

Hindu Gods Seated in the Grand Canyon

By William A. Noble

In his description titled “The Grand Canyon of the Colorado River,” Francois E. Matthes wrote: “Of all the geographic features of the United States that are famed for their scenic grandeur, the most extraordinary, the most truly unique, is the mile-deep canyon that the Colorado River has carved across the high plateaus of northwestern Arizona. The alpine mountain ranges of this country are equaled and excelled in height, if not in spectacular beauty, by those in other lands, but though there are elsewhere deep canyons, some of even greater depth than the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, there is not one that can match its vastness, its majesty, its ornate sculpture, and its wealth of color. Whoever stands on the brink of the Grand Canyon beholds

a spectacle unrivaled on this earth.”

Those individuals with interest in India will be excited to discover that three of the most spectacular remnant formations within the Grand Canyon National Park are named after the gods of the Hindu triad: Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

Erosion has preceded within the great bend of the Colorado River; many erosional remnants have been left standing within the Grand Canyon. Because the northern and western rims within the bend are so much farther away from the river, there are more and larger features left there. The largest of these erosional remnants was named “Shiva Temple” by Clarence E. Dutton, writer of the first major work on the Grand Canyon, titled “Tertiary History of the Grand



Here all three temples – Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu – are visible in Arizona’s Grand Canyon.