

removing a danger to the world.

“When Smara, the ever victorious, whose arrows never once fail their purpose in this world of gods, asuras, and men, viewed you, O lord, as just like the other gods, he became only an object of memory - for disdain of the self-controlled is not salutary.

“The earth suddenly fell into peril as you stamped your foot; the ether, full of the host of constellations scattered by your flailing arms which were like iron bars, was also in peril, the sky shook again and again as its curving sides were struck by your matted hair flying loose while you were dancing to save the world. Is not your power a perverse one?

“[The heavenly Ganges,] filling the sky, splendid in the scattering of its foam, which is counted to be the host of stars, the flood of waters, which seems like a mere drop on your head, makes the world seem only an island girdled by the ocean. By that alone your divine body with its enduring greatness can be imagined.

“The earth was your chariot, your charioteer he who had a hundred sacrifices (Brahmā); the lord of the mountains (Meru) your bow; your chariot wheels were the sun and moon, and he whose hands are emblazoned with sun and moon (Vishnu) was your arrow. What was the purpose of such a bombastic drum-beating when you wanted to

burn up the three cities, which were no more than grass to you?

The purposes of the lord with these his own creations were only sportive and not under others' influence.

“When Hari, who [daily] used to offer a thousand lotuses at your feet, was [once] short by one, he extracted one of his lotus-like eyes.



That bit of excess devotion (his eye) underwent evolution, and in the form of his discus ever stays alert, O destroyer of the three cities, to protect the three worlds.

“When the rite is over and gone to sleep, you stay awake to grant its fruit to the celebrants. Never can a ceremony, which is [not eternal but is] bound to come to an end, be success-

ful without propitiation of the Supreme Soul.

Therefore, considering that you are the guarantor of results in rites, folk place faith in Śruti, firm in their reliance upon ceremonies.

“Skilled in ceremonies was [the prajāpati] Dakṣa, patron of the sacrifice, lord of embodied beings; the office of manipulators of the sacrifice was entrusted to the ṛṣis, O giver of refuge; the hosts of gods were the supervising priests.

[But] destruction of the ceremony came from you, who usually are intent upon granting the fruit of the rite. For it is certain that the sacrifices of one who performs them with denial of faith [in you] are only a kind of witchcraft.

“O lord, the lord of creatures (Brahmā), who in a stag's form had been violently and lustfully pursuing his own daughter transformed into a doe, while he was obsessed with desire to enjoy her, and who had fled from you with bow in your hand until he reached the sky - him yonder, pierced by your arrow up to

the feathering, fear-stricken as he is, your ardor for the chase does not release even to this day. ...

“Your sport is in burning grounds, O destroyer of Smara; Piśācas (who eat the flesh of human beings) are your companions; ashes from a funeral pyre are ointment for your body; and your garland is a string of human skulls - though your character and