



Smithsonian Institution

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The People of India, Volume One

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THE HO TRIBE.

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There is no more pleasing trait amongst all these tribes than their kindly affectionate manner one towards another. Girls never quarrel with each other, and the men never coarsely abuse, and seldom speak harshly to, the women. The Ho girls are acutely sensitive under abusive language, or language that at all reflects upon them, and may be, and often are, driven to commit suicide by an angry word. If a woman appear mortified by anything that has been said, it is unsafe to let her go away until she is soothed.

The Hos are passionately fond of sport, and are so successful, that in the neighbourhood of their villages no game is to be found. In the hot weather they form great hunting expeditions, and scour the hills and jungles in search of large game. They are also fond of cock-fighting. A meet is announced, and all who please, go to the place chosen with their cocks at the appointed time. The cocks are armed with steel spurs and made to fight à l'outrance, and the owners of the victorious birds keep the slain.

The sole arms of the Hos are the bow and arrow and battle-axe. The latter, a very formidable weapon, is also used as an implement of agriculture and tool for all work. It is shown in the photograph of the Ho Booiee. With the bow and arrow they are very expert, commencing to practise with it at the earliest age. Boys of every age, from three or four years and upwards, when herding cattle or otherwise engaged, have always their bow and blunt and sharp arrows, the former for practice at marks, the latter to bring down birds when they get a chance.

In appearance the Hos are decidedly the handsomest of the tribes called Cole. In their erect carriage and fine manly bearing they look like men that have maintained and are proud of their independence. They are also the tallest, and, taking them as a whole, the fairest, of the races treated of. They have generally high cheek-bones, but straight-set eyes, high noses, well-formed mouths with beautiful teeth, and the facial angle as good as in the Hindoo races. The figures, both of male and female, freely displayed by the extreme scantiness of the national costume, are often models of beauty. But this description applies only to the people of the highly cultivated part of the country, who have seldom been subjected to severe privations. The inhabitants of the imperfectly reclaimed hill forests are well represented in Dr. Simpson's pictures of the Korewahs. (Plates 20, 21.) - Compiled from Report by Major Dalton, Commissioner of Chota Nagpore.

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