

autumnal pūjā, the same group of figures is constructed, and the image of the goddess is in the same attitude, with the same attendants and the same enemy. It is her struggle with Mahishāsura that is then commemorated too. The two pūjās, called respectively the vernal and the autumnal, are performed with the same rites and ceremonies, occupying each the same same number of days—although the former is less known, because it has not attained the popularity enjoyed by the latter. And the calculations of the days in the two cases have precisely the same relation to the two equinoxes.

The *Devī-māhātmya* goes on relating another contest in which the goddess engaged with two demon-kings called Sumbha and Nisumbha. These asuras had likewise discomfited the gods and reduced them to utter destitution. The gods presented their supplications to her for relief. The struggle was brought about by her displaying the elegance of her form and the attractions of her person before Chanda and Munda, two servants of Sumbha and Nisumbha. These men went and reported to their masters that they had seen on the Himālaya a handsome female whose beauty added splendour to the whole mountain. Sumbha on hearing this report of her beauty sent a messenger to call her into his palace. The goddess told the messenger that she had formed the resolution of giving herself away to none but him that could overpower her in personal strength. When this was related to the king, he felt indignant at the impertinence of a weak delicate woman, and sent a hero named *Dhumralochana* with stringent orders to bring the goddess into the palace. The goddess made quick work of the hero, reducing him to ashes by a single turn of her eyes, while her lion des-