

fragments of the dialogue as I loiter slowly by. The typical Hindoo who cannot speak English has one set answer to everything asked: *ham nahin janta*, (I don't know), varied by an occasional *hans*, (yes), whenever he wishes to vary the monotony of conversation, being influenced, doubtless, in his choice of answers by the expression of face, inflection of voice, etc., of the interlocutor.

"Rampur," says one of the men, raising his voice, "how far off?"

The patriarch, after a prolonged scratch and semi-contemptuous stare, shrugs his shoulders and vouchsafes answer, "*Ham nahin janta, Sahib.*"

"No *janta*, why what use are you, if you don't *janta* your own neighborhood, eh! You're an old duffer."

An equivocal shrug and no response.

"Any goat's milk?"

"*Ham nahin janta.*"

"I suspect you don't want to *janta* that, do you? A few pice (copper coins) would do your understanding all the good in the world, wouldn't they now, old fellow?" produces the coins, and makes gestures of drinking.

"*Hans, Sahib,*" and a capacious smile ripples over the countenance of the old man, "*dudh* (milk), *hans.*"

A hideous old woman, attracted doubtless by the conversation, here appears in the doorway. She is the wife or the mother of the aged mountaineer, it is impossible to tell which, so deceptive are the ages of Eastern women. She looks, however, over seventy, and is repulsively ugly and dirty, with sunken, bleary eyes, withered cheeks, and skin like that of an exhumed mummy. She glares at us half suspiciously, half defiantly.

The old man mutters something, and she re-enters the hut to re-appear soon with a brass *chattie* containing the milk.

The soldier tosses the coins on to the mat, and receives the liquid in his canteen, "Is that your daughter?" continues he. "She's a pretty little creature, a regular mountain daisy, isn't she now?"

"*Ham nahin janta, sahib,*" dubiously and with a puzzled look.

"Well she is, isn't she, Jim?" this to his companion.

Jim nods gravely, and articulates the cabalistic legend, "You bet," with all the unction of a judge of the supreme court.

"Yes, and you'll give her to me when we come back, won't you, and come and live with us yourself, eh!" good-humored rising inflection.



A HINDI BELLE.

"*Hans, sahib,*" taking the cue, presumably, from Jim's devout demeanor.

"That's sociable—and bring the whole family. Well ta-ta, we'll call again, and don't lavish the mountain beauty upon a ne'er-do-well before our return."

The old man, who had risen to pick up his coins and deliver the milk, resumes his seat with a self-satisfied salaam, and the incorrigible and his friend Jim turn to go.

In justice to the Hindi women it must be observed, that though they age early, and become for the most part singularly hag-like and repulsive in appearance, yet, when young, they possess in common with their Western sisters many attractions, being singu-