thousand (yojanas). There are four parts of fourteen thousand yojanas.

66. Listen now to the account about what I told you as the pericarp.

67. It is attractive with hundreds of jewelled petals of various colours, golden and shining like the rising sun.

68. It has a thousand protrusions and thousand depressions and is fully circular.

69. In it there is the assembly of Brahmā with splendidly jewelled arches and full of Brahmarṣis.

70. It is known by the name Manovatī in all the worlds. The glory of the great lord, resplendent like a thousand suns, is well marked there.

71. The groups of Devas propitiate the four-faced Brahmā with sacrifices and prayers.

72-74. Also by those great men who have given up all desires by those who are of good mind and taken to righteous living,

devoted to please the manes and gods, and by those householders who are full of humility, inclined to honour guests and of detached mind.

75. Those who with a resolve get their sins removed by their yogic practices like yama, niyama etc, attain the commendable white Brahmāloka.

76. The final position is beyond a height of fourteen thousand yojanas.

77. Above that is the beautiful black place luminous like the rising sun in the mountain full of gems and minerals.

78-80. The mountain with the circular base is thirty thousand yojanas and from a place in it which is ten yojanas long starts the river which begins flowing upwards and then falls on the earth. This flows through Amarāvati, the city of gods.

81. Thrown out by this river, the sun, the moon and the stars rise and set and render service.

82. The Brahmins propitiate all the eight great mountains.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The cities of the eight Dikpālas

Rudra said:

1-2. On the resplendent eastern part of Meru full of different minerals and in the form of a circular extension, there is the city of the immortals full of mighty gods and demons, full of gold and with well-devised pathways and arches.

3- . To its north-east with hundreds of spires and extensive lakes, decorated with flowers and flags, is the prosperous city of Indra named Amarāvati abounding in Devas, Yakṣas, Apsarases and sages.

6. In the interior of Amarāvati there is a hall full of diamonds and other gems, which is well known as the assembly Sudharmā.

7. In it remains the thousand-eyed Indra, husband of Śacī, surrounded by Siddhas and other divine beings.

8. Indra, revered by all other gods, is the president of this assembly. The great sun is there.
9. On its side, as broad and splendid like it, is the city of Agni, called Tejovatī.
10. Next is the beautiful city of Vaivasvata (Yama), well known as Saṁyamini.
11. On the fourth direction is the city of Nirṛti, called Kṛṣṇavatī.
12. The fifth, on the northern side, is the city of the lord of waters (Varuṇa), called Śuddhavatī.
13. Beyond that in the north is the city of Vāyu, called Gandhavatī.
14. On its right is the beautiful city of Kubera, called Mahodaya with a hall of Vaiḍūrya gems.
15. On the eighth quarter is the city of Īśāna, called Manoharā.
16. This world of gods, prayed for by people in their different āśramas (stages of life) is svarga (heaven).

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

The Meru Mountain

Rudra said:

1. The middle of Meru, which is considered as the pericarp of the world-lotus, has (a circumference) of one thousand yojanas.
2. Its bottom is (in circumference) fortyeight thousand (yojanas).
3. In it there are thousands of mounts and those at the extremity of the eight quarters are the mounts that indicate the limit.
4. Among these, two named Jaṭhara and Devakūṭa are on the eastern side.
5. O great Brahmins, listen to my account of this Meru, the golden mountain, in respect of its parts in different directions

6. There are four prominent parts in the four directions and fourteen parts at the top, because of which the earth, with its seven islands, moves.

7. Its extent is ten thousand yojanas and its vertical and horizontal parts are covered with yellow orpiment.

8. It has caves full of red arsenic and is strewn with golden gems. It has numerous fine mansions and playgrounds.

9. On its eastern part is the mountain Mandara, on its south Gandhamādana, on the west Vipula and on the north Supārśva.

10. On their peaks are four great trees which are resorted to by gods, demons and Apsarases.

11. At the peak of the Mandara mountain is the big tree called Kadamba with hanging branches.

12. Its flowers have the size of big pots and they blossom throughout the year and have high fragrance.

13. The entire area where its smell spreads is very sacred.

14. This is the tree of trees and is famous, beautiful and auspicious.

15. Lord Viṣṇu, meditated upon through efficacious mantras, remains in it.

16. This is also called 'Bhadrāśva', because this great god remains in it surveying the whole world.

17. On the peak of the southern mountain is the Jambū tree in a cluster with big branches full of flowers and fruits.

18. From that fall down at the top of the mountain fruits by name Atisa, sweet and fragrant and like ambrosia.

19. From this great mountain arise many rivers which make the places fertile.

20. There we get gold named Jāmbūnada glowing like fire and used by the gods for their decoration.

21-22. Devas, Gandharvas, Yakṣas and Rākṣasas drink the juice of the jambu fruit which is like ambrosia and delight themselves in the southern region which is known as Jambūloka. People call it Jambūdvīpa.

23. In the mountain Vipula on the south, there is the very big tree called Aśvattha with a big trunk spreading all around. It is the abode of all noble qualities.

24. It bears beautiful fruits big like pots throughout the year.

25. Because of the flags fluttering in this region, resorted to by Devas and Gandharvas, it is known as Ketumāla (literally one having a row of flags). O Brahmins, listen to this name.

26. At the time of churning the milky ocean, a garland and a banner appeared here and hence it is known as Ketumāla.

27. At the top of the peak of Supārśva we get the big tree Vaṭa.

28. It has got a big trunk; it spreads over three yojanas, grows also downwards and is highly clustered by hanging branches.

29. It bears golden fruits big like pots.

30. Adding lustre to the tree are the mind-born sons of Brahmā, the younger brothers of Sanatkumāra.

31. They are seven in number and are known as Kurus. They are calm in mind and free from passion.

32-33. They are eternal and they remain in this region which goes by their name. These Kurus are the lords of the region.

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Mandara and other mountains

Rudra said:

1-8. I shall now tell you about the four great mountains and about the lakes in them, which are beautiful, from which blow the gentle and sweet-smelling breeze, which have rivers flowing out of them, each of which have nine regions frequented by the celestial couples, which are full of gems and sacred spots, which always sound with waterfalls, which are full of lotuses, lilies, and other beautiful plants.

9. The lake in the eastern mountain is Aruṇoda, the one in the southern is Mānasa, the one in the western is Asitoda and the one in the northern is Mahābhadrā. All these are full of lilies of various colours.

10. I shall tell you now about the mounts around Aruṇoda, listen to me.

11-12. They are Vikaṅka, Maṇiśṛṅga, Supātra, Upala,

Mahānīla, Kumbha, Suvindu, Madana, Veṇunaddha, Sumedas and Niṣadha, all of them holy.

13. The mounts around Mānasa, I shall now enumerate.

14-16. They are Triśikhara, Śīśira, Kapi, Śatamakṣa, Turaga, Tāmrābha, Viṣa, Śvetodana, Samūla, Sarala, Ratnaketu, Ekamūla, Mahāśṛṅga, Gajamūla, Śāvaka Pañcaśaila, Kailāsa and Himavān.

17. The mounts on the next, namely on the west (around Asitod a) I shall now give you.

18-20. They are Kapila, Piṅgala, Bhadra, Sarasa, Kumuda, Madhumān, Garjana, Markaṭa, Kṛṣṇa, Pāṇḍava, Sahasraśīras, Pāriyātra and Śṛṅgavān. I shall tell you now about the mounts around Mahābhadra in the north.

21-23. They are Haṁsakūṭa, Vṛṣahaṁsa, Kapiñjala, Indraśāila, Nīla, Kanakaśṛṅga, Śataśṛṅga, Puṣkara, Meghaśāila, Virāja and Jāruji.

24. In this manner know the places, towns and lakes in order from the north.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

The Valleys of Meru I

Rudra said:

1-2. Between the mountains Asita (Kṛṣṇa) and Kumuda is the valley which is three hundred yojanas long and hundred yojanas broad and full of all kinds of birds and beasts.

3. In it there is a beautiful big lake with sweet water and huge lotuses, white and red, in which are seated gods, demons, Gandharvas and the great snakes.

4. Its placid water is resorted to by all. It is called Śrīsaras and it always sparkles.

5-7. Amidst that array of lotuses there is a particularly big lotus shining like the sun, astounding in its size, spreading with a crore of petals and attractive filaments, and with the bees humming all around. In it is seated the great goddess Lakṣmī, the embodiment of prosperity.

8-9. On the bank of that lake is the forest of Bilva trees always full of flowers and fruits wherein live Siddhas. It is two hundred yojanas in length and hundred yojanas in breadth.

10. It has numerous big trees as high as half a krośa with thousands of branches.

11. They bear thousands of fruits green and grey, smelling sweet and tasty like nectar.

12. The place is filled with the fruits falling from these trees and it is known all over the world as Śrīvana.

13. It has eight peaks. Many Devas and bilva-eating sages, live in it. Lakṣmī, adored by groups of siddhas, ever remains there.

14-15. Between the mountains Ekācala and Maṇiśṛṅga there is a lotus-grove, two hundred yojanas long and a hundred yojanas broad, resorted to by Siddhas and Cāraṇas.

16. The flower there appears as if held by Lakṣmī. There are big peaks as high as half a krośa.

17. With branches full of flowers, the whole place is made reddish yellow.

18-19. In this the flowers are each three cubits long and two cubits broad and with filaments of the colour of red arsenic and sweet-smelling. It always hums with inebriate bees and there are in it gods, Gandharvas, Rākṣasas and Yakṣas, and also Kin-naras, Apsarases and Nāgas.

20. There is the hermitage of the divine Kaśyapa in it and also other hermitages.

21. Between Mahānīla and Kakubha (Kumbha?) there is the river Sukhā, and on its bank is a big forest fifty yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad.

22. This forest is Tālavana (forest of Palmyras) with the trees rising to a height of half a krośa.

23. These trees are full of big, strong and juicy fruits of the colour of collyrium.

24. The whole place smells sweet and it is resorted to by Siddhas. This bears close resemblance to Airāvata, the great elephant.

25-26. Between Airāvata, Rudra (Kailāsa)? and Devaśīla (Pañcaśaila?) there is a tableland formed of a single rock, thousand yojanas long and hundred yojanas broad, without any kind of trees or plants, and with but a small stream of water.

27-28. Thus has been narrated, O Brahmins, the valleys in order around Meru.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Valleys of Meru II

Rudra said:

1. Let us now see the valleys on the southern side occupied by Siddhas. Between Śīsira and Pataṅga is the white land which is without women and trees. But its sugar-cane-like peak has trees, and around it there is the grove of Udumbara trees full of birds.

2. In this grove, the trees bear fruits as big as large tortoises. It is resorted to by all the eight kinds of demigods.¹

3. In this region flow many rivers which are full of clear and sweet water. In it there is the hermitage of Kardama Prajāpati frequented by many sages and men. Around it there is a forest extending to a hundred yojanas.

Between the mountains Tāmrābha and Pataṅga there is a big lake hundred yojanas broad and twice as long, full of different kinds of lotuses glowing like the rising sun and resorted to by Siddhas and Gandharvas.

4. In the middle is a tall peak, hundred yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad, full of a variety of minerals. At its top is a broad pathway leading to a vast enclosure with a jewelled porch. Within it is the city of Vidyādhara. Therein lives the Vidyādhara king by name Puloma with numerous attendants.

5. Between the mountains Sumūla and Vasudhāra, there is the place called Bilvasthalī, fifty yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad.

6. The Bilva trees there bear fruits big like pitchers, the ground there is strewn with these fruits, and it is resorted to by Guhyakas and the like who eat these fruits.

Between Vasudhāra and Ratnadhāra there is the Kimśuka

1. The demigods are Vidyādharas, Apsarases, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Gandharvas, Kinnaras, Piśācas and Guhyakas.

forest, a hundred yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad, spreading smell of the blossoms over a hundred yojanas. It has abundant water and is used by the Siddhas.

7. In it is the abode of Āditya. This god, the sun, appears month after month. Devas and others bow to Prajāpati, the creator of the world.

Between Pañcakūṭa and Kailāsa, there is the expansive land which is one thousand yojanas long and hundred yojanas broad, white like the swan, unapproached by trivial beings, and which is like the ladder to heaven.

8. Let us see now the valleys on the western side. Between Supārśva and Śikhiśaila there is a stony plateau which is untouchably hot for ever. In its middle is a part, a hundred yojanas in extent, which is the place of fire. Here fire which is the destroyer of the world, blazes for ever without fuel.

Between the mountains Kumuda and Añjana is the Mātuluṅgasthala (the place of Pomegranate), inaccessible to beasts and covered by yellow fruits.

In it is the holy pond used by Siddhas. This grove is Brhaspati's.

Then between the mountains Piñjara and Gaura there are lakes extending to hundreds of yojanas. They are full of big lilies.

9. In it is the abode of the great lord Viṣṇu.

Between the mountains Śukla and Pāṇḍura there is a single rock ninety yojanas long and thirty yojanas broad without trees. In it there is a pond of still water with different kinds of lotuses. In its middle is a big banyan tree spreading over five yojanas. Beneath it sits lord Śiva wearing blue cloth, praised by Yakṣas and others.

Between the mountains Sahasraśikhara and Kumuda is a sugar-cane-like peak, fifty yojanas long and twenty yojanas broad, full of birds and numerous trees bearing tasty fruits. In it is the divine hermitage of Indra.

Between Śaṅkhakūṭa and Rṣabha there is the beautiful grove of Punnāga trees extending over several yojanas and bearing sweet-smelling fruits as big as bilvas. In it live the Nāgas and others inebriated with the juice of the Punnāga fruits.

10. Between the mountains Kapiñjala and Nāga, there is the place, two hundred yojanas long and one hundred yojanas

broad, occupied by various kinds of people and with grapes and dates in abundance.

Between Puṣkara and Mahāmegha is the place, one hundred yojanas long and sixty yojanas broad, called Pāṇitala, without trees and plants. On its sides are four big forests and lakes extending over several yojanas. In it there are fierce valleys, ten, five, seven, eighty, thirty and twenty yojanas long.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

The domains of Devas in the Mountains

Rudra said:

1. I shall now state about the domains of Devas in these mountains. At the top of the mountain called Sītā is the pleasure spot of Indra. Therein is the big grove of Pārijāta trees. On its eastern side is the Kuñjara hill. At its top there are eight cities of Dānavas.

2. In the mountain Vajraka there are many cities of Rākṣasas. They are called Nilakas and they are capable of changing their shapes. In the mountain Mahānīla, there are fifteen thousand cities of Kinnaras. They are the regions of fifteen Kinnara kings like Deva datta, Candra and others. In the mountain Candrodāya we get golden underground cities wherein live Nāgas. The Dānavas are established there under an arrangement with Garuḍa. In (the mountain) Veṇumān there are three cities of Vidyādhara, each thousand yojanas in length and hundred yojanas in breadth. These are the regions of Vidyādhara Kings like Ulūka, Romaśa and Mahāvetra.

3. In each of these Garuḍa is established. In the mountain Kuñjara Paśupati (Śiva) is permanently established. In Vasudhāra the great god Śaṅkara (Śiva) on the bull remains with his retinue of crores of Gaṇas. In this live Vasus.

4. At the tops of Vasudhāra and Ratnadhāra there are eight and seven cities (respectively) for Vasus and seven sages. In the great mountain Ekaśṛṅga is the seat of four-faced Brahmā.

In the mountain Gaja the goddess herself takes abode with her retinue.

5. In the mountain Vasudhāra is the city, the abode of sages, Siddhas and Vidyādharas with forts and gateways. In it live the militant Gandharvas called Anekaparvatas with their chief Rājarāja. In Pañcakūṭa there are Devas and Rākṣasas, in Śataśṛṅga Dānavas, and there are hundred cities of Dānavas and Yakṣas.

6. On the western portion of Prabhedaka there are the cities of Devas, Dānavas, Siddhas and others. At the top of this mountain there is a big slab. The moon descends on it every new moon day. On its northern portion is Trikūṭa. Brahmā remains in it sometimes. There we get the abode of Fire. Fire in concrete form is worshipped by gods.

7. On the north, in the mountain Śṛṅga, we get the abodes of gods. On its eastern part is the abode of Nārāyaṇa, in the middle that of Brahmā and in the west that of Śiva. There we see a few cities of Yakṣas. On the north, in the mountain Jātuccha, there is a lake covering an area of thirty yojanas. In it lives the hundred-headed serpent-king Nanda.

8. Thus are the eight Devaparvatas (mountains of gods). They have the colours of gold, silver, ruby, cat's eye, vermillion etc., in order. This part of Earth is full of millions of houses of Siddhas and Vidyādharas. On the side of Meru is the world of Siddhas full of Kesara trees. The earth is in the form of a lotus. This is the general description given in the Purāṇas.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The descent of the rivers

Rudra said:

1. Now listen to the descent of the rivers. From what is known as the ocean of the sky, starts the river of the sky. This river is always agitated by the elephant of Indra. (As a result) it falls at the top of Meru in eightyfour thousand streams. And flowing upto the foot of the Meru, it forms into four and follows

a clockwise direction for six thousand yojanas with the names Sītā, Alakanandā, Cakṣus and Bhadrā. Among them the one that reaches earth slashing eightyone thousand mountains is known as Gaṅgā.

2. Now we describe Amaragaṇḍika on the side of Gandhamādāna. It is thirtyone thousand yojanas long and four hundred yojanas broad. This region is Ketumāla with mighty men black in complexion and beautiful women lotus-like in complexion. There we get big jack trees. The son of Brahmā is the lord there. The people here drink water, are free from decay and disease and live for ten thousand years. On the eastern side of Mālyavān is the Pūrvagaṇḍikā and from Ekaśṛṅga extends Mānasa for one thousand yojanas. This region is known as Bhadrāśva.

3. There we get the forest of wholesome Rasāla trees. The mangoes are black, men white, women lotus-coloured and their life is one thousand years. There are five great mountains, Śailavarṇa, Mālākhyā, Korajaska, Tripaṇa and Nīla. The regions watered (by the streams from these mountains) have the same names.

4. Those regions consume the water from the rivers Sītā, Suvāhinī, Hamsavatī, Kāsā, Mahāvakra, Candravatī, Kāverī, Surasā, Ākhyāvatī, Indravatī, Aṅgāravāhinī, Harittoṃyā, Somā-vartā, Śatahradā, Vanamālā, Vasumatī, Hamsā, Suparṇā, Pañcagaṅgā, Dhanuṣmatī, Maṇivaprā, Subrahmabhāgā, Vilāsinī, Kṛṣṇatoyā, Puṇyodā, Nāgavatī, Śivā, Śaivālinī, Maṇitaṭā, Kṣīroda, Varuṇatāli and Viṣṇupadī. Those who drink the waters of these rivers live for ten thousand years and become devotees of Rudra and Umā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

The regions and rivers in the mountain Naiṣadha

Rudra said:

1. Bhadrāśva and Ketumāla have been described in detail. Now are described the major mountains, regions and rivers on

the western side of the great mountain Naiṣadha. The seven major mountains, Viśākha, Kambala, Jayanta, Kṛṣṇa, Harita, Aśoka and Vardhamāna, have given rise to crores of others. The regions occupied by people there are also known by the same name (as of the mountains).

2. The settlements upto Sauragrāma like Sātapa, Kṛtasurā, Śravaṇakambala, Māheyācala, Kūṭavāsa, Mūlatapa, Krauñca, Kṛṣṇāṅga, Maṇipaṅkaja, Cūdamala and Somīya and those upto the end of the sea, like Kurakuñja, Suvarṇataṭa, Kuha, Śvetāṅga, Kṛṣṇapāda, Vida, Kapila, Karṇika, Mahiṣa, Kubja, Karanāṭa, Mahotkaṭa, Śuka, Nāka, Sagaja, Bhūma, Kakurañjana, Mahānāha, Kiki, Sapaṇa, Bhaumaka, Coraka, Dhūmajanma, Aṅgāraja, Madhurcyā, Śukeya, Cakeya, Śravaṇa, Mattakāśika, Godāvāma, Kulapañjāba, Varjaha and Modasālaka consume the water flowing from these mountains.

3. Among these rivers, Plākṣā, Mahākadambā, Mānasī, Śyāmā, Sumedhā, Bahulā, Vivarṇā, Puṅkhā, Mālā, Darbhavatī, Bhadrānadī, Śukanadī, Pallavā, Bhīmā, Prabhañjanā, Kāmbā, Kuśāvatī, Dakṣā, Kāsavatī, Tuṅgā, Puṇyodā, Candrāvatī, Sumūlavatī, Kakupadminī, Viśālā, Karaṇṭakā, Pīvarī, Mahāmāyā, Mahiṣī, Mānuṣī, Caṇḍā are the more important. The others are small rivers and they are in thousands.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

The regions on the South and North of Meru

Rudra said:

1. Now are duly described the people who live on the northern regions as well as those who live on the southern side.

2. O Brahmīns, listen to what I say. In the region to the south of Meru and north of Śveta, there is Ramyaka belonging to Vāyu.

3. The people there are born pure, highly intelligent and free from old age and disaster.

4. The extremely big banyan tree grows there. Drinking the juice of its fruits, all the people there attain divine form and live for ten thousand years.

5. To the north of Śveta and south of Triśṛṅga, we get the region named Hiraṇmaya where flows the river Hiraṇvatī.

6. The mighty Yakṣas, who can assume any form at will, live there. The duration of their life is eleven thousand years.

7. Many live there for fifteen thousand years.

8. The breadfruit and jack trees flourish there. By the juice of their fruits alone, one can live for many days.

9. In Triśṛṅga with its peaks of gems and gold, from its northern peak, upto the southern ocean¹, is the northern Kuru. There we get sappy trees and many juice. In those trees are clothes and ornaments. The land is full of gems and the sands are golden. People dropped from heaven live there, with duration of life of thirteen thousand years.

10. On the western side of this island, after four thousand yojanas, we get the celestial region Candradvīpa covering an area of one thousand yojanas. In its middle are two waterfalls called Candrakānta and Sūryakānta. Between them is the great river Candrāvartā with numerous tributaries and many trees (on the banks).

11. On the northern side of Kuru is the celestial region Sūryadvīpa covering an area of one thousand yojanas washed by the waves of the ocean. In its middle is a great mountain, a hundred yojanas in extent. From it arises the river called Sūryāvartā. The abode of the Sun is there. Therein live the people with the Sun as their god and having the same complexion as his, with duration of life of ten thousand years.

12. On the western side of this island, after four thousand yojanas, we find in the ocean the island called Bhadrākara covering an area of one thousand yojanas. Therein is the abode of Vāyu adorned by numerous gems. There Vāyu remains in corporal form. There the people are golden in colour and live for five thousand years.

1. Perhaps the northern ocean is meant.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

The nine divisions of Bhārata

Rudra said:

1. Thus has been described the arrangement in the world-lotus. Now listen to the ninefold division of Bhārata. These (divisions) are Indra, Kaseru, Tāmravarṇa, Gabhasti, Nāga-dvīpa, Saumya, Gandharva, Vāruṇa and Bhārata (proper). Each is surrounded by an ocean and is one thousand yojanas in extent. There are seven major mountains.

2. These major mountains are Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Śuktimān, Ṛkṣa, Vindhya and Pāriyātra.

3. There are minor mountains like Mandara, Śāra, Dardura, Kailāsa, Maināka, Vaidyuta, Vārandhama, Pāṇḍura, Tuṅgaprastha, Kṛṣṇagiri, Jayanta, Airāvata, Ṛṣyamūka, Gomanta, Citrakūṭa, Śrīparvata, Cakorakuṭa, Śrīśaila and Kṛtasthala. There are smaller mountains also. In the settlements in these dwell Āryas and Mlecchas. They drink water in the rivers flowing there.

4. The rivers are Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī, Śatadru, Vitastā, Vipāśā, Candrabhāgā, Sarayū, Yamunā, Irāvati, Devikā, Kuhū, Gomatī, Dhūtapāpā, Bāhudā, Dṛṣadvatī, Kauśikī, Nisvīrā, Gaṇḍakī, Cakṣuṣmatī and Lohitā, all rising from the foot of the Himālayas. Vedasmṛti, Vedavati, Sindhuparnā, Candanābhā, Nāśadācārā, Rohīpārā, Carmaṇvatī, Vidiśā, Vedatrayī and Vapantī arise from Pāriyātra.

5. Śoṇa, Jyotirathā, Narmadā, Surasā, Mandākinī, Daśārṇā, Citrakūṭā, Tamasā, Pippalā, Karatoyā, Piśācīkā, Citrotpalā, Viśālā, Vañjukā, Bāhuvāhinī, Śuktimatī, Virajā, Paṅkinī and Rātrī arise from Ṛkṣa. Mañijālā, Śubhā, Tāpī, Payoṣṇī, Śighrodā, Veṣṇā, Pāśā, Vaitaraṇī, Vaidipālā, Kumudvatī, Toyā, Durgā, Antyā and Girā arise from the base of the Vindhya. Godāvari, Bhīmarathī, Kṛṣṇā, Veṇī, Vañjulā, Tuṅgabhadrā, Suprayogā and Bāhyakāverī arise from the foot of Sahya.

6. Śatamālā, Tāmraparnī, Puṣpāvati and Utpalāvati arise from Malaya. Triyāmā, Ṛṣikulyā, Ikṣulā, Trivindālā, Mūlinī and Vaṅśavarā have their origin in Mahendra. Ṛṣikā, Lūsati, Mandagāminī and Palāśinī have their source in Śuktimān. These are the main rivers arising from the major mountains.

The others are minor rivers. This Jambūdvīpa is one lakh yojanas in extent.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Śākadvīpa

Rudra said:

1. Now know about Śākadvīpa. It is double the extent of Jambūdvīpa and the saline ocean surrounding it also is double the size. There live in it blessed people, long-lived and free from famine, decay and disease. There are seven major mountains here which have the saline ocean on one side and milky ocean on the other.

2. On the east is the extensive mountain called Udaya. To the west of it is the mountain named Jaladhāra, also called Candra. Indra drinks its water and then pours it down (as rain). In it there is another mountain called Śvetaka. It has six parts. Here the people play a good deal. There is another mountain called Rajata. It is also known as Śāka. Beyond it is Āmbikeya. It is also called Vibhrājasa.

3. The same is called Kesarī. The wind arises from there. The regions are also known after the mountains, as Udaya, Sukumāra, Jaladhāra, Kṣemaka and Mahādruma as principal names. The other names of the mountains are also applied. In the middle is the Śāka tree. There are seven main rivers with two names each. These are Sukumārī, Kumārī, Nandā, Veṇikā, Dhenuḥ, Ikṣumatī and Gabhastī.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Kuśadvīpa

Rudra said:

1. Now listen to Kuśadvīpa, the third. Kuśadvīpa is surrounded by the milky ocean, and is double in extent of the Śāka-

dvīpa. There are seven major mountains here also, each with two names such as Kumuda, also called Vidruma. The high Hemaparvata is also Droṇa, Puṣpavān is also Kaṅka, Kuśeśaya is also Agnimān, and the sixth Mahiṣa is also Hari. Agni remains there.

2. The seventh is Kakudhra; it is the same as Mandara. These are the mountains in Kuśadvīpa. The divisions in it have also two names each. Kumuda is Śveta, it is named first. The high Lolita is also Veṇumaṅḍala. Valāhaka is Jīmuta and is the same as Rathākāra. Droṇa is Hari and is the same as Balādhana.

3. The rivers there have also two names. Pratoṃyā is also called Praveśā. The second is Śivā, also called Yaśodā. The third is Citrā, also known as Kṛṣṇā. The fourth is Hrādinī, also called Candrā. The fifth is Vidyullatā, also called Śuklā. The sixth is Varnā, it is the same as Vibhāvārī. The seventh is Mahatī, the same as Dhṛti. These are the main rivers. The others are minor ones. This is the arrangement in Kuśadvīpa.

4. Śākadvīpa and its position have already been narrated. In its middle is a big mass of Kuśa grass. The Kuśadvīpa is surrounded by an ocean of curd, equal to amṛta, and double the size of the milky ocean.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Krauñcadvīpā

Rudra said:

1. The fourth is Krauñca, double the dimensions of Kuśadvīpa, surrounded by an ocean also double in size. In it also there are seven mountains. The first in Krauñca is Vidyullatā or Raivata, then is Mānasa or Pāvaka. Then is Andhakāra or Acchodaka. Then is Devāvṛta which is called also Surāpa. After this is Deviṣṭha, also called Kāñcanaśṛṅga.

2. After Devananda we get Govinda or Dvivinda. Then is Puṅḍarīka, which is the same as Toyāsaha. These seven mountains in Krauñcadvīpa are all high and full of gems.

3. The regions in Krauñca are: Kuśala or Mādhava, Vāmaka or Saṁvartaka, Uṣṇavān or Saprakāśa, Pāvaka or

Sudarśana, Andhakāra or Sammoha, Munideśa or Prakāśa and Dundubhi or Anartha.

4. There are seven rivers: Gaurī, Kumudvatī, Sandhyā, Rātrī, Manojavā, Khyāti and Puṇḍarīka.

5. Gaurī is Puṣpavahā, Kumudvatī is Ārdravatī, Sandhyā is Raudrā, (Rātrī) is Sukhāvahā, (Manojavā) is Bhogjavā, Khyāti is Kṣiprodā, Puṇḍarīka is Bahulā. The minor rivers have different colours and flow in different regions. Krauñca-dvīpa is surrounded by (an ocean of) ghee and beyond it is Śālmali.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Śālmali-dvīpa and others

Rudra said:

1. I shall now speak about the people in the remaining three islands. Listen to the account of the fifth, Śālmali.

2. Śālmali is double the size of Krauñca island.

3. This is surrounded by the sea of ghee. It is also double in size. There also we get seven principal mountains, and the same number of rivers. The mountains are big, yellow and full of gold and have the names Sarvagūṇa, Sauvarṇa, Rohita, Sumanasa, Kuśala, Jāmbūnada and Vaidyuta. The regions are also of the same names.

4. Then is the sixth, Gomeda. This is twice the size of Śālmali. There are only two mountains in it, Avasara and Kumuda. The ocean is of Sugarcane juice.

Puṣkara is double its size. In it there is the mountain called Mānasa. This is divided into two and is surrounded by sweet water spreading to the same area as itself.

5. Then is this broad earth forming part of the expansive universe.

These are the regions enumerated. In every aeon Lord Nārāyaṇa assumes the form of a boar and raises it up by a tusk and restores it to its original position.

6. I have thus told you about the dimensions of the earth. May good befall you, O Brahmins. I shall now retire to my abode in Kailāsa.

Varāha said:

7. Saying thus, Rudra immediately left for Kailāsa. All the gods and sages also departed.

CHAPTER NINETY

The Goddess of Creation

Earth said:

1. Some consider the holy Śiva, some Viṣṇu and others Brahmā as the supreme being.

2. I have great curiosity to know who among these is superior and who inferior. Please enlighten me.

Varāha said:

3. O goddess, Nārāyaṇa is the supreme god. Then is Brahmā who arose from him. From Brahmā arose Rudra the omniscient.

4. The wonders Rudra accomplished are numerous. I shall tell you all of them.

5. In the beautiful peak Kailāsa, full of many kinds of minerals, resides the three-eyed lord Śiva.

6. Once this god, who is bowed to by all beings, was in the company of Pārvatī, surrounded by his Gaṇas.

7. Some among the Gaṇas were lion-faced and were roaring like lions. Some were elephant-faced and others horse-faced.

8. Some were crocodile-faced, others boar-faced, yet others mule-faced and donkey-faced.

9. A few were goat-faced and a few others fish-faced. In all, they were all innumerable and holding weapons. Some were singing, some dancing, some running and some jumping.

10. The mighty ones were laughing, clapping and roaring. Some of the leaders were fighting throwing stones at one another.

11. Many were engaged in single combat. Thus were the Gaṇas surrounding Maheśvara.

12. While the Gaṇas were thus mirthful and the lord was playing with his spouse, there came Brahmā in great hurry together with Devas.

13. The great god Rudra, seeing Brahmā arrive there, honoured him and said:

14. “O Brahmā, tell me quickly the object of your hurried visit to me”.

Brahmā said:

15. “There is a great Rākṣasa named Andhaka. Being much harassed by him, Devas came to me for help.

16. I then told them that they may go to Śiva and that is why they are here now”.

17. Saying this, Brahmā looked at Śiva and at the same time called to his mind the great god Nārāyaṇa.

18. Lord Nārāyaṇa thus came to be between the other two. And Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara came to be unified.

19. They looked at each other minutely, and as a result of the unified looks of the three, a goddess arose.

20. This deity was young and resplendent, had the complexion of the blue lotus and had dark and curly hair.

21. She had shapely nose and forehead and wellformed mouth. All that the god Tvaṣṭā (the celestial architect) had described as five-tongue was well discernible in her.

22. Seeing her, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara asked her who she was and what she wanted to do.

23. That goddess who had the three colours black, white and yellow said:

24. “O great gods, I was born out of the combination of the looks of all the three of you. How do you fail to know me to be the goddess representing your energies?”.

25. Then Brahmā and others were pleased and gave her a boon saying: “O goddess, we name you Trikalā, protect this universe always.

26. You will have other names also based on your attributes, and all these will produce different achievements.

27. There is another thing also. You have three colours. Assume three different forms one with each colour”.

28. Thus told by the gods, she became triplicated, one white, another red and the third black.

29. The white body is Brahmā (because of Brahmā element) and creation proceeds from it calmly as ordained by Brahmā.

30. The beautiful body red in colour, is Vaiṣṇavī (because of Viṣṇu's element) and bears conch and disc.

31. She protects the whole universe and is known as Viṣṇu-māyā.

32. The body black in colour bears the trident and holds a fierce face. She destroys the universe.

33. The broad-eyed white goddess with the aspect of Brahmā, took leave of him and disappeared.

34. She hid herself in the Śveta mountain and began to perform severe penance desirous of attaining omniscience.

35. The red goddess with the aspect of Viṣṇu took leave of him and went to the Mandara mountain for performing severe penance.

36. The fierce-looking black goddess with the aspect of Rudra, similarly went to perform penance at the Nīla mountain.

37. Then for a long time Brahmā started to create beings, but he could not progress.

38. When the creations made out of the mind of Brahmā thus failed to multiply he began to seriously think about the cause of it.

39. When Brahmā, thus, meditated with his yogic powers, he knew about the goddess performing severe penance at the Śveta mountain.

40. Then he went to the place of her penance and told her who was absorbed in contemplation.

Brahmā said:

41. O beautiful goddess, why do you do this penance? I am pleased with you. You may seek of me a boon.

Sṛṣṭi said:

42. "O god, I don't wish to remain confined to a single place. I seek of you the boon to make me present everywhere".

43. God Brahmā, being thus requested by Sṛṣṭi (the goddess of creation), told her that she would be present everywhere.

44. Told thus, the beautiful Sṛṣṭi dissolved herself in Brahmā.

45. From then onwards, the creation by Brahmā began to grow.

46. Seven arose from Brahma's mind, from them other sages, from them yet others, and from them still others. Thus there are four series of beings.

47. Thus was established beings moving and stationary and all that is expressible by words.

48. Thus was established all that is past and future.

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Sarasvatī and others

Varāha said:

1. O fair lady, hear what that goddess did who was made triple by the great god Śiva.

2. The form of the goddess of creation which is beautiful and white, is known as Ekākṣarā (of one syllable) and also Sarvākṣarā (of all syllables).

3. She is also known as Vāgīśā (highest speech) and sometimes as Sarasvatī. She is Vidyeśvarī and Amitākṣarā.

4. She is Jñānanidhi (the abode of all knowledge) and also Vibhāvarī. All the names that are soft and all the names related to knowledge pertain to her.

5. The broad-eyed, beautiful and red-coloured Vaiṣṇavī is another. Raudrī is the third.

6. All the three arose really out of Rudra. It is really a single goddess who is in three forms.

7. Thus have I told you about ancient creation. The entire world of movable and immovable objects is pervaded by her.

8. Brahmā praised the goddess by whom his creation was made to grow.

Brahmā said:

9. Hail O goddess, that arose from truth, firm and eternal, the mother of all, all-pervading.

10. You bestow all achievements, all intelligence and good progeny.

11. You are Svāhā, you are Svadhā, you are the origin of everything, you are Praṇava and the source of all Vedas.

12. You are the source of all gods and demons, all Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Rākṣasas, all animals and all plants.

13. You are Vidyā, Vidyeśvarī, Siddhā, Prasiddhā and Sureśvarī.

14. You know everything, you give all success, you are present everywhere, you are free from all doubts, and you destroy all enemies.

15. You hold all knowledge and bestow all good. I bow to you.

16. He who unites with his wife after her menstrual bath, gets good progeny by your blessing. You destroy all enemies and always remain victorious.

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

The greatness of Vaiṣṇavī

Varāha said:

1. The goddess Vaiṣṇavī who went to Mandara for performing penance, was the great power representing Rajas.

2. She was doing penance all by herself (at the place) Viśālā. After a long time, her mind became agitated.

3-4. As a result of this agitation there arose hundreds of beautiful damsels with black curly hair and red lips, wearing bracelets and anklets.

5-7. Seeing them all, the goddess created a city with numerous mansions with golden balconies, crystal stairs and water fountains, with jewelled windows and gardens, all on broad roads.

8. The ladies thus created were innumerable, but I shall tell you the names of the more important among them.

9-12. Vidyutprabhā, Candrakāntī, Sūryakāntī, Gambhīrā, Cārukeśī, Sujātā, Mañjukesinī, Ghṛtācī, Urvaśī, Śaśinī, Śīlamanḍitā, Cārukanyā, Viśālākṣī, Dhanyā, Candraprabhā, Girisutā, Sūryaprabhā, Amṛtā, Svayamprabhā, Cārumukhī, Śiva-

dūti, Vibhāvārī, Jayā, Vijayā, Jayantī, Aparājitā and several others in hundreds occupied that fine city.

13. All these in the retinue of the goddess were bearing the rope and the noose, and she herself was seated on the throne.

14. Attended on by these, she began to perform the vrata called Kaumāra.

15. While she was thus engaged in penance, duly attended on by them, there appeared before her Nārada, the son of Brahmā.

16-17. Seeing that great sage, she directed Vidyutprabhā to give him a seat and water for washing the feet.

18. Thereupon Vidyutprabhā offered to Nārada *āsana* (seat), *pādya* (water for feet) and *arghya* (holy water).

19. When Nārada bowed to her and took his seat, she asked him in great joy.

20. “O great sage, welcome to you. From which world are you coming now? Be pleased to say with what purpose you have come?”.

21-22. Asked by the goddess thus, Nārada who knew all the worlds, said: “From Brahmāloka I went to Indraloka and from there to Rudra’s mountain (Kailāsa). From there I have come here to see you”. Saying so, he looked intently at the goddess.

23. Seeing her for a while, Nārada became wonder-struck.

24. “How wonderful is her form, how wonderful is her lustre, how wonderful her courage, how wonderful her selflessness in that she is undergoing all this strain.

25. In no other woman can this beauty be seen, be she belong to Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas, Yakṣas, Kinnaras or Rākṣasas”. Thinking thus, his wonder was redoubled.

26. He bowed to her and then jumped into the sky and quickly went to the city of the Rākṣasa chief.

27. That city was known as Mahiṣa and was within the ocean. He went there to the Asura whose form was like a buffalo.

28. When he saw the sage, he duly honoured him with devotion.

29. Thus pleased, Nārada told him about the matchless beauty of the goddess doing penance.

Nārada said:

30. “O lord of Asuras, by means of a boon, the entire universe has become yours. Now hear about a jewel among damsels.

31. From Brahmaloḳa I happened to go to the Mandara mountain. There I saw a city, Devīpura, full of hundreds of young women.

32. The chief among them is performing penance. Like her we cannot find one among gods, demons or Yakṣas.

33. I have not seen one like her in all my wanderings all over the world.

34. She is honoured by Devas, Gandharvas, Ṛṣis, Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Daityas.

35. Seeing that benevolent goddess, I rushed here to you. She cannot be won without winning Devas and Gandharvas”.

36. Thus informing him, Nārada immediately disappeared.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

The discussion of Mahiṣāsura with his ministers

Varāha said:

1. When Nārada was gone, Mahiṣāsura began to think of the beautiful damsel spoken about by him.

2. Thinking of her, he never got peace of mind. He summoned his chief minister by name Alaṅśarman.

3-4. He had eight ministers who were learned, valiant and just. They were Praghosa, Vighasa, Śaṅkukarṇa, Vibhāvasu, Vidyunmālī, Sumati, Parjanya and Krūra. These were the principal ones. They asked their king to tell them what they should do.

5. Determined to get the damsel mentioned by Nārada, the king told them:

Mahiṣa said:

6. Sage Nārada spoke to me about a young woman. She cannot be obtained without defeating the king of gods.

7-8. You, therefore, consider the matter well and tell me how gods can be defeated and how this woman can be obtained. Please tell me quickly.

9. Thus asked, they began to say. First Praghasa said to him:

10. "O lord, she who was spoken of by Nārada to you, is the supreme power that has assumed the form of the goddess Vaiṣṇavī.

11. A king who desires the wife of his preceptor, the wife of another king or the women in attendance on him, or cohabits with a woman prohibited for him, brings about his own doom.

12. After Praghasa, Vighasa said, "O king, what Praghasa said about that goddess is true.

13. If we all agree, then what should be done by one desirous of success, is to get that virgin goddess in marriage.

14-15. In a matter relating to a virgin, one should not act by oneself. If you all agree to what I say, then let the ministers go to her nearest relative and seek her hand for you.

16. We will first try negotiation failing which we will try to get the approval by gifts. If we still fail we try the method of threat, and finally, if necessary, we will fight.

17. If by all these processes, we fail to achieve our aims, we will march forward and carry her away by force".

18. Vighasa's proposal was gladly approved by all the other ministers. They said:

19. "Vighasa has said now what best we can do in this matter. Let that be done and let us send a messenger now.

20. The messenger should be pure in mind, valiant and learned in polity.

21. We should know from him about her appearance, complexion, valour, might, relations and residence.

22. After knowing all this, we may think of the further action to be taken".

23. The king accepted the suggestion and applauded the minister Vighasa.

24. All of them then considered as to who should be sent as messenger and finally chose Vidyutprabha, who had magical powers, for the purpose.

25. Vighasa then told him: "Be victorious over the army of gods. Mobilise the Rākṣasa army with all its four constituents.

26. O lord of Asuras, when the gods are defeated by you, that damsel will naturally come to you.

27-28. When the guardians of the quarters, Maruts, Nāgas, Vidyādharas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Rudras, Vasus, Ādityas, are all overcome, you will become Indra.

29. When Indra's harem with numerous women, and the women among Devas and Gandharvas fall to you, she too will certainly do so".

30-31. Thus said, the king ordered the commander-in-chief Virūpākṣa, black like the cloud and collyrium, to get ready the army with the elephants, horses, chariots, and soldiers, in order to defeat gods and Gandharvas.

32. Commanded thus, Virūpākṣa immediately got ready the invincible army.

33. Each Rākṣasa in the army was adequate to defeat one god in battle.

34. Even the chieftains were nine crores in number. Thousands of Rākṣasas constituted the infantry.

35. The entire force was assembled and made to march with a view to defeating the force of gods.

36. With a variety of weapons in hands and with ferocious looks, the soldiers in the army danced in delight and uttered loud cries at the prospect of victory over the gods.

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The fight between gods and demons

Varāha said:

1. Then the mighty demon Mahiṣa, who could assume any form at will, started for mountain Meru on an elephant.

2. Reaching Indra's city, he challenged Indra and gods for battle.

3. Taking their weapons and riding on their battle vehicles, the gods accepted the challenge.

4. Then started the exciting battle between great warriors full of war cries from both sides.

5. The (eight) Vasus were attacked by eight Rākṣasas, namely Añjana, Nīlakukṣi, Meghavarṇa, Valāhaka, Udarākṣa, Lalāṭākṣa, Subhīma and Svarbhānu.

6-9. The twelve Ādityas were engaged by twelve Rākṣasas, namely, Bhīma, Dhvāṅkṣa, Dhvastakṣṛṇa, Śaṅkukarṇa, Vajraka, Jyotivīrya, Vidyunmālī, Raktākṣa, Vidyujjihva, Atikāya, Mahākāya and Dīrghabāhū.

10-12. Similarly, the eleven Rudras were to face eleven Rākṣasas by name Kāla, Kṛtānta, Raktākṣa, Harāṇa, Mitrahā, Nala, Yajñahā, Brahmahā, Goghna, Strīghna and Saṁvartaka.

13. The other Rākṣasas engaged the other devas and Mahiṣa himself engaged Indra.

14. Mahiṣa was very valiant and was highly haughty that he could not be killed by any male, because of a boon from Brahmā, be he Śiva himself.

15. Numerous Asuras were killed by Ādityas, Vasus and Rudras. Many in the army of Devas were also killed by the Rākṣasas.

16. In the end Indra was defeated, and the gods, unable to face the piercing weapons, took to their heels.

17. The Asuras reached Brahmāloka and began to harass Devas further.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

Death of Mahiṣāsura

Varāha said:

1. Then Vidyutprabha, who was sent as the messenger, reached the place of the goddess where there were hundreds of young women, and said:

Vidyutprabha said:

2. "O goddess, there was a sage named Supārśva who was one among the first of creations.

3. To him was born the valiant and resplendent Sindhudvīpa.

4. He was performing severe penance without food in the city Māhiṣmatī.

5. One day princess Māhiṣmatī of incomparable beauty was moving about playing with her friends.

6. She chanced to reach the valley of the Mandara mountain.

7-8. There she saw the penance-grove of sage Asvara which was full of bowers and trees like Bakula, Lakuca, Candana, Spandana, Sāla and Sarala.

9. Seeing this beautiful hermitage, princess Māhiṣmatī thought.

10. "I shall frighten out this sage from this penance grove and shall myself enjoy here with my friends".

11. Thinking thus, she transformed herself into a buffalo with sharp horns, along with her friends.

12. She then went to the sage to frighten him.

13. When frightened by them, the sage was able to see by his internal eye that she was the Asura princess, and in anger he cursed her.

14. "Since you are frightening me by assuming the form of a buffalo, you be a buffalo itself for a hundred years for your misconduct".

15. Cursed thus, she was shivering with fear, and she fell at his feet with her friends and sought his pardon.

16. He was very much moved and said in mitigation of the curse: "When once you give birth to a son with this form, there will be the end of the curse. My words will never be in vain".

17. Told thus, she went to the bank of river Narmadā where Sindhuvīpa was performing penance.

18. There a young and beautiful Rākṣasa girl by name Indumatī, bathing naked, was seen by this sage.

19. Then he had an emission which he dropped in a stony crevice at the river (and it got mixed with the water).

20. Finding the water fragrant (with it), Māhiṣmatī told her friends that she would drink it. She then drank the water containing the emission of the sage.

21. As a result she conceived and in due time brought forth, a son named Mahiṣa, intelligent and valiant.

22. O goddess, this Mahiṣa who has vanquished the army of gods, now desires to marry you.

23. This great Asura, having subjugated all the three worlds, will give you everything you desire.

24. O goddess, you will be doing a great thing if you offer yourself to him".

25. Told thus by the messenger, the goddess simply laughed and did not utter a word.

26. When she was laughing, he saw in her belly all the three worlds and he became stupefied.

27. Then the doorkeeper of the goddess, by name Jayā, spoke what was in the mind of her mistress.

Jayā said:

28. “You have now spoken seeking the hand of this goddess (for your master). But the vrata she has undertaken is a ceaseless one.

29. There are so many damsels here attending on her. Even one among them is not available to you. Then why speak of the goddess. Therefore, O messenger, please go before something untoward befalls you”.

30. The messenger departed. Immediately there appeared sage Nārada from the sky.

31. He quickly prostrated before the virgin goddess, took the seat offered to him and said after bowing to all the others there.

32. “O goddess, I am sent to you by the gods.

33. The gods have been defeated in battle by the asura Mahiṣa, and now he is attempting to capture you.

34. And I have been asked by the gods to tell you that you should be firm in killing him”.

35. Soon Nārada disappeared and the goddess ordered her retinue to get ready for battle.

36. Thus ordered, they all took ferocious forms holding sword, shield and arrows, and stood ready for battle to destroy Asuras.

37. Then the entire army of Asuras quickly came away from the army of gods to the place where this army of women was ranged.

38. The women fought with them and soon destroyed their force with all its four divisions.

39. The heads of many were smashed or cut down. The chests of many were broken and goblins were drinking the blood therein.

40. The trunkless heads of many of the Asuras were rolling on the ground.

41. Thus very soon the Asura army was vanquished and the attack now turned towards Mahiṣāsura.

42. Then the whole army raised a cry of fear, and Mahiṣa asked the commander why it was so.

43. The Asura named Yajñahanu, who had assumed the form of an elephant, told him that this was because of the army of women striking ferociously at the Asura force.

44. Mahiṣa then darted forth towards these women to strike them with his mace.

45. He straightaway went to the spot where the goddess worshipped by Devas and Gandharvas was standing.

46-47. Seeing him advance towards her, she assumed a form with twenty hands, holding bow, sword, spear, arrows, trident, club, mace, disc, sling, rod, rope, flag and lotus.¹

48. The twenty-armed goddess appeared riding on a lion. She then meditated on the fierce Rudra who is the cause of destruction.

49-50. Rudra immediately arrived there. She bowed to him and said that she would gain victory over the Asuras by his mere presence there.

51. Then she defeated all the Asuras except Mahiṣa. Afterwards she darted towards him.

52. When he saw her, Mahiṣa rushed towards her. He alternately fought and fled.

53. He sometimes fought and sometimes withdrew. The fight went on in this manner for ten thousand divine years.

54. The entire universe was reeling with fear in the tumult of the battle.

55. Finally in the mountain Śataśṛṅga, he was trodden upon and killed with the trident.

56. His head was cut off with the sword, As he was killed by the goddess, his soul went to heaven.

57. Then Devas led by Brahmā, 'delighted at the annihilation of Mahiṣa, praised the goddess.

Devas said:

58. Bow to you, O goddess, the great, majestic and fierce,

1. Only thirteen items are mentioned here and not twenty.

victorious, the cause of the existence of the world, three-eyed and omnipresent.

59. Knowledge and nescience, meditation, the object of meditation, the slayer of Mahiṣāsura, present in everything, the lord of all, of universal form, Vaiṣṇavī.

60. Free from fear, permanent, with eyes like the lotus petal, engaged in holy vows, of frightening form.

61. The bestower of prosperity and success, learning and ignorance, immortal, auspicious, the energy of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, prostrated by all gods.

62. Holding the bell in hand, bearing the weapon trident, the destroyer of terrible Mahiṣa, fierce in form, uneven-eyed the great illusion, the exuder of ambrosia.

63. Well disposed towards all beings, the very essence of all beings, the supporter of all beings, the source of all Vidyās, Purāṇas and Śilpas.

64. Bow to you, O mother, you are the repository of all powers and all the secrets of the Vedas.

65. Bow to you, O great goddess, pure, the embodiment of forbearance.

66. We all seek refuge in you, O supreme goddess, as a result of which we never meet with any reverse in battle.

67-68. He who recites this Stotra with devotion escapes from ferocious animals like the tiger, from robbers and from the displeasure of kings, gets release from fetters and lives happily.

Varāha said:

69. Thus extolled by gods, she asked them to seek of her a boon.

The gods said:

70. “The boon we seek is that you may be pleased to fulfil all the desires of those who recite this stotra of yours”.

71. Saying ‘Let it be so’, the goddess sent the gods off and herself remained there.

72. O Earth, he who knows this the second birth of the goddess, becomes free from grief and attains the eternal abode free from all misery.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

The exploits of Raudri

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, listen to the Vrata of Raudrī, representing the power of Tamas, who went to the Nila mountain for performing penance.

2. With the aim of protecting the world by means of penance for a long time, she resorted to five fires.¹

3-4. While she was thus performing great penance, there lived in a city rich with gems and full of forests in the midst of the sea, a powerful Asura king named Ruru who had got a boon from Brahmā. He was a source of terror to gods.

5. He was like a second Namuci,² and had as his followers crores of Asuras.

6. For a long time he fought against gods with a view to capturing the cities of the deities guarding different quarters.

7. As the great Asura was rising with his army, the water in the sea began to swell and enter the valleys of mountains filling them with crocodiles and big fish.

8. From within that water issued forth the Asura army with variegated weapons and armour.

9. Came out from it big elephants with Asuras seated on them and loudly tinkling with bells tied on them.

10. Crores of horses having white streamers came out with riders seated on golden pedestals.

11. Similarly, came out a ceaseless stream of chariots with good wheels, shaft and poles, fitted with mechanical contrivances, and equalling in speed the chariot of the sun.

12. In the same manner rushed forth the infantry with quivers, bows and arrows, quickly striking at all those that came in the way.

13. After coming out of the waters, they vanquished the gods and darted towards the city of Indra with all the four divisions of the army.

14. The Asura king Ruru fought Devas with fierce club, hammer, rod and arrows.

1. The five fires are those on the four sides, the fifth being the sun.

2. Namuci was a demon killed by Indra.

15. In the battle, the Asuras inflicted serious injury on Devas and so too Devas on the Asuras. In the end, Devas with their leader Indra were defeated and they ran away.

16. When Devas were thus taking to their heels, Asuras chased them.

17-18. Running in great fear, gods came to Nīla mountain where the goddess Raudrī was doing penance. They understood her to be Kālarātri, the cause of all destruction.

19. Seeing Devas thus fear-stricken, she told them aloud not to be afraid.

The goddess said:

20. O gods, why are you so worried. Tell me the cause of your fear.

The gods said:

21. "O great goddess, protect us from the powerful Ruru, the king of Asuras, who is pursuing us".

22. Told thus by the gods, she of matchless valour, simply laughed a while.

23. As she was laughing, from her mouth arose numerous goddesses of strange forms, and the whole world became covered by them.

24. They were ferocious, with expansive breasts, holding noose, goad, trident, bow and arrows.

25. They remained around the goddess in crores.

26. They soon fought against Asuras and annihilated their entire force.

27. The army of Devas together with the army of Kālarātri fought Asuras and sent them all to Yama's abode.

28. The great demon Ruru alone was left there.

29. He then discharged towards the gods a magical power which made them all fall into a swoon.

30. When Devas were thus in a state of forced sleep, the goddess struck at Ruru with her trident.

31. When he was struck, his trunk (*carma*) and head (*muṇḍa*) got separated from each other.

32. Since the *carma* and *muṇḍa* of the demon Ruru were separated thus, she came to be known as *Cāmuṇḍā*.¹

33. Because of her terrific form engaged in destruction, she was known as *Kālarātri* (the night of time).

34. Her attendant goddesses are legion and they always stand around her.

35. They all felt extremely hungry and so requested the goddess to give them food.

36. Thus requested, she began to think about food for them, but could not find an immediate solution.

37. She then meditated on Lord Rudra, and as a result the three-eyed god appeared before her.

38. He then asked her to tell him what her desire was.

The goddess said:

39. These mighty attendants of mine are in need of food. Please give them something suitable to eat. Otherwise, O lord, they may be eating me.

Rudra said:

40. "O resplendent *Kālarātri*, I shall tell you about the food for them. Please listen.

41-42. She who, while in pregnancy, wears the cloth of another woman, or touches a man (other than her husband), let her be (the food) for some of them on earth.

43. Where there are foibles among the ignorant, the occasion may be taken advantage of as an offering for some of them.

44. Others may take advantage of crevices in rooms for child-birth and snatch away the newborn ones.

45. Still others may satisfy their hunger by possessing the bodies of women standing with tears in houses, fields, lakes, tanks and gardens thinking of men (other than their own husbands)".

46-47. Telling the goddess thus and seeing Ruru and his army lying dead, the three-eyed god began to praise her.

Rudra said:

48. "Hail goddess *Cāmuṇḍā*, hail the snatcher of all beings, hail omniscient *Kālarātri*, bow to you.

1. Usually the name is taken as due to her killing the two demons, *Caṇḍa* and *Muṇḍa*.

49. O you of universal form, the auspicious, pure, three-eyed, fierce, benevolent, the great illusion, the great beginning.

50. Speedy like the mind, victory, the cause of growth, fierce-eyed, settler of all agitation, the great devastation, attractive in body, the lover of dance.

51. Fierce, black-coloured, remover of sins, with noose and and rod in hand, of frightening appearance.

52. Cāmuṇḍā, with flaming mouth, sharp teeth, mighty, sitting in a hundred vehicles, sitting on the dead.

53. Possessed of threatening big eyes, striking terror in all beings, furious.

54. Kāli, Karāli, Kālarātri, bow to you”.

55. Thus praised by god Rudra, the great goddess became very much pleased and asked him to seek any boon he wished.

Rudra said:

56. “May you be pleased to grant desires of those who recite this stotra of yours.

57. He who recites this with devotion thrice a day, may attain sons, grandsons, cattle and affluence.

58. He who listens to this account of the Triple power, may he be freed of all sins and made to attain beatitude”.

59. Having praised the goddess Cāmuṇḍā thus, lord Rudra disappeared and the gods retired to their abodes.

60. He who knows about the origin of the goddess in this three-fold form, becomes freed from all bondages and attains supreme bliss.

61. A king who has lost his kingdom, regains it free from all troubles, if for one year he worships her fasting on Aṣṭamī, Navamī and Caturdaśī.

62. This Triple power brings success in diplomacy.

63. This great goddess of creation, when white, is of Sāttvic nature and pertains to Brahmā. The same, when red, is of Rājasic nature and is called Vaiṣṇavī (pertaining to Viṣṇu).

64. The same, when black, is of Tāmasic nature and is known as Raudrī (pertaining to Rudra).

65. Just as the same supreme soul manifests itself in three forms (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Rudra), so the same power manifests itself in three different forms based on function.

66. He who listens to the origin of this Triple power, becomes free from all sins and attains the highest bliss.

67. He who listens to the same on the Navamī tithi with great attention, becomes free from fears and attains a kingdom.

68. He who keeps it written in his house, gets it immune from fire, thieves and snakes.

69. He who worships the book in which it is written, gets the whole world in his favour. He gets children, money, grain, kine and noble women.

70. He who has it in his house, gets jewels, horses, cows, servants, servant maids and all other kinds of wealth.

Varāha said:

71. O Earth, I have now told you about the secret and the greatness of Rudra.

72. Cāmuṇḍā has different forms numbering nine crores. Cāmuṇḍā is the Tamasic power which pertains to Rudra.

73. Vaiṣṇavī has different forms numbering eighteen crores. Vaiṣṇavī is the Rājasic Power of protection which pertains to Viṣṇu.

74. Brāhmī has different forms countless in number.

75. O Earth, to each one of these Śiva creates a form of himself to be their husbands.

76. So Rudra becomes pleased with those who worship them and grants all that they desire.

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

The greatness of Rudra

Varāha said:

1. O Earth, now listen to the origin of Rudra Vrata, by knowing which one gets freed from all sins.

2. The red-eyed and tawny-coloured Rudra who was created by Brahmā in his third birth, was borne by him in pleasure on his shoulder.

3-4. When he was thus on the shoulder, the fifth head of Brahmā told Rudra the Ātharvaṇa mantra by which release is obtained.

5. "O Kapālin, Rudra, Babhru, Bhava, Kairāta, Suvrata, my valiant and broad-eyed son, do protect this world".

6. When Rudra was thus addressed by the names which he would be getting in future he was angry at the word 'Kapāla' used and clipped off that (fifth) head.

7. The head was clipped off by the nail in the left thumb, but it got attached to the hand.

8. Having plucked out the head, Rudra, however, spoke to Brahmā in humility.

Rudra said:

9. O lord, please tell me how this cut-off head can be made to fall from my hand and how I can make atonement for this sin.

Brahmā said:

10. "O Rudra, perform the vrata called Kāpālika by your own prowess and following the right Samayācāra."

11. Thus said by Brahmā, Rudra went to the holy mountain Mahendra to make atonement for his sin.

12. Remaining there, Rudra broke that head into three. He separated the hair on the head and with it made his yajñopavīta.

13. He made a bead of the bones. One part of the skull, full of blood, remained in his hand.

14-15. Another he made into smaller parts and placed them on his matted hair. Then the great god wandered over the whole earth with its seven islands, bathing in the holy Tīrthas every day; first he bathed in the sea and then in the Ganges.

16. He went to river Sarasvatī and then the confluence of the Ganges and Yamunā. He then went to river Śatadru and from there to the great river Devikā.

17. He then bathed in Vitastā, Candrabhāgā, Gomatī, Sindhu, Tuṅgabhadra, Godāvarī and Gaṇḍakī.

18. He went to the great Śiva temple in Nepal and then to Dāruvana in Kedāra.

19. He visited Bhadreśvara and then the very holy Gayā and there propitiated the Pitṛs.

20. Thus, O Earth, he quickly traversed the whole earth.

21-22. In the sixth year of his wandering, his only dress,

a lion cloth tied to the waist-string, fell down and he became the naked Kāpālika.

23. Wandering again for the next two years from one holy place to another, he attempted to cast off the piece of skull in his hand but could not.

24. For another two years he continued the same but in vain.

25. He then spent one year in the holy Himālaya mountain.

26. For another year also he did the same in great excitement.

27. The next two years Rudra wandered about visiting very ancient holy places.

28. O Earth, in the twelfth year, he went to Vārāṇasī and had his bath there.

29. When he was dipping himself in river Gaṅgā there, Brahmā's skull in his hand released itself.

30. This tīrtha in Gaṅgā, thereafter came to be known as 'Kapālamocana'.

31. Going to the place Harihara and bathing in Devāṅgada and worshipping Someśvara, he went to Cakratīrtha.

32. Bathing there and worshipping the deity Trijaḥśvara, he went to Ayodhyā and from there to Vārāṇasī.

33. At the end of twelve years, the skull in his hand was made to fall by the force of the Gaṇas moving in the borders.

34. This place became the holy tīrtha named Kapālamocana.

35. He bathed in the Gaṅgā there, worshipped Viśveśvara and became free from the sin of Brahmahatyā.

36. The tīrtha Kapālamocana is well known in the world, by bathing in which one gets absolved of the sin of killing a Brahmin.¹

37. Seeing the skull fall, Brahmā arrived there together with Devas, and said:

Brahmā said:

38. "O Rudra, be you the propounder of the righteous path in the world. Since you wandered in the world with *Kapāla*

1. Verses 31 to 36 seem to be an interpolation stating the same matter as in the verses before with the change that the skull was made to fall by the Gaṇas instead of its dropping on its own accord.

(skull) in hand, the Vrata relating to you will be known as *Nagnakāpāla*.

39. Since you attained reddish-brown colour while wandering in the Himālaya, the Vrata will be known as *Bābhavya*.

40. Since you became *Śuddha* (purified) in this place, the Vrata will be *Śuddhaśaiva*, highly purificatory.

41. I will impart the śāstras only to those who duly worship you at first.

42. He who performs these Vratas which you did first, will be absolved of even the sin of killing a Brahmin.

43. The Vratas performed by you as a *Nagnakāpāla* (naked holding the skull), *Bābhavya* (as pure Śiva), will be known by the respective names.

44. Following this, those who duly worship you, to them you may impart briefly with the rituals all śāstras, the Pāśupata Śāstra in particular”.

45. Told thus by Brahmā, Rudra became extremely pleased, and hailed by Devas, he went to Kailāsa.

46. Brahmā departed with Devas to the celestial world, and then Devas went to their abodes.

Varāha said:

47. I have thus told you about the greatness of Rudra and what he did in this world.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

Mokṣa of Satyatapas¹

Earth said:

1-2. O lord, you said formerly that there is much that is interesting to be said about Satyatapas, the Brahmin who became a hunter and who saved Āruṇi from a tiger and propitiated Durvāsas and then went to Himālayas.

1. In the text the chapter is named *Paroddhyāya*.

3. I am now very much eager to know this. Be pleased to tell me.

Varḍha said:

4. Satyatapas was a Brahmin in the line of Bhr̥gu, but because of his association with Dasyus (a cruel uncivilised tribe), himself became one like them.

5. After a long time, by the contact with sages, he became a Brahmin again and got instruction from Durvāsas in particular.

6. On the northern side of mount Himavān there is a holy river called Puṣyabhadrā, on its bank a beautiful slab called Citraśilā and a big banyan tree called Bhadra.

7. There Satyatapas was performing severe penance.

8. Once when he was cutting with his axe sticks (for homa), he happened to cut his left fore finger.

9. At the broken part there were only ashes, neither blood nor flesh nor marrow. He put the broken finger in its place and it got united as before.

10. This wonder was seen by a Kinnara couple that had resorted to the banyan tree Bhadra the previous night.

11. When the couple returned to Indraloka in the morning, they were asked by Indra and Yakṣas, Gandharvas and Kinnaras there to tell them if there was anything wonderful to be narrated.

12-15. The Kinnara couple then narrated about their being near Rudrasaras, the wonder relating to Satyatapas they saw on the bank of river Puṣyabhadrā, the exudation of ashes from his broken finger and all that.

16-17. Surprised at this, Indra suggested to Viṣṇu that they may go to the place of wonder mentioned by the Kinnara pair on the slopes of the Himālayas.

18. Viṣṇu then transformed himself into a boar and Indra into a hunter, and both went near the sage (Satyatapas).

19. Viṣṇu in the form of the boar appeared within the sight of the sage, alternately revealing and hiding himself.

20. Soon appeared there Indra also (in the guise of the hunter) with bow and arrow in hand and asked sage Satyatapas:

21. "O sage, did you see here a big boar? I want to kill it for the food of my family".

22. Asked thus, the sage began to think: "If I show him the boar now, it will surely be killed by him.

23. If I don't, his family will famish. This hunter with his wife and children, is in great hunger.

24. The boar hit by the arrow has sought refuge in my hermitage. What shall I do?"

25. When thus in a dilemma, a thought occurred to him, and he exclaimed:

26. "The eye is directed to see the moving objects and the tongue is directed to speak to the hunter. There is no eye now to see or the tongue to speak. Does the tongue really have the eye?"

27. Hearing this, both Indra and Viṣṇu were pleased, and showing their genuine forms, offered to grant him a boon.

Hearing this Satyatapas said:

28. "Really there is nothing to be asked, after seeing you both before me here in this earth. I am fully gratified.

29. Still I shall ask: One, when Brahmins honour other Brahmins at the sight of the new moon and full moon with devotion, let their acquired sin disappear in the course of a month.

30. Another, let me attain full liberation".

31. They granted him both the boons asked for and disappeared. Satyatapas too felt in his heart to have become one with Brahman.

32. While the sage was thus remaining there fully gratified, his guru Āruṇi came there after going round the world visiting the holy spots.

33. In great devotion he honoured the Guru with a seat, Pādya, Ācamana and Godāna.

34. Āruṇi then spoke to him, seeing him full of humility and freed from all sins.

Āruṇi said:

35. "You have achieved in full the aim of penance and you have now become Brahman. Now it is the time for your liberation along with me,

36. Arise, my son, we shall go to the supreme Abode, after reaching which there will be no rebirth”.

37. Then both of them, Satyatapas and Āruni, meditated on Lord Nārāyaṇa and became merged in him.

38. He who listens to this Parvādhyāya in full or reads it to others, attains all that he desires.

CHAPTER NINETY-NINE

Greatness of Tiladhenu¹

Earth said:

1. She who is Māyā and arose out of the body of Brahmā who was born of Avyakta, became the eight-armed Gāyatrī and fought Caitrāsura.

2. The same goddess became Nandā to achieve the purpose of Devas. Then she became Vaiṣṇavī at the instance of Brahmā for killing Mahiṣāsura. Be pleased to tell me how all this was done.

Varāha said:

3. She is the goddess Gaṅgā very much loved by Lord Śiva. Being given his own abode, she is omniscient.

4. In Svāyambhuva (time), she killed as Vaiṣṇavī in the Mandara mountain the demon Mahiṣa.

5. Then in the Vindhya as Nandā, the demon Caitra was killed.

6. Or (it may also be understood) she is the power of knowledge and Mahiṣa the embodiment of ignorance. Doubtless, ignorance is to be overcome by knowledge.

7. For the embodied form we get the story. For the abstract form the place is the heart itself. This is proclaimed by Vedic statements and established by the exponents of the Vedas.

8. Now listen, O Earth, to the propitiation of Viṣṇu, the greatest of gods, as a result of which the five great sins are destroyed and sons and wealth are acquired.

1. Hollow metal cow filled with sesamum.

9. And he who is oppressed by poverty and diseases like leprosy and is issueless, attains quickly prosperity, long and healthy life and children.

10. He who sees Lord Nārāyaṇa with goddess Lakṣmī in the maṇḍala with due rites.

11. The lord who is self-born and is the embodiment of mantra, as directed by the priest.

12. During all Dvādaśī days, particularly on the Dvādaśī day in the bright half of the month Kārttika.

13. Or during the change of month or solar and lunar eclipses.

14. To him occurs great happiness, dissolution of all sins, and other deities also get propitiated.

15. The priest should test for one year whoever approaches him, be he Brahmin, Kṣatriya or Vaiśya, as to his conduct and eligibility as true devotee.

16. The devotee should also treat the priest with the same constant devotion as for Viṣṇu.

17. At the end of the year he should propitiate the priest saying.

18. "O worthy lord, I desire by your grace all prosperity in this world and then to cross this ocean of worldly existence".

19. Thus should he worship the Guru taking him to be Lord Viṣṇu before him.

20. Thus worshipped, the Guru should on the Daśamī day in the month of Kārttika, get him clean the teeth with mantras using the twig of a sappy tree and sleep near the deity.

21. He will see dreams and he should tell them to the Guru, who will then know whether it augurs well or ill.

22. On the Ekādaśī day the devotee should fast and go to the temple after bath.

23. Then Guru should prepare the maṇḍala on the floor according to prescription and draw there the cakra Ṣoḍaśāra, Sarvatobhadra or Aṣṭapatra¹ and ask the devotee to see it.

24. Then he should cover the eyes of the devotees with white cloth and ask them to enter the place of worship in the order of their Varṇa (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaiśya).

1. These are diagrams of different kinds to be drawn on the floor according to specifications.

25. The maṇḍala Navanābha should then be arranged with different colours.

26. Then worship should be done for the Dikpālas in their respective positions in the maṇḍala, Indra in the east, Agni in the south-east.

27. Yama in the south, Nirṛti in the south-west, Varuṇa in the west, Vāyu in the south-west.

28. Kubera in the north and Iśāna in the north-east.

29. At the centre of the *Padma* (lotus in the middle of the diagram), worship should be done to the great lord Viṣṇu.

30. In the petal on the east of the Padma, worship should be offered to Balabhadra, in the one on the south to Pradyumna, in the one on the west to Aniruddha and in the one on the north to Vāsudeva, the destroyer of all sins.

31. (Of the four objects in the hands of Viṣṇu) the conch should be placed on the north-east, the disc on the south-east, the club on the north-west and the lotus on the south-west.

32. In the north-east, again, may be placed the mace (*musala*). Garuḍa should be on the right and Lakṣmī on the left of the lord.

33. The bow and the sword are to be placed in front, special position is to be given for Śrīvatsa (the mark on Viṣṇu's body) and Kaustubha (the jewel he wears).

34. After performing worship to lord Janārdana in this way, in the petals in the diagram on the eight directions, a pot each filled with water should be placed. A ninth pot pertaining to Viṣṇu also should be placed (in the middle).

35. The water in the pot pertaining to Viṣṇu should be poured on the devotee desirous of mokṣa.

36. The water in the pot pertaining to Indra (the one placed on the east) should be poured on him who is desirous of prosperity and the same in the one pertaining to Agni (the one placed on north-east) on him who is desirous of great fame.

37. The water in the pot pertaining to Yama (the one placed on the South) should be poured on the devotee desirous of long life, and the same on the one relating to Nirṛti (placed on the south-west) on him who desires the annihilation of the wicked.

38. The water in the pot pertaining to Varuṇa (the one placed on the west) should be poured on him who is desirous of tranquility and the same on the one relating to Vāyu (the one

placed on the north-west) on him who desires the destruction of his sins. The water in the pot pertaining to Kubera (the one placed on the north) should be poured on him who desires wealth.

39. The water in the pot pertaining to Īśāna (the one placed on the north-west) should be poured on him who desires knowledge or kingship.

40. Even when bathed in the water of one of these, one becomes free from sins, acquires profound knowledge and attains great skill. What then, when he is bathed in all the nine? All his sins disappear, he becomes equal to Viṣṇu and becomes a king.

41. The Guru may also perform worship to the guardian deities of different directions (Indra and others) one after another in the respective spots.

42. And then lead there the blind-folded devotees and make them circumambulate the maṇḍala.

43. The rituals relating to Varuṇa, Vāyu and Soma should then be performed and the order of propitiation should be told.

44. Namely, high Brahmins, Vedas, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Rudra, Āditya, Agni, the lokapālas (deities guarding the eight directions), the planets, preceptor, Vaiṣṇavas and the devotee who has taken the vow.

45. Then the homa should be performed with the mantra *Om namo Bhagavate sarvarūpiṇe huṃ phaṣ svāhā*.

46. Homa should be made in the blazing fire with the (above) Ṣoḍaśākṣara mantra, and rituals like Garbhādhāna should be done.

47. The offering should be made thrice in fire in front of the deity. At the end of the homa, the devotee who has undertaken the vow should give dakṣiṇā to the Guru.

48. A king may give as dakṣiṇā elephants, horses, jewels, gold and land; others according to capacity.

49. O Earth, the merit attained by this cannot be described even for a hundred years.

50. If the person with the vow listens to Varāha, it is equivalent to reciting the Vedas, Purāṇas and mantras.

51-52. He gets double the merit of reciting them at Puṣkara tīrtha, Prayāga, Kurukṣetra or Vārāṇasī or during eclipses or Viṣu.

53. Even Devas perform penance and meditation, and wonder when they will be born in Bhāratavarṣa.

54. Become devotees with vow, listen to Varāha, and leaving the body with its sixteen elements.

55. Reach the position from which there is no return. They think so and say the same.

56. An old story is illustrated in this connection in the form of conversation between Vasiṣṭha and Śveta.

57. In the region Ilāvṛta there lived a highly saintly king named Śveta.

58. He wished to gift away all his verduous land and consulted sage Vasiṣṭha on the matter.

59. "O great sage, I wish to give away the entire continent of mine to Brahmins. Please permit me". Vasiṣṭha told the king.

60. "O king, give them food conducive to all times. If food is given, what does become not given?"

61. The gift of food is superior to all other gifts. All beings arise from food, and they all grow by food.

62. Therefore, O king, resort to giving food". The king, however, did not follow the advice of Vasiṣṭha.

63. He called Brahmins and gave them gems, cloth, ornaments and fine urban land with money.

64. He even gave them majestic elephants. After this, once having conquered the whole earth, he called his family priest Vasiṣṭha again and told him:

65. "O great sage, I wish to perform a hundred Aśvamedha sacrifices".

66. He then performed the sacrifice and gave the Brahmins gold, silver and copper but not food or drink thinking it to be an insignificant thing.

67. O Earth, this affluent king, in due course, became dead.

68. In the world beyond, he became oppressed by hunger, and thirst in particular.

69-70. He went to the mountain Śveta and from there collected from the place where his mortal body was cremated, all the bones and began to lick them.

71. He then got into his aerial car and returned to heaven. (He used to do this quite often).

72. After a long time, the king was seen thus licking the bones by sage Vasiṣṭha. The sage asked him why he was feeding on his own bones.

73. Thus asked by Vasiṣṭha, king Śveta replied.

74. "O sage, I am hungry and as I have not gifted food or drink, so hunger and thirst overpower me".

75. Told thus by the king, Vasiṣṭha addressed him again.

76. "What can I do for you, particularly now that you are hungry. What is not given never serves any one at any time.

77. By giving gold and gems, one enjoys pleasures. But by giving food and drink, one attains everything.

78. That was not given by you, being under the impression that it was a trifle.

Śveta said:

79. Please tell me how I can attain its fruit, although I have not given food. I request you most earnestly.

Vasiṣṭha said:

80. There is one way to attain it. I shall tell you that. Please listen.

81. In days of yore, there was a famous king named Vinī-tāśva. He began a great sacrifice called Sarvamedha.

82. During the sacrifice, he gave to the Brahmins cows, elephants and money, but not food, just as you did.

83. After a long time he died in river Gaṅgā and because of the great merit he had acquired, he went to heaven as you too did.

84-85. He too became very much hungry in the same manner and went to the Nīla mountain on the bank of the river Gaṅgā, in a resplendant aerial car and saw there his own body.

86. He also saw there on the bank of Gaṅgā his priest and asked him the cause of his hunger (and the means to overcome it).

87-88. The priest asked him to quickly make gifts of Tiladhenu, Jaladhenu, Ghr̥tadhenu and Rasadhenu so that he may be rid of his extreme hunger.¹

1. These are models of cows with sesamum, water, clarified butter and sugarcane juice inside.

89. The effect will last as long as the sun and moon are in the sky”.

The king then asked him again:

Vintāśva said:

90. O Brahmin, tell me how Tiladhenu (cow of sesamum) is to be given so that I may peacefully enjoy heaven.

The priest said:

91. Listen to me. I shall tell you how Tiladhenu is to be given.

92. Four Kuḍavas make one Prastha. The cow should be of sixteen prasthas and the calf of four prasthas. The nose should be of sandal and the tongue of gur.

93. The tail should be adorned with bells and the horns should be made of gold.

94. The body should be of bronze and hoofs of silver. As is the cow (so should be the calf). This should be then given to the Brahmin.

95. On its back should be placed antelope’s skin and the rope should be adorned with gems.

96. The gift should be made with mantra and with herbs uttering.

97. “May I get food, may I get water good, O cow of sesamum given to the Brahmin, I hold you with devotion for the sake of my family. I bow to you, may you be pleased to grant my desire”.

98. Give away Tiladhenu in this way. I fulfil all your desires.

99. He who listens to this intently or makes the gift or makes one give such a gift, gets freed of all sins and reaches the abode of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Greatness of Jaladhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about Jaladhenu. On a holy day clean the floor of the size of a cow's skin with cowdung.

2. In its middle, place a pot full of water with perfumes, camphor and sandal paste.

3. Consider that as the cow and another full of water as the calf.

4. Place on all sides the tender sprouts of Dūrvā grass and duly decorate with garlands.

5. Put on the pot fine gems and different kinds of fine fragrance.

6. Place also different kinds of grain on all sides.

7. Place four vessels on the four sides respectively filled with ghee, curd, honey and gur.

8. The face should be of gold, horns of lead and eyes of pearl.

9. The back should be of copper and (the rest of) the body of bronze and hairs to be of darbha. The tail should be of strings with black bells.

10. There should be garlands on the neck, gur on the face and teeth should be of seashells. The tongue should be of strings with black bells.

11. The feet should be of Sugarcane with sandalpaste and flower. Cover it then with cloth and place it on an antelope's skin. Then give it to a Brahmin after giving him sandalpaste and flowers.

12-13. The person to whom it is given should be good, learned in Veda, one with a family and devoted to duty.

14. He who gives the gift, sees it or hears about it and he who receives it, all get freed of their sins.

15. Even those who have the sin of killing a Brahmin, father or cow, or of drinking liquor or of adultery with his teacher's wife, get absolved of it and go to Viṣṇu's abode.

16. The performer of an Aśvamedha with all gifts and dakṣiṇas and the giver of a Jaladhenu are equals.

17. The giver of Jaladhenu may live on water alone for a day and the receiver in the same manner for three days.

18. The giver of Jaladhenu goes to the place where rivers are full of milk and ponds are full of honey and where always swells the music of the Apsarases.

19. He who gives Jaladhenu, he who causes it to be given and he who receives it, all get merged in Viṣṇu.

20. He who speaks about the greatness of the gift of Jaladhenu and he who listens to it go to heaven, getting rid of all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND ONE

Greatness of Rasadhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about the rules of the gift of Rasadhenu in brief.

2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) place an antelope's skin covered with kuśa grass and over it a pot filled with sugarcane juice (and also the metal cow) and a calf of one-fourth its size on its side.

3. Its feet should be of sugarcane sticks and hoofs should be of silver.

4-5. The horns should be of gold, the tail of cloth, the udder of butter, the face and tongue of gur.

6. The teeth should be of fruits and back made of copper, the hairs of flower and eyes of pearl. It should be well decorated and scented with sandal paste.

7. Seven (different kinds of) cereals should be placed near it and lamps lit on the four sides. .

8. Four vessels filled with sesamum should be placed one on each side.

9. The person desirous of heaven should make the gift of Rasadhenu.

10. The giver and the recipient attain the result of drinking the sacrificial soma juice if they fast for a day before the gift.

11. Those who see the gift being made also attain salvation.
12. With the mantras stated before, the donor should pray and then give it to the recipient.
13. Besides himself he leads to a permanent position in heaven ten generations of his ancestors and ten generations of his successors.
14. Thus I have told you, O king, about Rasadhenu. Follow it and attain supreme bliss.
15. He who reads this account every day or listens to it in reverence, goes to the world of Viṣṇu, being freed of all sins.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND TWO

The greatness of Guḍadhenu

The priest said:

1. I shall now tell you about Guḍadhenu, the gift of which accomplishes all desires and endows wealth.
2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) place an antelope's skin covered with kuśa grass. Spread a cloth on it and place in it the cow made of gur along with the calf and a bronze milking vessel.
3. The face should be of gold and teeth of pearls. The neck should be full of gems and nose of sandal paste.
4. The horns are to be of Agarū sticks and the back of copper. The tail is to be of silk and well decorated.
5. The feet are to be of sugarcane and hoofs of silver. A velvet cloth is to be put on it and fitted with bells.
6. The ears are to be of brass and the udder to be of butter. Different kinds of fruits are to be placed all around.
7. The best Guḍadhenu is one which is four ādhāras (in weight), its calf may be half or one-fourth its weight.
8. The medium is the one with half its weight and the inferior is the one with a quarter of the weight. The poor may have it of the size according to capacity.
9. Then according to means, worship should be performed to this, as also for the Brahmin to whom it is to be given.

10. This is to be done with sandal paste, flowers, ghee and other offerings and lamp.

11. It should be given to a Vedic Brahmin, preferably one who has performed sacrifices, with a hundred pieces of gold, or half or even a quarter of it.

12. And in the absence of capacity even for that, with a hundred or fifty, together with ear-rings, umbrella and footwear.

13. And then should be uttered the mantra: "O virile Guḍadhenu, the bestower of all prosperity, be pleased to provide me with food and drink as a result of this dāna".

14. The mantras cited before may also be recited.

15. The giver should face east while giving it to the Brahmin.

16. The gift of such a cow is proclaimed to be efficacious in removing the sins committed through thought, word or deed and of all that is false.

17. Those who witness the gift of such a cow attain salvation. The rivers in that place flow with milk and marshes produce ghee. The sages and Siddhas flock there.

18. The giver takes himself and those in the past ten and future ten generations in his family to the world of Viṣṇu.

19. For this dāna the equinoxes, solstices and the new moon and full moon days are particularly meritorious.

20. The gift should be made only to a deserving person and with full sincerity.

21. It then fulfils all wishes, removes all sins, provides enjoyment and finally liberation.

22. By the blessing of Guḍadhenu one enjoys all prosperity, good health and long life.

23. All adversity is overcome and the abode of Viṣṇu is attained.

24. Never does he, at any time, meet with any distress or discomfort.

25. He who recites this or listens to this or advises others on its basis, lives in this world with all happiness and in the world beyond for long honoured by the gods.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED AND THREE

Greatness of Śarkarādhenu

The priest said:

1. Listen, O king, similarly to the account about Śarkarādhenu (cow of sugarcandy).
2. On the floor smeared (with cowdung) place antelope's skin and over it kuśa grass and then cow made of sugarcandy.
3. The best is one made of four weights of sugarcandy and its calf of one-fourth the quantity; the medium is one of half this quantity and the inferior one of a single unit of weight. In all cases the calf is to be of one-fourth the weight of the cow.
4. (The money to go with it) may be above one hundred and eight, but it may also be according to one's capacity and without straining oneself.
5. Cereals of different kinds should be placed on all the four sides.
6. The face and horns should be of gold, eyes of pearls and tongue of flour. The face should be smeared with sugar.
7. Round the neck should be a silken band. The feet should be of sugarcane, the hoofs of silver and udder of butter.
8. The ears should be of grass. The cow should be adorned with five gems and white chowries and cloth should be thrown over it.
9. It should then be decorated with sandalpaste and flowers and given to a poor, good and intelligent Brahmin with a family.
10. It should not be given to one who is bad or jealous.
11. Solstices, equinoxes and other holy days are particularly good for this dāna.
12. It is particularly good if it is given to a deserving Vedic Brahmin who happens to come to the house.
13. The gift should be made facing east or north and keeping the cow faced east and holding its tail, and the calf on its northern side.
14. The mantras prescribed for the gift should be recited and the Brahmin to whom it is to be given should be honoured with ear-rings.
15. In his hand should be placed sandalpaste and flowers and dakṣiṇā according to one's means.