



Classical Dictionary: Of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History, and Literature (Classic Reprint)

John Dowson

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Excerpt from Classical Dictionary: Of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History, and Literature

In this work an endeavour has been made to supply the long-felt want of a Hindu Classical Dictionary. The late Professor Wilson projected such a work, and forty years ago announced his intention of preparing one for the Oriental Translation Fund, but he never accomplished his design. This is not the first attempt to supply the void. Mr. Garrett, Director of Public Instruction in Mysore, published in India a few years ago a Classical Dictionary of India, but it is of a very miscellaneous character, and embraces a good deal of matter relating to the manners and customs of the present time. It has not obtained favour in Europe, and it cannot be considered as any obstacle in the way of a more complete and systematic work.

The main portion of this work consists of mythology, but religion is bound up with mythology, and in many points the two are quite inseparable. Of history, in the true sense, Sanskrit possesses nothing, or next to nothing, but what little has been discovered here finds its place. The chief geographical names of the old writers also have received notice, and their localities and identifications are described so far as present knowledge extends.

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