



# South-Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses (Classic Reprint)

*H. Krishna Sastri*

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Excerpt from South-Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses

This little book owes its origin to a suggestion made by His Excellency Lord Carmichael, when he was Governor of Madras in the year 1912. He felt that, while there was a multitude of books dealing with Hindu religion and incidentally with Hindu iconography, there was no popular handbook which would give information about the images one commonly sees in temples or museums in Southern India, and that it would be a distinctly useful thing to supply that want. The Madras Government entrusted the task to me, presumably because my official duties bring me very often to visit the various temples in the Province and to study and classify the images found therein.

When I accepted the task, I was not fully aware of the difficulties that lay before me. In the first place, there were very few printed books, in Sanskrit or in translations, that gave the orthodox description and significance of the images set up in temples. And when I managed to collate notes from a few old manuscripts treating of this subject, it was almost impossible in several instances to reconcile the discrepancies which they showed or even to understand the technical terms which abounded in them. In some cases, the description of a particular image found in the local chronicles or Sthala-Puranas could not be traced in the Agamas. I am not altogether sanguine that I have steered clear of these difficulties and succeeded in presenting a clear and readable account to the average reader.

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