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Appointed through family influence to the East India Company, Mountstuart Elphinstone (1779–1859) arrived on the subcontinent in 1796, quickly learning Persian and developing an interest in Indian civilisation. After postings in Benares, Afghanistan and Poona, he became governor in 1819 of the recently acquired territory that became known as the Bombay Presidency, where he remained until his resignation in 1827. On his return to England, he devoted much of his time to writing and was a founder member of the Royal Geographical Society. This two-volume history, based on a range of Indian sources and first published in 1841, is infused with his lifelong understanding of Indian culture, science and philosophy. A scholarly refutation of James Mill's *History*, it was the most popular work of its kind among the early Victorian public. Volume 1 contains a topographical introduction and covers the history of the Indian subcontinent to the thirteenth century.

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VOLUME 1

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THE

HISTORY OF INDIA.

BY

THE HONOURABLE
MOUNTSTUART ELPHINSTONE.

VOL. I.

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P R E F A C E.

THE appearance of a new history of India requires some words of explanation.

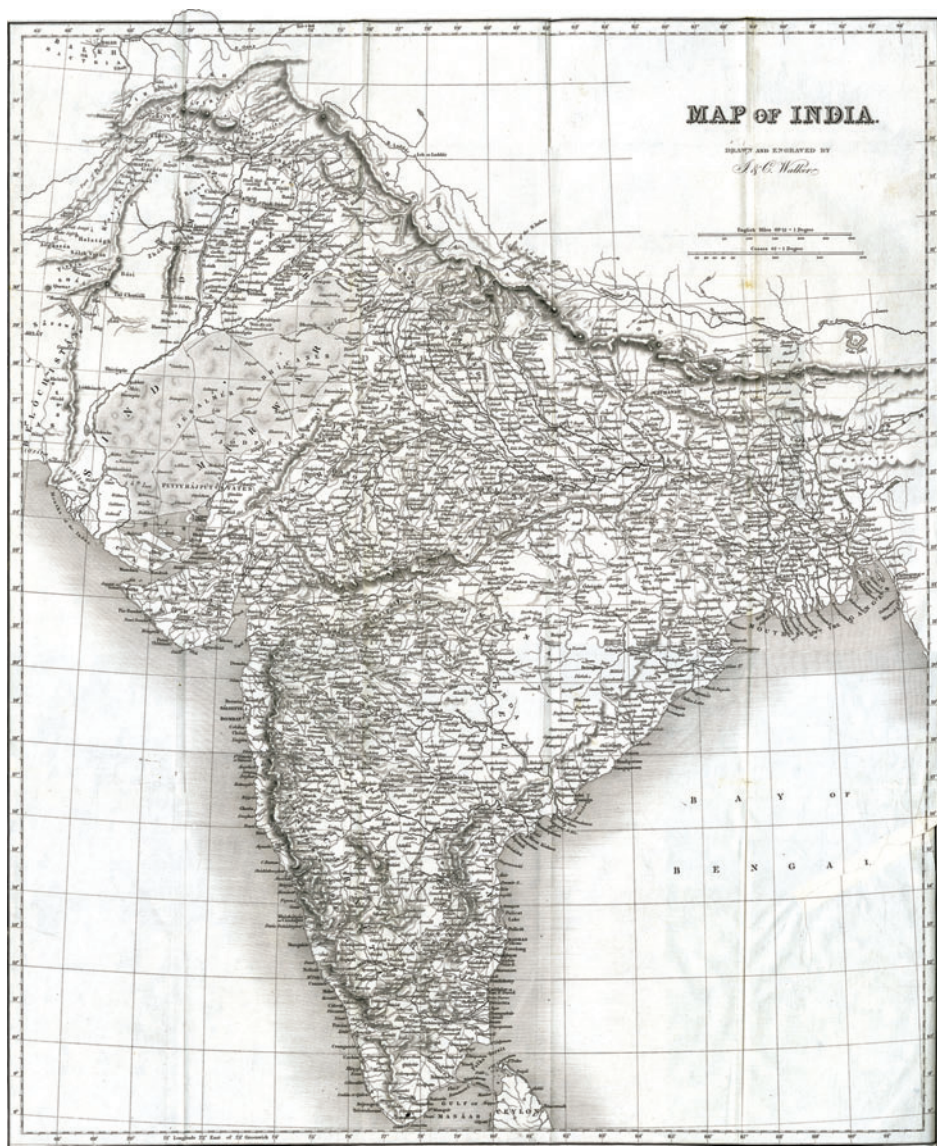
If the ingenious, original, and elaborate work of Mr. Mill left some room for doubt and discussion, the able compositions since published by Mr. Murray and Mr. Gleig may be supposed to have fully satisfied the demands of every reader.

But the excellence of histories derived from European researches alone does not entirely set aside the utility of similar inquiries conducted under the guidance of impressions received in India; which, as they rise from a separate source, may sometimes lead to different conclusions.

Few are likely to take up these volumes unless they are previously interested in the subject, and such persons may not be unwilling to examine it from a fresh point of view: if the result suggests no new opinions, it may at least assist in deciding on those contested by former writers.

In the choice of difficulties presented by the expression of Asiatic words in European letters, I have thought it best to follow the system of Sir W. Jones, which is used by all the English Asiatic Societies, as well as by Mr. Cole-

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