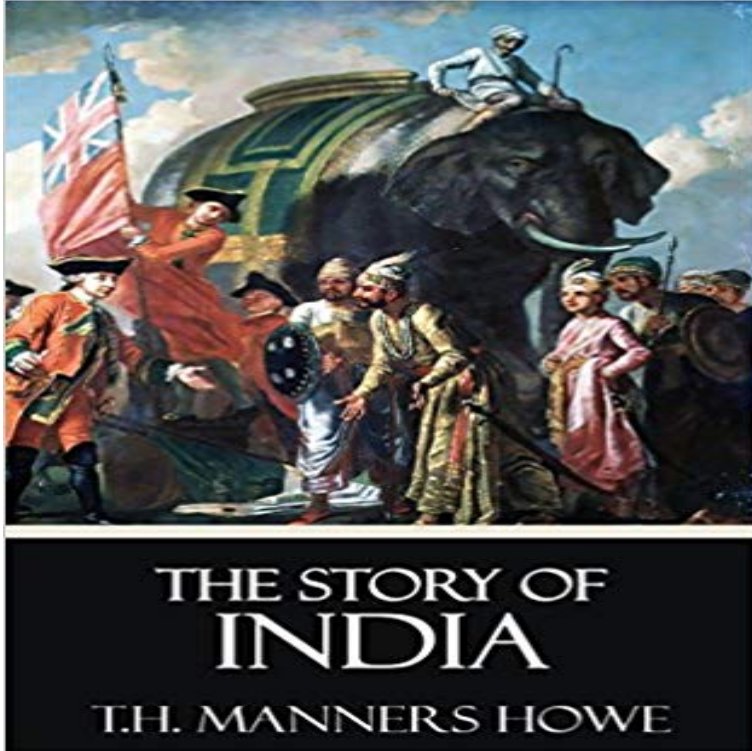


The Story of India [Quintessential Classics] [Illustrated]



If we look at a map of Asia we shall notice what looks like a great red tongue stretching down into the waters of the southern ocean. This is India, a country as large as the continent of Europe without Russia. It is the most beautiful part of Asia, containing ranges of huge mountains, wide fertile plains, wonderful forests, and mighty rivers. We shall find there numerous races of people whose forefathers came to India in great armies thousands of years ago, and before they settled down in the country fought and conquered the people who were there before them. Now we ought to feel a special interest in the Indian people, because very many ages ago our forefathers belonged to the same family or nation. These ancestors of ours were called Aryans and lived in the highlands of Central Asia, where, as time went on, they became so strong and numerous that large numbers of them had to go forth in search of other homes. So it came to pass that something like two thousand years before Christ, about the time of Abrahams arrival in Canaan, vast multitudes of our Aryan fathers moved away from the old home in the highland country with their wives and children and all their possessions. But they did not all go the same way. While some thought it best to march westward, others resolved to search for new homes to the south-east. Those who went towards the west moved on and on until they gradually spread over what we now call Europe, and in thousands of years became many different nations. But those who moved towards the south-east pushed on through the great mountains and down into the warm plains of India, where they found strange tribes of human beings who were the remains of a wild early period of the world about which we know very little. These people hunted and fought with flint axes and other deftly worked instruments of stone such as we may see in our

museums to-day. And before them were beings still wilder and more savage, whose agate knives and rough flint implements are often found to-day buried in the Narbada valley...

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