

of Semiramis on the banks of the Indus probably suggested the tale. But, to say nothing of the mythical character of Semiramis herself, the retreat of a foreign enemy was not likely to be commemorated by the fabrication of a triumphant goddess. If the Brahmins had thought of preserving some recollections of the Babylonian queen in their literature, they would more probably have given her the sort of celebrity which Tāḍakā, or Súrpanakhā the sister of Rāvaṇa, enjoys in the Rāmāyaṇa. or Putanā in the Śrī Bhāgavata.

The Devī-māhātmya appears to be altogether allegorical. The goddess was produced by the concentration of the energies of all the gods, and furnished with the weapons for which they were severally conspicuous. Supposing that the etherials had a quarrel with the demons and that after many signal defeats, separately sustained, they had thought of the wisdom of uniting their forces, and had formed a general confederacy by which the Asuras were vanquished,—how could an imaginative Brahmin describe the fact more felicitously than by means of the allegory of the Devī-māhātmya. The union of their forces and resources furnished the gods with a *power*, (the goddess has among other names that of Śācti) which the demons could not resist.

We have followed the *Gauḍīya*, or Bengal manuscripts, in this edition. The Maithila manuscripts present in many instances various readings of which the most remarkable is that which we have placed separately at the end. From the 28th śloka of chapter 135 that reading entirely diverges from Bengal manuscripts. We find no more convergence between the two even to the end of the book.