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THE STORY OF OUR
FOREIGN MISSION

(Presbyterian Church of Wales)

By **JOHN HUGHES MORRIS**

— Liverpool —

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LIVERPOOL

LIVERPOOL:

HUGH EVANS & SONS, LTD.,
356, 358, 360 STANLEY ROAD

1930

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The Story of our Foreign Mission

(Presbyterian Church of Wales).

CHAPTER I.

THE EARLY BEGINNINGS.

THE Evangelical Revival in England and the Methodist Revival in Wales had among their most blessed and lasting results the awakening of missionary interest that had lain dormant for centuries. In the dark years preceding these movements, the state of religion in Britain was by no means favourable to the growth of missionary enterprise. Spiritual religion seemed to be dead. Dr. Johnson, it is said, told Boswell that he had never met "a religious clergyman." Bishop Butler refused the Primacy because he thought it "too late to save a falling church." Sir William Blackstone declared that in all his visits to the churches of London "he did not hear a sermon that had more Christianity in it than a speech of Cicero."

Similar conditions prevailed in Wales: ignorance, superstition, infidelity, immorality, flagrant desecration of the Sabbath; a land without schools or teachers, books or Bibles,—such were the conditions of Welsh life in the opening years of the eighteenth century.

But even in the darkest days of spiritual deadness, a few earnest hearts are always found feeling deep concern for the coming of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the consummation of His reign upon earth. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the names of John Eliot, David Brainerd, Jonathan Edwards, George Keith, Patrick Gordon, John Wesley, stand out in bright and clear relief as men upon whose hearts the spiritual condition of the heathen world lay as a heavy burden.

In Wales also two honoured names appear,—Griffith Jones, Llanddowror, accepted by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts as a missionary to Tranquebar, South India, but who, when all preparations for his departure had been made, was mysteriously deterred; and Dr. Thomas Coke, of Brecon, the pioneer of Wesleyan Missions, a man of flaming zeal, who crossed the Atlantic eighteen times “in the service of the souls of men,” and died while on a voyage to Ceylon, whither he was sailing as the leader of the first band of Wesleyan missionaries to the island.

Williams, Pantycelyn, the peerless hymn-writer of Wales, heralded the dawn of the great missionary revival. In the year 1744, half a century before the first of modern missionary Societies was formed, he had given to Wales his first collection of hymns, entitled *Aleluia*. Even in those early days he sang with confidence of “the dawn of the Gospel’s springtime,” of days when “the precious treasure shall have been carried to the farthest isles,” when the “joyful sound shall have reached earth’s uttermost parts,” and “the Lamb’s purchase be drawn unto Him from north and south, from west and east.” Thirteen years later, in 1757, appeared the most popular of his missionary hymns—probably the most popular missionary hymn of all times—“*O’er those gloomy hills of darkness.*” Williams entered into rest two years before the formation of the first of modern missionary Societies.

Prayer and Missions are indissolubly connected. Every great missionary movement, from the days of the Apostles to our own, is directly traceable to prayer. In Britain and in America, “Prayer Bands” were formed as a preparation for, and as the outcome of, the evangelical awakening. Jonathan Edwards’ pamphlet “*An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God’s People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom on Earth,*” was sent over to this country and reprinted here. As a result, the Baptist ministers of Northamptonshire in 1784 resolved to hold special meetings in their churches, at stated times, to pray for the coming of the Kingdom. They further resolved to set apart

the first Monday in each month for the same object. Here we see the beginning of the monthly Missionary Prayer Meeting, still observed in the majority of the churches of Wales.

Passing by a number of smaller, but deeply significant events in the next few years, we come to the publication of Captain Cook's Journals,—the story of his voyages in the Pacific, of the islands he had visited, and of the unspeakable degradation of their inhabitants. William Carey, at the time a young and obscure Baptist minister in Northamptonshire, who had started life as a still more obscure cobbler and school master, read the book. It was as a spark to the tinder, for Carey's mind had long been occupied with the state of the heathen world. There followed his "*Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathen.*" On the 31st of May, 1792, he preached his memorable sermon, based upon Isaiah liv., 2, 3, in which he enunciated the two great truths which still remain the ground and inspiration of all missionary endeavour: "Expect great things from God; Attempt great things for God." Five months later, on the 2nd day of October, 1792, the Baptist Missionary Society was formed—the first fruits of the missionary awakening. On the 20th of March the following year, William Carey and John Thomas sailed for India.

Three years after the foundation of the Baptist Missionary Society, on the 21st September, 1795, "The Missionary Society" (now known as the London Missionary Society) was formed. The Missionary Society was, and still continues in principle, undenominational. A Welsh divine, the Rev. Edward Williams, D.D., a native of Glanclwyd, near Denbigh, minister of Carr's Lane church, Birmingham, and later Principal of Rotherham College, played a prominent part in its formation. To him was entrusted the writing of a letter to all the churches of England and Wales "on the subject of spreading the Gospel." It is known that at least two ministers of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists were present when the foundations of the Missionary Society were laid,—Thomas Charles of Bala—ever to the front with every good cause—and David Jones of Llangan.

The formation of the Missionary Society afforded to the churches of Wales their first opportunity of participating in missionary efforts. In the Society's Report published in June, 1796, among the personal contributions appears: "The Rev. Mr. Jones, Llangan, £1/1/0"—the first recorded contribution from Wales towards Foreign Missions. In the same Report the first recorded missionary collections from the Principality appear :

	£	s.	c.
Amlwch, Anglesey	0	18	0
Bangor	0	13	6
Denbigh	1	10	0
Llanbrynmair	4	17	6
Llanfyllin.....	1	4	6
Pwllheli	4	8	0
Rhos-y-meirch and Bethlehem, Anglesey	1	1	6
Welshpool	4	11	0

In each subsequent year similar contributions are acknowledged ; the amounts, it is true, were small ; but, in the words of Mr. Charles, they "represented the willing sacrifices of the poor,"—for in those years not many rich were found in the dissenting churches. On the return of the "*Duff*," the historic ship which carried the Society's first missionaries to their destination, Tahiti, Thomas Charles was in London, and dined with the ship's Commander on board the vessel. In a letter to his friend, Thomas Jones of Denbigh, he gave a lengthy and vivid account of the memorable voyage as related to him by Captain Wilson. The letter was published, and was the first direct means of bringing the Society and its claims to the notice of our churches. "Its effects," wrote Mr. Charles to the Society's Secretary, "have been very beneficial. Fervent prayers and praises have been offered up by our people who knew nothing at all of it before, or of the state of the heathen world. Their hearts being warmed, their purses began to open,"—this statement being confirmed by the largely increased contributions which followed.

Coming to the year 1813, we see the beginning of a period of renewed missionary activity in the Calvinistic Methodist churches. Three important movements were then initiated : (1) The formation of a *Home* Missionary Society ; (2) The institution of the Monthly Missionary Prayer Meeting, by resolution of the Pwllheli Association. The resolution deserves to be quoted : "It was established that a prayer meeting on behalf of the success of the Gospel be held every first Monday night in the month in all the chapels of the Calvinistic Methodists ; and attention was called how it behoved us on these occasions to have definite petitions in our prayers, and not to talk as men without any requests to make before God." (3) Arrangements were made to ensure an *annual* missionary collection in *every* church. Before the end of the year, as the outcome of the re-awakened interest, the sum of £1024/9/2 was contributed by the Calvinistic Methodist churches to the funds of the Society.

In the same year, 1813, the first recorded missionary meeting among the Welsh people was held, in the old Bedford Street chapel, Liverpool, on the 5th of August, for the purpose of forming an Auxiliary Society. Similar meetings were held in Swansea, August 1814, and in Llanfyllin, Montgomeryshire, August 1816. A correspondent of "*The Evangelical Magazine*" declares that these were "the first missionary meetings held in the Principality."

After the death of Thomas Charles and David Jones, Llangan, the Society found powerful advocates in John Elias and Thomas Jones, Denbigh. As the result of John Elias' constant appeals in his home county, it was acknowledged by the Society's Secretaries that the contributions of the Anglesey churches exceeded in liberality those of any part of the kingdom.

The connection of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists with the London Missionary Society continued until 1840,—a period of 45 years. During that period we find that their total contributions to its funds amounted to, *at least*, £36,000. This amount, however, does not represent the whole of their

contributions towards Missions, for it is known that a number of the churches contributed also towards the Church Missionary Society; of these contributions, however, no particulars are now available.

Besides contributing money, the Calvinistic Methodists were privileged to give to the Society four missionaries :—

(1) John Davies, of Montgomeryshire, who at the time of his call to the field, was in charge of one of Mr. Charles' schools into Llanwyddelan. He and his wife sailed for Tahiti in 1800. John Davies continued to labour on the island for fifty four years, without once returning to his native land. In his later years he had become totally blind, and died at the age of 84. To him was given the privilege of translating the greater part of the New Testament into the language of Tahiti, as well as translating *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Brown's Catechism*, *The Westminster Catechism*, and a large number of smaller books, besides compiling the first Dictionary and preparing the first Grammar of the language. Truly, the simple Welsh schoolmaster, John Davies, has earned an honoured place in the annals of missionary enterprise.

(2) Evan Evans, of Llanrwst, a printer by trade, entered the Society's field in South Africa in 1816, sailing thither in company with Robert Moffat. Owing to failing health, after eleven year's service, he returned to Wales, and died the following year.

(3) Isaac Hughes, a blacksmith from Manchester, sent out in 1823 to South Africa as "a missionary artisan," but later given the status of a missionary, spent forty seven years on the field without once returning to the home land. He died on the 23rd June, 1870.

(4) Josiah Hughes, of Liverpool, a member of the old church in Rose Place. His field of labour was Malacca, to which he was appointed in 1830. His connection with the Mission was dissolved in 1836. Having received ordination at the hands of Bishop Wilson of Calcutta, he returned to Malacca as Chaplain, and died there in November, 1840.

We have given, in barest outline, the principal facts relating to the earliest missionary efforts of our churches. We come

now to the circumstances which led to the formation of our own Society.

As already stated, several denominations were united together in the organisation of the London Society, and it seemed to some that "the end of sectarian division had arrived." Within a few years, however, most of the larger branches of the Christian church in Britain had established Societies of their own. Long before the year 1840 the desire for "a Mission of our own" had arisen in many of the Calvinistic Methodist churches, as is shown by the letters which appear in the "*Drysorfa*" and other publications. By this time the management of the London Missionary Society was almost entirely in the hands of the Independents; and it is well known that the theological controversies which had agitated Wales for thirty years or more had created much bitterness in many parts of the country between the Calvinistic Methodists and the Independents. The Directors of the Society, also, had more than once rejected candidates from among the Calvinistic Methodists, and strong suspicion prevailed that their sole disqualification was the fact that they were Methodists!

Sectarian feeling, however, was not the only motive underlying the desire for "acting independently." A number of the leading ministers and laymen, who held the Directors of the London Missionary Society in high and deserved esteem, were convinced that our churches had not taken their full share of their responsibility for world evangelisation, and believed that the formation of a Connexional Mission would stimulate them to greater and worthier efforts.

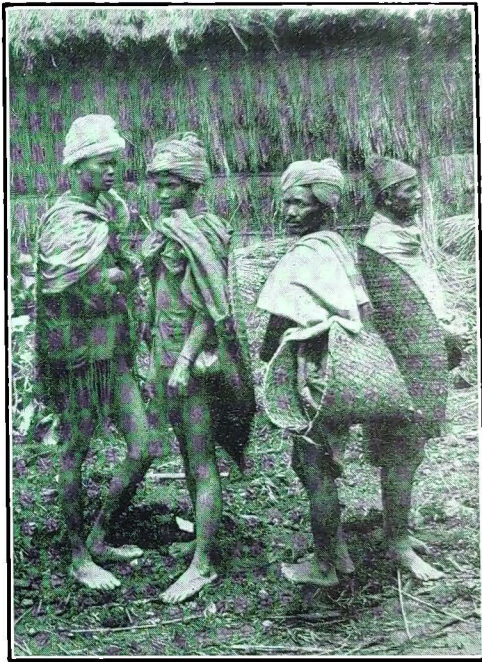
The feeling in favour of separation ran highest in Liverpool and Montgomeryshire. A promising candidate from Montgomeryshire had been rejected for reasons declared by his friends to be groundless. Offence had been given also to Josiah Hughes' friends in Liverpool, because the Directors had judged him unsuitable for work in India, and appointed him to Malacca. His inability later to work harmoniously with the Committee and with his fellow-missionaries aggravated the offence. Attempts to discuss the Connexion's missionary policy were made in several Associations in North

Wales during 1837-1839, but the influence of John Elias was sufficient to hold the agitators in check.

About this time a young preacher from Montgomeryshire, Thomas Jones of Berriew, was drawing near the close of his studies in Bala School, and had intimated his desire of becoming a foreign missionary. Towards the end of 1839 his candidature came before the London Missionary Society's Directors. The report of their medical adviser, however, was unfavourable to his appointment for work in India, the field for which he had offered, and suggested South Africa. It was understood that the candidate assented to this arrangement. A few days later he appears to have regarded the matter in a different light, and again applied for appointment to India, having by this time obtained the opinion of other medical men as to his fitness for work in that field. The Directors, however, could not set aside the opinion of their own medical adviser.

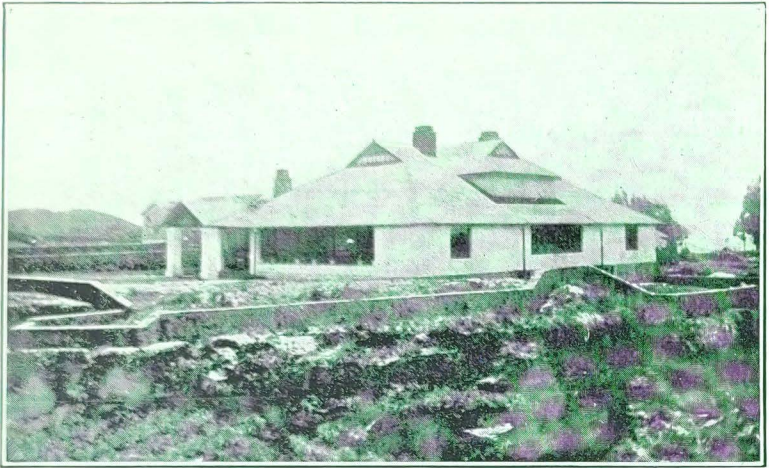
The day following his second interview with the Board, Thomas Jones returned to Liverpool. The report of the Directors' decision aroused considerable feeling among his friends there, many of whom, as already stated, still felt aggrieved by the Board's action in regard to Josiah Hughes. A meeting of the ministers and leading laymen was hurriedly convened, and was held in the school-room of Rose Place chapel, on Friday night, the 31st of January, 1840. To this gathering Thomas Jones related "the circumstances of his rejection," and despite the appeals of Henry Rees and John Hughes, Mount Street, the meeting resolved "that we incorporate as a Foreign Missionary Society." Space forbids our entering into details regarding the frequent discussions upon the proposal in the Associations, until its ultimate adoption by both the North and South Wales Associations in 1843, when the "Liverpool Society" became the Missionary Society of the whole Connexion, fully corresponding to its new name, "The Welsh Calvinistic Methodists Foreign Missionary Society."

It will be seen from what has been written that our Foreign Missionary Society started upon its course under somewhat

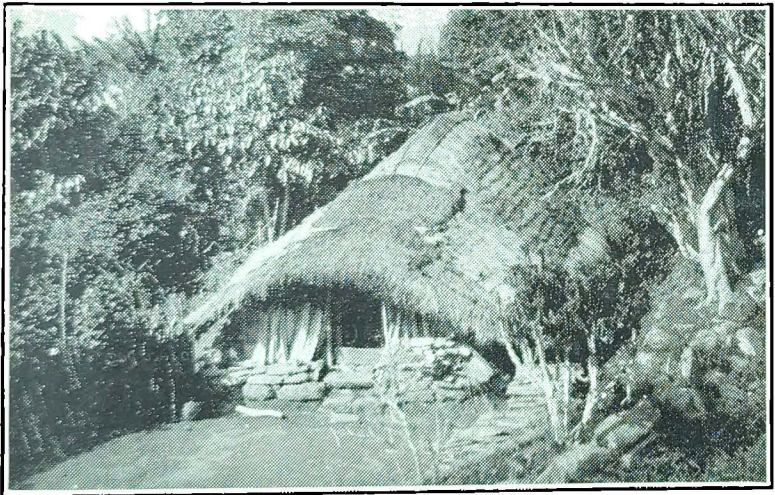


Khasi Labourers (Heathen).

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The Theological College, Cherra.



Typical Khasi Hut.

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exceptional and turbulent circumstances, and circumstances which, it must be admitted, it is not altogether pleasing to relate. Judging, however, from the abundant blessings that have followed its labours, we cannot but believe that "this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

That the formation of the Society met the wishes of the churches is evident from their liberal collections. The highest amount contributed towards the London Missionary Society in one year was £1,700. In the second year of our own Society's history, the total collections amounted to £2,483/1/10, and in the following year, £3,085/15/3.

CHAPTER II.
OUR FIRST FIELD.

IMMEDIATELY after the meeting held in Rose Place, the Liverpool Committee were called upon to choose the newly formed Society's field of operation. Their missionary was ready : to what part of India should he be sent,—for, in view of what has already been related, no other part of the world was considered. Two fields had been brought to their notice,—the first, Gujurat, by the Rev. Dr. Wilson, Bombay ; and the second, "the Khassiah (or Cossyah) Hills," suggested by the Rev. Jacob Tomlin, B.A.

For some years, Mr. Tomlin, a man of independent means, had been a co-worker with Josiah Hughes in Malacca. Having severed his connection with the London Missionary Society, he resolved to begin work in China on his own responsibility, and attempted to make his way thither overland from Calcutta. The Khasia Hills lay across his path. For reasons of health he was forced to remain on these Hills for about nine months. Eventually he returned to this country, and resided at Treborth, near Bangor. Through his connection with Josiah Hughes, Mr. Tomlin had become known to a number of the leaders of the Connexion both in Liverpool and in Wales. His description of the mountainous area of Assam as "an exceptionally needy and an exceptionally promising field," led the Directors unanimously to adopt the Khasia and Jaintia Hills as their sphere of labour. Thomas Jones and his wife sailed for Calcutta, the nearest port to their destination, on the ship "*Jamaica*," leaving Liverpool on the 25th November, 1840.

The tract of mountain territory known as the Khasia and Jaintia Hills forms part of the north eastern frontier of India. To the north lies the Brahmaputra Valley (Assam proper) ;

to the south, the Plains of Sylhet and Cachar ; to the east, the Naga Hills and North Cachar ; and to the west, the Garo Hills. For many years the Hills were attached to the Presidency of Bengal ; but in 1874 they became part of the newly-formed Province of Assam. On the partition of Bengal in 1905, the area was attached to the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. This arrangement was reversed in 1912, and Assam became once more a separate unit.

The Khasia and Jaintia Hills contain an approximate area of 6022 square miles. (Compare with the area of Wales, 7340 square miles). The population, according to the Census of 1872, numbered 141,838 ; in 1901, 202,250 ; in 1921, 243,263. The whole Province of Assam contains an area of 61,471 square miles, and a population of 7,990,246, divided as follows :

	<i>Area</i>	<i>Villages</i>	<i>Population</i>
Khasia and Jaintia Hills ..	6022 ..	2214 ..	243,263
Plains of Sylhet.....	5388 ..	11998 ..	2,541,341
Plains of Cachar	1859 ..	1206 ..	500,484
North Cachar Hills	1706 ..	329 ..	26,744
Lushai Hills	7227 ..	516 ..	98,406
Garo Hills	3140 ..	2048 ..	179,140
Naga Hills	3115 ..	459 ..	160,960
Manipur.....	8456 ..	1318 ..	384,016
Assam Valley, etc.	24558 ..	12187 ..	3,855,892

The Khasia and Jaintia Hills on their southern side rise almost perpendicularly from the Plains of Sylhet ; on their northern side the ascent is much more gradual. The lower portions of the Hills are clothed in dense forest and jungle. The higher table-lands consist of undulating downs, broken here and there by the deep glens of the hill torrents, and covered with coarse grass. The forests abound in wild beasts, —tigers, elephants, buffaloes, bears, wild hog, jackals, leopards and wild deer. The earliest known reference to the Hills, towards the close of the sixteenth century, speaks of them as the haunt of the wild elephant.

Compared with those of Wales, the Khasi "hills" must be described as "mountains," for they are all between 4,000 and 6,000 feet high. The highest hill is the Shillong Peak, 6,449 feet. (Compare with Snowdon, 3,560 feet). Ironstone and limestone are found in abundance. Numerous orange plantations are cultivated on the southern slopes. Potatoes were introduced into the country by David Scott, the Governor General's Agent, and are exported in large quantities. Rice is cultivated in all parts of the country.

The climate is on the whole salubrious. The rainy season commences in May and lasts until October. The rainfall in the village of Cherrapoonjee is said to be the heaviest in any part of the world, averaging between 500 and 600 inches annually. (Compare with that of England, 32 inches). The explanation of Cherrapoonjee's enormous downpour is given as follows : Throughout the summer vast quantities of moisture are exhaled from the distant tropical seas. This moisture is driven northward, at the time of the monsoons, in long processions of heavy clouds, whose progress is first impeded by dashing against the Khasia Hills at Cherra, where they discharge themselves in torrents.

The inhabitants of these Hills first became known to the civilised world about the year 1765, when the East India Company established its stations in Bengal. The earliest reference in British annals is found in connection with an expedition into Jaintia in 1774, probably to punish the hillmen for one of their frequent raids upon the Plains. The main object of the raids was said to be the securing of victims to be offered as human sacrifices.

At the conclusion of England's war with Burma, 1824-26, Assam proper, lying to the north of Khasia, was ceded to the British. The Hills now lay between two British territories, —the valley of Assam in the north and the Plains of Sylhet in the south. With the object of opening direct communication between the two, the Governor General's Agent, David Scott, negotiated with the Khasi chiefs for the opening of a road across the Hills. Consent having been obtained, the work

was begun immediately, and for upwards of eighteen months the most cordial relations existed between the Khasis and the British. Early in April, 1829, trouble broke out. A number of Bengalis from the Plains, employed by the British in the making of the road, had given great offence to the Khasis by their insolent behaviour. In a quarrel between them, one of the Bengalis, a British officer's servant, well knowing that nothing would be more offensive to the independent hillmen, declared he knew, from what his master had told him, that when the road was completed, the British intended to take possession of the country. The threat, although entirely unfounded, was sufficient to arouse the suspicions of the Khasis. A plan was quickly formed to be rid of the invaders. The two British officers in charge of the work, Lieutenants Beddingfield and Burlton, were barbarously murdered, together with about sixty of their followers. Troops were rushed up from Sylhet. The Khasis fought bravely, and four years elapsed before peace was restored. The British possessions on the Hills, acquired by "right of conquest," comprise a very small area; by far the greater portion of the country consists of semi-independent states, under native rulers, whose election is confirmed by the British Government. The head of a Khasi state is called a *Siem* (chief); in Jaintia, *Dolloi*. Their powers are circumscribed; no act of importance can be performed without the approval of the native council or *Durbar*.

The Jaintia Hills became entirely British territory in 1835. The circumstances which led to annexation were connected with the frequent murderous raids upon the Plains. Warnings and threats were ignored. In 1832 four British subjects were carried into the temple at Goba, where three were sacrificed; the fourth succeeded in making his escape. After years of fruitless negotiations, it was decided to annex the Rajah's territory. The British occupation of both the Khasia and the Jaintia Hills secured for the people the cessation of internal strifes, for previously hardly a year passed by without clan rising against clan, or kingdom against kingdom, upon the slightest provocation.

The inhabitants of the Khasia Hills and the inhabitants of the Jaintia Hills (the latter commonly known as *Syntengs*) are closely allied. In language, religion, and social customs, the differences between them are slight. The origin of the Khasis, who are described as "an island standing out amidst seas of alien peoples," differing in language and customs from all the nations around them, is a vexed question. It is, however, generally accepted that they are of Mongol descent, this theory being confirmed by points of similarity in language and physiognomy.

Prior to the advent of the missionaries the Khasis had no written language, and therefore no literature or records. None of the large stone monuments with which the country is studded bears any inscription. As explaining why their Bengali neighbours possess a literature while they have none, a Khasi tradition relates that they also at one time possessed a book but lost it. A Bengali and a Khasi went together to God's house, each carrying a book which God had given them teaching them their duty. In order to have their hands free to swim across a river, each put his book in his mouth. The Khasi, gasping for breath while struggling with the waves, swallowed the precious volume. Having related with trembling his misfortune, God consoled him by saying it was "the same thing for him to have the book in his belly as in his hand." This tradition was found useful in the early years of Mission work as an argument against education,—one party maintaining that God did not desire the Khasis to be educated, as they had been so careless with His book; another party contending that the Khasis required no education, having already "swallowed" all knowledge!

The typical Khasi dwelling is a small, low hut, made of bamboo, daubed with clay and thatched with grass. The hut contains two apartments; in the inner room is stored the family stock of rice, the outer apartment serving as living and sleeping room. No windows or chimneys are found in the huts; the fire burns on a stone hearth in the centre of the floor.

The occupations of the people are various, the greater number being employed in cultivating rice, potatoes and

oranges. During recent years an increasing number have learned useful trades,—carpenters, stone masons, blacksmiths, etc. Owing to the hilly nature of the country and the consequent lack of roads, many gain their livelihood as carriers. The narrow hill-paths are of the most zig-zag description, exceedingly difficult to ascend and descend. Loads are usually carried in large baskets, suspended from a band or strap firmly fixed against the forehead, and resting upon the back. The strongest coolies carry travellers in the same way, in a large basket called the *Ka Ko* or *Toppah*.

Generally speaking the character of the people is simple and upright. In many parts of the country they retain to this day an almost patriarchal simplicity. Unlike their Hindu neighbours, caste distinctions are unknown among them. They are, however, divided into a large number of clans—the crab, fish, monkey, etc., from which the ancestors of the clan are said to be descended. Another marked distinction between the Khasis and their Bengali and Muhammadan neighbours is the position of the female, the woman being regarded by the Khasis as the head of the family. All relationship is reckoned from the mother, the children belonging to the mother's clan. Child marriage is not practised among the Khasis. Divorce is simple and common.

A ceremony to which great importance is attached by the Khasis is that connected with the naming of their children. To secure the child's well-being, his name must accord with the will of the spirits. Various means are employed to ascertain the approved name. As a rule three names are selected by the maternal grandmother. The diviner lets fall three drops of spirit on a plantain leaf, previously covered with powdered turmeric. The three drops represent the three names; the drop taking the longest to fall represents the favoured name. In Jaintia, two sticks are dropped on the ground, the diviner at the same time shouting out one of the selected names. Should the sticks, in falling, cross one another, the omen is regarded as favourable. The names of males have the prefix *U* (pronounced as *oo* in *good*); the names of females the prefix *Ka*. Khasi parents are always

called by the name of their eldest child. The father of a boy named U Ram will be known as Kpa U Ram (the father of U Ram); and the mother as Ka Kmi U Ram (the mother of U Ram).

Before British rule was established on the Hills, the mode of deciding disputes was of a very primitive character. Cases in which the evidence was conflicting would most frequently be determined by drawing lots; a piece of silver and a piece of gold, hidden in two small balls of clay of equal size, would be placed in a jar or vessel, and at the command of the headman, one of the appellants would take out a ball in the presence of the durbar. Should he draw the clay containing the baser metal, his case was lost.

In former times certain disputes were decided by an appeal to the "sacred water." The ceremonies attending this ordeal occupied a whole day, and commenced with the friends of the contending parties meeting together at early morn to offer sacrifices. This continued until the afternoon, when the parties proceeded by different routes to a stream of sacred water. Here the sacrifices would be renewed, the two parties, meanwhile, standing on opposite banks, shouting defiance the one at the other. The disputants, having entered the river, and grasping a staff planted in the river-bed, dived, at a given signal, under the water. The man who first emerged would lose his claim, it being declared that he had been "rejected" by the spirit which dwelt in the sacred stream. In order to ensure victory the supporters of the contending parties would sometimes compel the divers to keep under water, holding them down with their spears. It happened not infrequently that the ordeal proved fatal to one or both parties.

Petty complaints are usually settled by the *siem* or chief; should he, however, not be able to bring about a reconciliation, a durbar is called. The "crier" is sent through the village to proclaim the meeting. Taking up a favourable position, he attracts attention by a prolonged, unearthly yell, "Ka-oo!" and delivers his message thus: "Ka-oo! Ka-oo! Ka-oo! Thou, a fellow-villager! Thou, a fellow-creature! Thou, an old man! Thou, who art grown up! Thou, who art young! Thou, a

boyl Thou, a child! Thou, an infant! Thou, who art great! Thou, who art little! . . . Hi! there is a quarrel! Hi! come to sit together! Hi! to assemble together in durbar to hear, to listen attentively! Hi! no drawing water to-morrow! Hi! no cutting firewood to-morrow! Hi! no going to work to-morrow! Hi! no going a journey to-morrow!" etc., etc. After this proclamation, no one is allowed to leave the village the following day. The men assemble together at the durbar ground, where, in some parts of the country, a number of large stones are arranged in the form of a circle, for the accommodation of the assembly. The proceedings are opened by one of the head-men; witnesses are examined, and solemnly sworn by licking a few grains of salt placed on a sword blade. Perfect order and dignity are maintained throughout the proceedings. The chief, having summed up the evidence, pronounces judgment, making an appeal at the same time to the villagers, "Is it not so?" to which they unitedly respond, "Yea, it is so." Corporal punishment was rarely administered by the Khasi courts, the usual mode of punishment being the infliction of a fine, almost always accompanied by an order to sacrifice a pig. The pig is supposed to be sacrificed to *Ka 'lei Synshar*,—"the goddess of the state," but is invariably eaten by the *siem* and the members of the durbar. Murder and certain forms of adultery were punishable by death. All cases of a serious character are now decided by the British authorities.

The Khasi "religion," usually described as "Animism," is a crude form of demonology. Its main principle consists in the endeavour to propitiate evil spirits by the offering of sacrifices. A vague belief exists in a Supreme Being, *U Blei*, who is also believed to be the Creator of the world, *U Trai Nongthaw*,—the Lord the Creator. Owing to man's offence, however, He has withdrawn from the world, and the affairs of men are now controlled by spirits or demons. The spirits reside in caves, jungles, mountains, large rocks and stones, trees and rivers,—anything large or fantastic is inhabited by a *ksuid* or demon. Sickness and misfortune are always attributed to the wrath or malice of the demons, who can only be appeased by the offering of appropriate sacrifices.

The Khasis have no idols or temples. A number of "house gods," spirits who make their abode in gourds in the people's houses, are believed in very generally. The most dreaded of this class is *U Tlen*. In form it is supposed to resemble a small serpent. The *Tlen* possesses the power of conferring great riches upon the family with whom it dwells; but it imperiously demands to be fed with human blood. Having strangled or clubbed his victim to death, the murderer cuts off his eyebrows, nostrils, lips, and finger-nails, which are presented as an offering to the demon.

The Khasi divination ceremonies, in cases of sickness or other trouble, are somewhat unique. The means generally employed is egg-breaking. In every Khasi village the egg-breaker is an important functionary, and his services are sought on all important occasions. Seating himself on the ground, with a small heart-shaped board in front, he smears an egg with moist red earth; then having scattered a few grains of rice around the spot to scare away any intruding demons, he commences to address the egg in flattering terms. Having finished his incantation, he leaps to his feet and dashes the egg on the board with considerable force. From the position in which the fragments of egg-shell lie, he discovers the offended demon and the sacrifice which it demands,—a fowl, pig, goat, cow, etc.

The ceremonies attending the disposal of the dead are of an elaborate character. Shortly before the spirit has left the body, the female members of the family draw near, and give vent to their distress in agonised wailings, entreating the dying person not to leave them. When death has supervened, the female relations are joined by other women, who unite in the loud lamentations, pulling their hair, dashing their heads against the ground, covering their heads with ashes, and cursing the demons who have taken their loved one from them. The men stand by in stolid silence. The body, having first been anointed with oil, is carefully laid with the head to the east, and the feet to the west. A number of ornaments and jewellery are placed upon it; and a few cowry shells are enclosed in the shroud, to enable the departed spirit to pay toll

to the spirits who have gone before, lest they should prevent him from going to his own people. A cock ("the bird that shows the way") is killed, and is invoked to guide the lonely traveller, that he may not "strike his foot against the stones, or be hindered by the deep water, or fall a prey to the great serpent." Three pieces of stick, about two spans in length, are tied together, smeared with the cock's blood, and placed at the head of the dead. These are to enable him to make a bridge, should he come to a river on his way.

As the funeral procession slowly marches to the burning *ghat*, cowries and betel nuts are dropped on the way in order that the dead man's spirit may follow. When a river is crossed, branches of a tree, or a piece of thread, will be thrown from bank to bank, along which the spirit of the departed may cross. Arrived at the burning place, the body is laid with the head towards the north. Fire having been applied to the wood, another cock is killed, and thrown three times backwards and forwards over the burning pile. The relatives and friends of the deceased, seated around the *ghat*, throw betel nuts and pân leaf for the refreshment of the spirit of the departed. Four arrows are shot—one to the north, one to the south, one to the east, and one to the west,—to terrify the demons who are thronging round the spot, bent upon hindering the man's spirit from joining his ancestors. The bones, having been carefully collected together, are placed in an earthenware vessel. When the death has occurred at the man's own home, his bones will remain with his family for twelve months, after which they are buried under a round stone, called "the family stone." Food will be carried daily to the spot for the use of the departed. As soon as the family's means permit, the bones will be disinterred for burial under the "clan stone." The day of re-interment is a memorable day in the family's history; the whole clan joins in the rejoicing, for the man's spirit is regarded as wandering, restless and homeless, until his dust is laid with that of his fathers. The large upright stones raised in memory of the dead are a peculiar feature of the country, and are to be found in considerable numbers on the outskirts of every village.

CHAPTER III.

THE SERAMPORE MISSION.

TRUE to the teaching of his own memorable sermon, William Carey, with boundless faith, "attempted great things for God." He looked even beyond the borders of his vast field in India to the great closed land of China. His plan was to enter it by way of Assam, sowing the seed in the lands through which he passed. This leads us to a short but highly interesting chapter in the history of our Mission field, which must be briefly related before proceeding to the story of our own work on the Khasia Hills.

The first convert of the Serampore trio, Carey, Marshman and Ward, was Krishna Pal. After seven years of tireless and apparently fruitless labour, Krishna, the first convert of modern missions in India, was baptised on the 28th December, 1800. The first Hindu convert became the first missionary to the Khasis. It is a further interesting fact that the way to the Hills was opened for him by Judge W. N. Garrett, then stationed in Sylhet, a nephew of Robert Raikes, the founder of the Sunday School in England. As the result of Krishna Pal's preaching, four Bengalis, one Assamese, and two Khasis, were baptised. Persecution followed, and the work was for a time abandoned. Further efforts to enter the Hills were discouraged by the Government, "as it was very dangerous to go to these Hills at present,"—a number of the Khasis having been hanged "for the murder of the Company's subjects."

In the meantime Carey's interest in the Khasis grew. In 1824 he published a translation of the New Testament in their language. The translation, it was understood, was made by a Bengali woman who had been in the employ of a British Officer on the Khasia Hills as a nurse. The translation, printed in Bengali characters, was so imperfect as to be entirely unintelligible to the natives.

Towards the close of the year 1829 a young soldier, James Rae, was appointed by Carey to Gauhati, and from this station it was hoped he would be able to reach the Khasi, Garo and Manipuri tribes. The attempt, it is almost needless to say, proved a failure. In 1832 a youth, eighteen years of age, Alexander B. Lish, was stationed by Carey at Cherrapoonjee, where the Government had recently established a Sanatorium. He endeavoured to open two or three schools and also to translate portions of the Gospel into Khasi. His efforts, however, do not appear to have been successful. In 1838, on the amalgamation of the Serampore Mission with the Baptist Missionary Society, the work in Khasia was abandoned.

Carey's interest in the field remained strong to the end. One half of the expense connected with the work in the last few years he had borne himself; and it is stated that when he lay on his deathbed, his thoughts were frequently of the work among the Khasis.

CHAPTER IV.

THE KHASIA HILLS : 1841-1890.

THOMAS JONES and his wife arrived in Calcutta on the 23rd April, 1841, the voyage, round the Cape, having taken five months within two days.

The village of Cherrapoonjee, at that time the head-quarters of Government on the Khasia Hills, was reached on the 22nd of June. In his first letter Thomas Jones described the people among whom he had come to labour in the following words : "A more pitiful, lamentable, and at the same time a more inviting field for the Christian cannot be found. Here are multitudes upon multitudes of untutored heathen, naturally lazy and sluggish, living in filth and rags, afraid to wash a rag lest it should wear out the sooner ; depriving themselves of proper clothing ; niggardly hoarding up every *pice* (farthing) they can get ; and if asked the reason why, they answer ' that they may have something to sacrifice when they or their friends are ill. ' "

The missionary's first task was to learn the language, and in this he was assisted by two young men who knew a little English. Early in 1842 three schools were opened,—the first in the neighbouring village of Mawsmal ; the second in Mawmluh, and the third in Cherra. For some months Thomas Jones had had a number of young men under instruction at the Mission House, and from among these he obtained his first teachers. The letter in which the missionary explained his policy is of abiding interest, inasmuch as it laid down the principle on which the work on the Hills has been, in a very large measure, carried on throughout the years :—

"The only plan which appears to me likely to answer a good purpose is to establish schools in the various villages, to teach the Khasis—children and adults—to read their own language ; and to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion ; or, in other words, to give them the same kind of

instruction as is given in our Sunday Schools at home, and not to introduce any other feature, except what may be necessary to draw the children to the schools, or to train native teachers ; and to make use of the natives to teach their fellow-countrymen to read. . . . In this way we shall not only bring up the young people in the knowledge of Gospel doctrines, but we shall also teach them to read ; and when we shall have translated and printed the Holy Scriptures into their language, we shall have some, at least, in every family, able to read them, and I may add, able to understand them also ; and I would regard this as an important step towards their evangelisation."

For the use of these schools the missionary prepared a "*First Khasi Reader*," and a translation of the "*Mother's Gift*." The two little books must be regarded as the beginning of Khasi literature. Mr. Lish, in the books which he prepared, had adopted Bengali characters, which had proved an insuperable difficulty to his pupils, as it necessitated their learning a hundred or more difficult sounds and signs. Thomas Jones, in spite of much adverse criticism, but wisely as events proved, adopted Roman characters.

Eighteen months after their arrival in Cherra, Mr. and Mrs. Jones were joined by other workers,—the Rev. and Mrs. William Lewis, and Dr. Owen Richards. The first of a series of troubles which befell the Mission in these years was the early recall of Dr. Richards, in March 1844. Violent opposition also arose among the natives when it became evident that the missionaries' teaching was influencing their scholars,—the boys, in some instances, refusing to join in the family sacrifices. One incident in particular caused intense feeling : five boys attending the schools cut their hair,—a much-dreaded operation in view of the belief that once the blood-thirsty Tlen secures a knot of a man's hair, both he and his family are doomed to a horrible death. The anxious parents frequently had resort to egg-breaking to ascertain whether the demons were favourable to the children's attendance at the schools. As a result the schools were frequently shunned for days together.

Year after year passed by before the long-expected and long-desired news of converts reached the homeland. At length, after five years of patient waiting, the first fruits were gathered, and presented to the Lord in baptism on the Sabbath day, March 8th, 1846. Two young men, U Amor and U Rujon, publicly confessed their faith in Christ.

Joy and sorrow alternated rapidly in the Mission's early history. Nine months after the cheering news of the first converts, came the sorrowful tidings of the sudden death of a young missionary who, with his wife, had arrived on the field a few days before the baptismal service,—Daniel Jones, son of the hymn-writer, Edward Jones, Maesyplwm. A few months previous to this again, Thomas Jones' wife had passed away. Following these losses came the death of Lieutenant Lewin, a British Officer in Cherra, who had given the missionaries invaluable help. But the heaviest blow was yet to fall. Thomas Jones, after contracting an injudicious marriage, embarked upon a commercial life, and his connection with the Mission was severed. Shortly afterwards, in circumstances of extreme sadness, he ended his days in Calcutta, on the 16th September, 1849.

In very truth the first years of the Mission's history were dark and troubled: progress was slow; the converts could be counted only by twos and threes in a year; promising workers were removed by death, and others proved disappointing. It is not surprising that rumours were afloat that the effort was to be abandoned. In a letter full of encouragement, the venerable Dr. Alexander Duff wrote to William Lewis from Calcutta: "Many Missions have been tried similarly to yours at the beginning, and have been greatly blessed after the dispensation of affliction has produced its suitable spiritual effects." His words, as we shall find later, were abundantly verified.

Mr. and Mrs. William Lewis were now alone on the field, and the lack of missionary candidates was causing grave anxiety. Opposition to the missionary's work grew stronger, and at times became threatening. Every baptism was the signal for renewed antagonism, and on more than one occasion

the missionary's house was surrounded by hostile crowds threatening violence. The conversion and baptism of Ka Nabon, the first female convert, led to indescribable scenes, and is among the most thrilling stories in the annals of the Mission. Two other young women were baptised a little later, Ka Bir and Ka Phuh. When the unique position of the woman in the Khasi household and clan is remembered, the violence of the opposition to their embracing Christianity can be understood.

Early in 1849 Mr. and Mrs. Lewis were joined by the Rev. and Mrs. William Pryse. Their stay on the Hills, however, was brief, Mr. Pryse removing the following year to Sylhet, to commence missionary operations on the Plains. At the end of 1849 the total number in the church in Nongsawlia (a spot lying mid-way between Cherra and the military station, which the missionary had chosen for his residence) was 19.

Two or three interesting movements are observable about this time. To develop in the converts a sense of responsibility, opportunity was given to them of contributing towards the support of the Lord's cause. The response was enthusiastic; the first church collection on the Mission field amounted to twelve shillings. In the same year, 1849, the church elected its first deacon, U Tirahsing, the oldest of the converts, a man of much originality and zeal, who frequently declared, both in his prayers and in his addresses, his earnest desire to "get hold of old Satan and grind him to powder!" In 1850 the first Christian marriage on the Hills was solemnised, when U Luh, who later became a devoted evangelist, was married to one of the female converts, Ka Phuh. The marriage marks the beginning of the Christian home on the Hills.

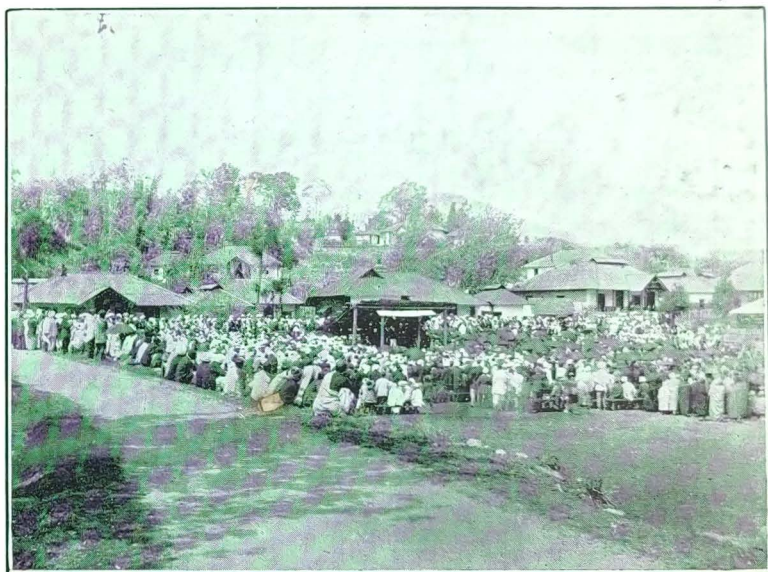
Owing to the paucity of workers, the missionary's labours had been confined to Cherra and the villages around. In 1850 an opportunity occurred of extending the work to Shella, one of the largest villages on the Hills, lying 14 miles south west of Cherra. A native of this village, U Laitmiet, witnessing the wonderful courage of the girl Ka Nabon, had been deeply impressed by her steadfastness, and became himself an enquirer. A schoolroom was erected in

the village, though not without strong opposition from the priests ; and the following year four converts were baptised, among them U Laitmiet, and another whose name is still cherished in Wales, U Larsing.

By the end of 1851 the Mission had completed its first ten years of labour. Five missionaries had been sent to the field : one died ; two proved disappointing, and one removed to Sylhet. For the greater part of the decade Mr. and Mrs. Lewis had been alone. What fruit had followed these early efforts ? One church had been formed (Nongsawlia), with fifteen baptised members and five enquirers. Five schools had been opened, Cherra, Nongsawlia, Mawsmal, Mawmluh, and Shella. The number of hearers attending the services with regularity, is given as "between 150 and 200." A beginning had also been made in providing literature ; the first Gospel had been printed, and portions of the "*Christian Instructor*" ("*Hyfforddwur*"). Family Worship and the Monthly Missionary Prayer Meeting had early been instituted. The church of the first ten years was indeed small, *but every member proved faithful to the end*, and it was declared, that from the youngest to the oldest, each one had been tried as by fire.

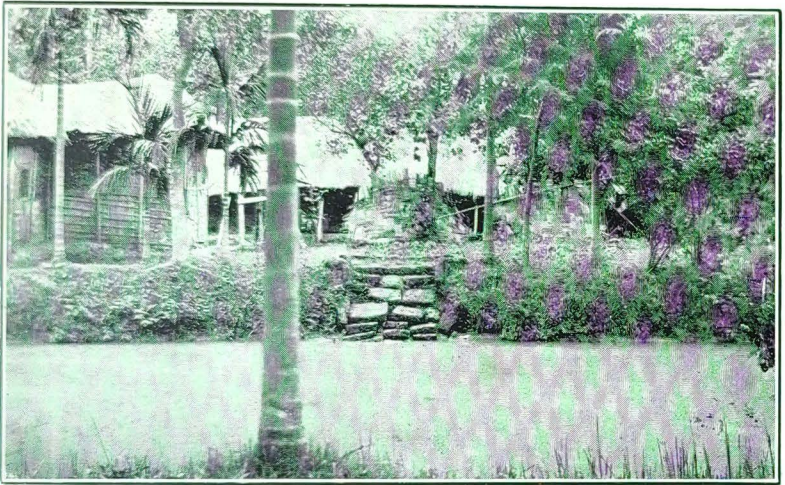
Much of Mr. Lewis' time was now occupied with translation work. Before the end of 1852 he had the joy of completing the translation of the Gospels of Mark, Luke and John, the Book of the Acts, and also revising Thomas Jones' translation of Matthew's Gospel. The first printed copies of the Gospels and Acts arrived in Cherra early in 1856, the welcome given to them recalling the scene witnessed in Wales half a century before, when the people flocked in crowds, singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving, to meet the first consignment of Bibles as it drew near Bala.

As the result of the visit of Judge Mills, of Calcutta, in 1853, the attention of Government was drawn to the missionary's educational efforts. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, expressed "great satisfaction with the testimony borne to the



Open Air Service, Jowai Assembly, 1930.

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A Sylhet House.

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earnest zeal of the Rev. Mr. Lewis, and the encouraging, though as yet moderate, success which has attended his labours." Early the following year the Government Council communicated its decision "that the spread of education among the Khasi and other hill tribes in those parts, could be most effectively secured by extending help to the Missionary Institution"; and voted a small monthly grant of five pounds. It is of interest to note that this was the *first grant* made by the Government of India towards education through the agency of a religious organisation; and it was also the beginning of the cordial co-operation that has continued throughout the years between the Government and the Mission in regard to education.

By the end of 1857 sixteen schools had been opened, with 240 pupils. Among them, and demanding special mention, was the school in Jowai, marking the beginning of our work on the Jaintia Hills. The following year a church was formed in the village, with twelve communicants. About this time other workers had entered the field: Thomas Jones (Glyn, Bala), arrived in Cherra in 1856; and Robert Parry (Chester), in Sylhet, the following year. James Roberts and his wife entered the field in 1860, but were recalled the following year. The ship in which they sailed from Calcutta was lost at sea, with all on board.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis had now spent eighteen years on the Hills, and their hard toil, in loneliness, and in difficult and discouraging circumstances, had left its mark deep upon them. In December, 1860, they left their much loved Khasia, bringing with them the young evangelist, U Larsing. The colder climate of this country soon proved fatal to him, and he died at Tÿ Cerrig, Caergwrle, near Wrexham, on the 24th August, 1863, and lies buried in Chester Cemetery. Mr. and Mrs. Lewis had hoped to return to India, but Providence ordained otherwise. In their retirement they continued to labour for the Mission, especially with translation work. To Mr. Lewis was given the privilege of translating the whole of the New Testament into Khasi; Mrs. Lewis also translated the "*Pil-*

grim's Progress" and other smaller books. The indebtedness of our Connexion to these two faithful and consecrated workers, who laid the foundations of our work on the Khasia Hills so wisely and securely, can never be adequately estimated. Mr. Lewis died May 6th, 1891, and Mrs. Lewis November 23rd, 1896.

After Mr. Lewis's departure from Khasia, Thomas Jones was for some time the only missionary on the Hills. In their method of working Mr. Lewis and he differed: the aim of the first was to consolidate; the aim of the second to expand. Both types of workers are essential on every Mission field, and they were given to our Mission each in his appropriate time. In Mr. Lewis' days expansion on a large scale was impossible owing to lack of teachers; the same difficulty for a time confronted his successor also. Thomas Jones travelled widely over every part of the Hills, visiting districts which no European had touched before. By the end of 1866 as many as 65 schools had been opened, with pupils numbering between 1,500 and 2,000. An attempt was now made to convert the Nongsawlia school into a Normal School, under the charge of the missionary, for the training of teachers. The pupils spent the first six months of the year in school, and for the remaining six months were sent to teach in the villages. In this way the work spread in many new directions,—to Mawnai in Khadsawphra; to Nongbah and Mawstoh in the valleys; to Shangpoong and Nongtalang in Jaintia, and towards Nongstoin in the west. With the exception of Nongkrem, every *siemship* of importance had at least one school within its borders.

With the arrival of the Revs. Daniel Sykes and Griffith Hughes early in 1866, a new station was opened in Jowai, with Mr. Sykes in charge. Mr. Hughes, who had served an apprenticeship in a printing office, set up a Mission Press in Cherra. The experiment proved unsuccessful, and the Press was sold to the Government in 1874.

An important development in church organisation was made in 1867 through the formation of the "Presbytery," the first meetings of which were held on the 20th and 21st May,—

Thomas Jones being elected its first Moderator, and Griffith Hughes its first Secretary. Following the lines laid down by Mr. William Lewis, and his insistence that all converts before being admitted to the full privileges of Christian fellowship, should be well grounded in the essential truths of the Gospel, the newly-formed Presbytery passed a wholesome rule that no convert should be admitted into the church without first learning to read, exception only being made in the case of those considered too old to learn. With the same object in view regular attendance in Sunday School was enforced. The Presbytery also decided to set apart men as evangelists. Already a small number of the most intelligent converts were recognised as evangelists,—U Jarkha, U Luh, U Timothy, U Ramjan and U Kiang. According to the new arrangements now adopted, candidates approved by the churches were, and still are, required to sit an "Evangelists' Examination." As a result the following six were approved in 1869, as the first "licensed preachers" of the Khasi church: U Timothy, U Jura, U Samuel, U Ksan, U Badon and U Sati.

Another important development to be noted in these years was the formation of the Normal School in Nongsawlia. Reference has already been made to Thomas Jones' effort in this direction, but in consequence of the lack of workers no great progress was made. Early in 1867, the Rev. Hugh Roberts was transferred from the Plains to the Hills, and placed in temporary charge of the Nongsawlia school during Thomas Jones' furlough. The Government undertook the payment of the salaries of the headmaster and his assistants, and provided also twenty scholarships, tenable for four years. A few months later a female section was opened under the charge of Mrs. Roberts. In 1870 the first fruits of the School were gathered, four of the pupils, three of them females, having successfully completed their course. In the following year, seven others were appointed to the charge of schools. It is a fact deserving of special note that the rapid progress made in subsequent years in the evangelisation of the Hills must be dated from this time, when competent Christian teachers from among the Khasis themselves were secured.

In the early part of 1870 a new missionary, the Rev. Thomas Jerman Jones, took charge of the Jowai station in succession to Daniel Sykes, who had been recalled. The following year, the Rev. John Roberts arrived on the field, and opened a new station in Shella, down in the valleys, on the borders of the Plains. His daring in erecting his house on jungle land known to be the abode of the demons filled the people with horror! Day by day, from a safe distance, the progress of the building was watched by excited groups. No evil befalling the *Saheb* and his *Mem*, it was explained that the demons had gone to consult with the "head demons." Ultimately the acknowledgment was tardily made that the missionary's God had triumphed.

Another important new station was opened in 1871 by Griffith Hughes in Shillong, thirty miles to the north of Cherra. The first reference to Shillong is found in Thomas Jones' report for 1864. At that time it was evidently a small village, with no Christians. Two years later, in 1866, on account of its healthy situation and accessible position, the Government offices and military headquarters were transferred to Shillong from Cherra. The village rapidly grew in size and importance, and is now the capital of the Province, with a mixed population of over 18,000.

Owing to the abandonment of the work on the Plains and the severance of Thomas Jones' connection with the Mission, Hugh Roberts, who had resumed his work in Sylhet, was once more placed in charge of the Normal School. After Hugh Roberts' return to Wales, John Roberts was appointed head of the School, being succeeded in Shella by the Rev. John Jones, who arrived on the field in 1876. Jerman Jones removed to Shillong at the time of Griffith Hughes' furlough, the latter on returning to the field taking over the Jaintia district. Further reinforcements arrived in 1878,—the Rev. Robert Evans joining Mr. Jerman Jones in Shillong, and Dr. Griffiths opening a new station in Mawphlang,—the beginning of our Medical Mission.

About this time a number of interesting incidents are recorded in connection with the progress of the work. The

story of the spread of the Gospel to the outlying Khadsawphra district, the north west corner of the Hills, is full of romance. Some slight knowledge of Christianity had been carried to this remote district in the early years of the Mission. The *siem* and his suite had frequently visited the Government offices in Cherra, and had heard the missionary's message. A school was opened in 1853 in Mawnai village, and a number of the *siem's* family were converted,—the first fruits of Khadsawphra for Christ, and the first also of the "royal" clans of Khasia to embrace Christianity. In 1868 a church of fifty members is reported at Mawdem, in the same district, but lying some forty miles distant from Mawnai. Intoxicating drink was the great curse of Mawdem,—men, women, and even children, being addicted to it. Their poverty was appalling. A few filthy rags barely covered their yet filthier bodies. The poverty and depravity of the Mawdem people had become a by-word even among the Khasis. The *sirdar*, U Lear by name, on one of his visits to Cherra, saw to his surprise a white man,—Griffith Hughes,—addressing the people gathered in the market place. Too ashamed of his own dishevelled and repulsive appearance to stand even among the market crowd, he hid behind a stone to listen. The message touched his heart. Returning homeward with conscience awakened and a new yearning in his heart, he repeated to his people the strange words he had heard. Straightway a number of the villagers set out for Cherra, seventy miles distant, to beg for a teacher. The *sirdar* became the first convert; and as his first act as a Christian he prohibited entirely the manufacture, sale, or consumption of intoxicants in all the villages under his charge. Highly significant of the transformation wrought by the Gospel in these parts, was the *sirdar's* statement in later years in one of the Presbyteries: "Before the Gospel entered the country I, as *sirdar*, had a load as much as I could carry on my back of *rupees*, twice every year, to take to the king of Khadsawphra,—fines for drunkenness, stealing, etc. But now not one *rupee* in a year goes to him!" And in all Mawdem no nobler monument of God's grace was to be found than the *sirdar* himself. He served the churches with wonderful de-

votion to the end of his days,—first as deacon and evangelist ; and from 1900 to the time of his death at the advanced age of eighty four, as a fully ordained minister.

Another notable convert of this period was U Borsing, cousin and heir of the *rajah* of Cherra, and a man much loved and trusted by the people. Less than six months after Borsing joined the church, the *rajah* died. The native *darbar* were unanimous that Borsing was the rightful heir ; but, his Christian profession stood in the way. Deputation after deputation waited upon him entreating him to renounce his Christian faith. Borsing's reply deserves to rank among the noblest of the answers of those who have suffered for Christ's sake : "I can throw off my cloak and my turban ; but the covenant I have made with God I can in no wise cast away." A rival claimant to the kingdom—one of the largest and richest kingdoms on the Hills,—was appointed *rajah* ; and in time, through the malice of his enemies, U Borsing was literally deprived of "all things"—every vestige of his property—for the kingdom of God's sake. Even then he declared : "I have the Lord Jesus Christ as my portion."

Returning once gain to Khadsawphra, where the Gospel obtained some of its most signal triumphs, reference must be made to another *siem* who willingly risked all for Christ's sake. The *siem* of Khadsawphra, U Kinesing, had for some years given proof that he was "not far from the kingdom of God." Taking at last the decisive step, he joined the Christians, to the great consternation of his heathen subjects. Trouble broke out immediately. Warnings and pleadings and threats proved of no avail. When asked if he had "counted the cost," Kinesing's quiet answer was : "I will never sell the kingdom of Heaven for the kingdom of Khadsawphra." After peace had been restored, when urged by some of his counsellors to banish or punish those who had attempted to dethrone him, Kinesing promptly answered : "It is not right for a Christian to take revenge." In later years the king of Khadsawphra became an excellent and much valued deacon in the Mairang church,—probably the only church in the world which could boast of two kings among its members ! Four or

five years after Kinesing had joined the Christians, the *siem* of the neighbouring kingdom of Nongspung also joined them. Their forefathers had been for generations engaged in constant war the one against the other ; by the power of the Gospel the old enmity was entirely removed.

In the ten years 1870-1880 remarkable progress was made in every branch of the work. Comparing the statistics of the latter year with those of the former, we find that the number of communicants, adherents and Sunday school members had *more than trebled*. In 1870 the communicants numbered 116 ; in 1880, 400 ; children in the churches (1870), 210 ; (1880) 739 ; church members (1870) 544 ; (1880) 1659 ; Sunday School (1870) 714 ; (1880) 2698 ; hearers (1870) 836 ; (1880) 2924. In 1870 not a single chapel had been erected, the schools being used for the purpose ; by 1880 excellent chapels were found in all the principal stations, built without any financial aid from the Mission, the whole cost being borne by the native church. Seven stations, with resident missionaries, had also been opened by the year 1880 : Nong-sawlia, Jowai, Shella, Shillong, Mawphlang and Nongrymai (Khadsawphra),—as compared with two in 1870.

A new missionary, the Rev. C. L. Stephens, arrived in 1880, followed three or four years later by the Rev. John Thomas, who, however, in a little over twelve months' time, was obliged to return to Wales owing to a breakdown in health. In 1886 the Rev. Griffith Hughes also returned home. The following year, 1887, three new missionaries were sent to the Hills,—the Revs. J. Ceredig Evans, Dr. A. D. Hughes, and William Williams.

With the rapid growth in the number of the churches and converts, several new needs became apparent. The first was the need for a better trained native ministry. With this object in view a Theological Institution was established in Cherra, in 1887, with the Rev. John Roberts as Principal, Mr. Ceredig Evans taking over charge of the Normal School. Following this, the question of a native pastorate was considered. A number of churches and villages were placed in charge of each evangelist of five years' standing, and on the

recommendation of the churches four were ordained to the full work of the ministry, October 11th, 1890,—U Juramon, U Ksan, U Iang Lalu, and U Ksanbin,—the first ordained ministers of the Khasi Church.

In the same year, 1890, Thomas Jerman Jones died on the voyage home, whither he was returning owing to impaired health. A man of heroic spirit—as witness his noble conduct in the terrible cholera outbreak of 1879, to which testimony was publicly borne by the Lieutenant Governor of the Province; at all times “in labours abundant,” unsparing of himself, with a wonderful gift for friendship, endearing him to natives and all others alike. The memory of “Saheb Jerman” remains a precious heritage in Wales and in India.

CHAPTER V.

THE KHASIA HILLS : 1890-1930.

THE year 1890 marks the Jubilee year of the Mission, and marks also the beginning of a period of wider expansion. A special collection was organised in the home churches, as a Thankoffering for the Lord's blessing upon the labours of the half century, and the sum of £37,326/15/5 was contributed. This fund was designed principally for the extension of the work on the Plains, and also for securing the greater efficiency of the Theological Institution and the Medical Mission. In order to show the progress made during the first fifty years, we give the following statistics for each decade from 1861 to 1891 :—

	1861	1871	1881	1891
Churches & Preaching Stations	16	33	102	189
Preachers	8	12	11	30
Deacons	*	10	11	85
Communicants	62	106	452	2147
Church Members ..	158	514	2060	6862
Sunday School Members	*	812	2918	7909
Day School Scholars	290	1250	2666	4625
Hearers	500	900	3326	9567

*No returns.

At the beginning of 1891 the Normal School was removed from Cherra to Shillong, and amalgamated with the Government High School and the Mission High School already established there, the Mission retaining the right of nominating the head master. Mr. Ceredig Evans was appointed the first Principal of the new Institution. About the same time the Khasia Medical Mission transferred its headquarters from Mawphlang to Cherra. The medical work in Jaintia

suffered a great loss at this time owing to the departure from the field of Dr. A. D. Hughes, consequent upon a serious accident to his wife.

The year 1891 will be memorable in the story of the work on the Khasia and Jaintia Hills as the year in which the translation of the Bible was completed. It may be well, perhaps, at this point, to summarise the efforts made to provide a complete translation of God's Word in the language of the people. In 1846, Thomas Jones brought through the Press the Gospel of St. Matthew. Seven years later, Mr. Lewis published a revised translation of the first Gospel, together with his own translation of the remaining three, and the Book of the Acts. In 1871 the whole of the New Testament was published,—the fruit of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis' diligent labours. A revised translation was published in 1885. In the same year an edition of the Pentateuch appeared. Other portions of the Old Testament were published from time to time, the translation being superintended by a Committee of missionaries, assisted by a number of the natives. Special reference is due to the great labours of the Rev. John Roberts, who was devotedly assisted by Mrs. Roberts. Mr. Roberts translated as many as twenty-three books of the Old Testament. To him also was entrusted the work of bringing the complete Bible through the Press.

Reference has already been made to translations of other books by the missionaries,—the *Christian Instructor*, *Confession of Faith*, &c. In 1855 William Pryse published a *Khasi Grammar*. Four years later, Robert Parry translated and published Dr. Watts' *Scripture History*. In 1867 Mrs. Lewis brought through the press her translation of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. A copious Dictionary—English-Khasi, 360 pages, was published by Hugh Roberts in 1870. Small collections of Khasi Hymns appeared in 1850 and 1860, followed in 1876 by a substantial volume of 206 pages, comprising 242 hymns, translated chiefly from the Welsh by Hugh Roberts and Jerman Jones. In 1889 William Williams launched the *Nongkit Khubor* ("The Messenger")—the first periodical in the Khasi language.

At the end of 1891 the Rev. W. M. Jenkins arrived on the Hills, followed early in 1892 by the Rev. Robert Jones, B.A., and Miss Bessie Williams (now Mrs. Wynne Jones), who took charge of the Girls' Section of the Normal School. Mr. Jenkins took oversight of the outlying Shangpoong district, the furthest portion of the Jaintia Hills. Work had been begun in Shangpoong as early as 1864. From its commencement, however, it had been strenuously opposed by the *dolloi* and his counsellors. The first converts were violently persecuted. The selling of land to the Christians for the purpose of building a school was forbidden, under a threatened penalty of fifteen years' imprisonment! In 1866, however, we find in this village—or rather on its outskirts, for the Christians were still denied entrance into the village itself,—a church of fourteen members. The first resident missionary was the Rev. Robert Evans, who was stationed there in 1880. The opposition of the *dolloi* and his head-men to the Christians had not abated in the slightest degree, and every effort to buy or rent land proved unavailing. The missionary was obliged to build his schoolroom outside the village. Providence intervened in a very wonderful manner. A large piece of land, adjoining the Mission Compound, and admirably adapted for the purposes of the Christians, was in the possession of two sisters; but they had quarrelled as to its division. After many years of litigation, the youngest sister fled to the Bhoi, where she remained for nearly fifteen years, nursing feelings of bitterness and hatred against her elder sister. Under these circumstances the prospect of securing the land for the Mission appeared hopeless. One of the converts, however, U Kiang Sylot, convinced of the power of the Gospel to bend the most stubborn will, resolved to visit the two sisters secretly. This he continued to do for several months, and his faithful ministry was ultimately rewarded. Gradually, and unknown to each other, the two women began to soften, and to desire to join the Christians. But the property was in the way,—each one fearing that should she take the step, her heathen relations would give the land to the other sister. After employing much strategy, U Kiang succeeded in bringing the two

together,—the one from the distant Bhoi, and the other from the village,—to meet in the house of one of the converts. Great was their surprise on meeting each other so unexpectedly, and greater still their joy on hearing of each other's desire to become followers of Christ! Reconciliation quickly followed; the past was forgiven and forgotten; and land in plenty was provided for the persecuted Christians of Shangpoong.

After four years on the field, William Williams, an enthusiastic young missionary, was suddenly cut down early in 1892. The previous year he had visited the Lushai Hills,—a visit which, as we shall relate later, ultimately led the Connexion to adopt that wild and mountainous territory as a part of its Mission field. In the following year, 1893, the Revs. E. H. Williams and Dr. Edward Williams sailed for India,—the first taking charge of the Shella district, and Dr. Williams succeeding Dr. A. D. Hughes in Jowai.

Much new land was possessed during these years, both in Khasia and in Jaintia. The *siemships* of Maram and Nongstoin, on the Khasia Hills, were entered. Nongstoin had for years proved a difficult problem. The *siem* ruled over his subjects with great severity, and vigorously opposed all efforts for their education. No one outside the *siem's* clan could engage in any trade, with the result that the *siem's* family were very rich and all others very poor. On the Jaintia Hills the work extended to the valleys on the east, as far as the borders of North Cachar,—valleys inhabited by numerous small tribes. The work in this part of the field was begun by Mr. John Jones, who opened a new station in Wahiajer, notorious as "the village of thieves." On one occasion, after a more daring robbery than usual, a number of police were sent to arrest the thieves. On the very night of their arrival, all the belongings of the police mysteriously disappeared! By the end of 1897 a church numbering 120 members was reported in the village.

The numerous small tribes inhabiting the Jaintia valleys (Bhoi), to whom reference is made above, are known as Mikir, Lalung and Hadem—all differing from the Khasis and Syn-

tengs in language and customs. The Mikir, who are the most numerous, numbering about 15,000, build their villages in the jungle. Each village as a rule contains from ten to fifteen houses; each house, however, contains on an average from twenty-five to thirty persons. The houses are raised on poles, some feet above the earth. As is the custom among many of the smaller tribes, the Mikir, having cultivated the surrounding land, remove their villages to another part of the country, thus adding considerably to the difficulty of our work.

Great progress has been made among these backward tribes, the church at Ampanai, consisting entirely of Mikir, numbering 600 members. During comparatively recent years opium was introduced into this part of the Bhoi country with disastrous results.

The rapid progress of the work in the years now under review must be attributed largely to the employment of native helpers. The native pastorate made steady advance, the pastors performing their duties with great faithfulness and efficiency. Convinced that the healthy development of the work can only be secured through the efforts of the native churches themselves, the Directors urged upon them the necessity of aiming continually at a larger measure of "self-support, self-government and self-propagation," reminding them that while remaining dependent upon others for support and guidance, they could not become strong and vigorous Christians. The message was accorded a cordial reception, and as a result several of the pastors and members resolved to contribute a tithe of their earnings towards the support of the work,—a practice that has grown in many of the churches.

Owing to the largely widened area of the Mission's operations and the rapidly increasing number of churches, necessity arose for re-organisation. Hitherto the one Presbytery formed in 1867 functioned for the whole field. In 1895 the field was divided into five Presbyteries. An Assembly for the whole field was also constituted, to consist of the missionaries, the pastors, and delegates appointed by the Presbyteries. The first meeting of the Assembly was held in Shella, Feb-

ruary, 1896,—the Rev. Robert Evans being elected the first Moderator, and the Rev. U Amirkha, Secretary.

The year 1897 will be remembered long in the history of the Mission as the year of the great earthquake. Of all the dark years through which the Mission had been called to pass, this was undoubtedly the darkest. The first shock occurred on Saturday afternoon, June 12th. In a few seconds every building in Sylhet, Khasia and Jaintia, was levelled to the ground: the Government offices, Mission premises, including the Mission houses, sixteen in number; the two Hospitals (Cherra and Jowai): thirty chapels; the Theological Institution, and a large number of schools, many of which, in the principal villages, were substantial buildings; the fruit of the sacrifices of the home and native churches for over half a century swept away at a single stroke! Whole villages were completely destroyed, large portions of them being buried, together with their inhabitants, under the landslips following the upheaval. All the missionaries were providentially saved, but the number of deaths among the native population was appalling. The disaster occurred at the height of the rainy season, and the sufferings of the homeless missionaries and natives were, in consequence, much intensified. Added to this, fevers and epidemics followed, making great ravages among the terror-stricken people.

The financial losses of the Mission were estimated at fifteen thousand pounds. Within less than six months from the time when the news of the disaster were received, the home churches had nobly responded to the appeal for help by a handsome collection of £14,251/3/5, in addition to the ordinary church contributions for the year. The re-building of the Normal School and Dispensaries was undertaken by the Government, which also contributed £1,250 towards re-building the Day Schools. The splendid conduct of the native Christians during this time of trial and suffering afforded abundant proof of the depth and reality of their convictions, and impressed deeply their heathen neighbours, hundreds of whom soon sought admission into the churches. The returns for the year showed that as many as 2,373 were received on

probation, while the number of adherents showed an increase of 2,101.

In less than three months after the earthquake disaster, another painful blow fell upon the Mission through the death of Miss Annie Williams, a young missionary from Liverpool, appointed to the charge of the Girls' School, Shillong. Whilst nobly ministering help to three little children stricken by cholera, and left to their fate, Miss Williams herself fell a victim to the plague, and died within less than ten months after arriving on the field. Before the end of the year Miss Annie W. Thomas, Liverpool, set out to fill the vacancy caused through Miss Annie Williams' death.

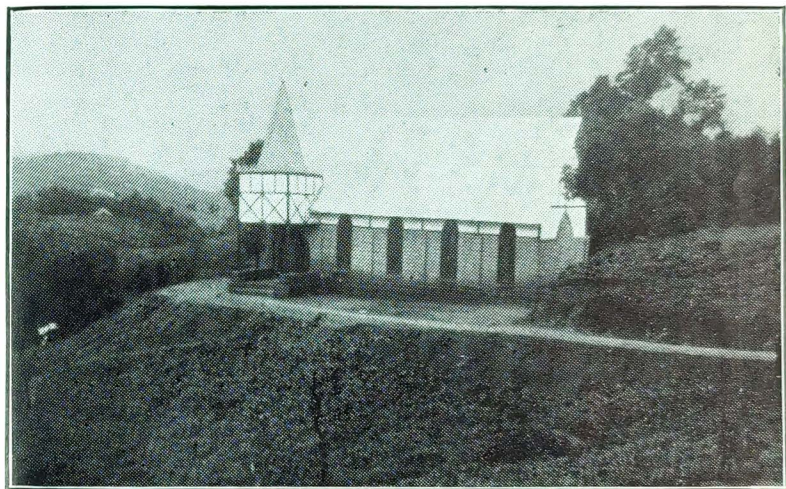
Following the example of the mother church in Wales, the Khasi churches celebrated the Centenary of the Connexion by a special collection of 10,000 *Rupees*. They further resolved to establish a "Home Mission" on the Hills, to be supported entirely by the native churches, the Centenary Collection being used as a supplementary fund. Work was begun immediately in hitherto untouched portions of the field,—the Mawlad valleys on the Khasia Hills, and the adjoining valleys on the Jaintia Hills. According to the last report the Home Mission now supports eighteen churches and twenty three schools. The movement is noteworthy as marking a definite advance in the direction of self-propagation.

A new school was opened in Shillong in 1900 for European and Eurasian children, under the control of Miss Ellen Hughes, who for some months previously had been stationed on the Plains. The Eurasians (offspring of mixed marriages between Europeans and Asiatics,—*Eur-Asian*) are increasingly recognised as an important and influential class in India, and steps have been taken by Government and other agencies to provide for their education. The Shillong school numbered from 30 to 40 scholars. In 1906 Miss Hughes was obliged to return home for family reasons, the vacancy in the school being filled by the appointment of Miss Aranwen Evans, Merthyr, in 1908. After Miss Evans' transfer to the Plains, two years later, the connection of the Mission with the school terminated.

Another development in Shillong about this time was the opening, in 1904, of a handsome new chapel for the purpose of holding English services for the benefit of Europeans, Anglo-Indians, and English speaking Bengalis and Khasis. The building was provided by the generosity of the late Mr. Robert Davies, Bodlondeb, Bangor, and Mrs. Davies, Llandinam; the site being presented by the Chief Commissioner.

Early in 1904 the Mission was deprived of the valued services of Dr. Griffiths, our pioneer medical missionary, who had spent twenty-five years on the field. For some time Dr. Griffiths' health had been unsatisfactory, and now rendered the continuance of his labours in India impossible. His strong missionary zeal, his kindly and cheerful nature, and his entire devotion to his work, carried on in the early years under difficulties and disadvantages, denote him as one of the most valued missionaries whom God gave our Connexion. The first Dispensary was opened by Dr. Griffiths in Mawphlang; the work was transferred later to Cherra, and, after the earthquake, to Laitlyngkot, a small village 17 miles from Shillong. At that time it was expected that Laitlyngkot village would develop rapidly, a new road to the Plains having been planned to pass through; the project, however, was later abandoned. Among a people who attribute all sickness and suffering to the influence of evil spirits, the value of medical work in dispelling superstition, and as a directly evangelising agency, can never be estimated.

In these years the value of the evangelistic and educational work on the Hills was becoming more and more apparent, especially in the large number of Khasis, trained in Mission schools, who now occupied positions of influence and responsibility. A member of the Shillong Church, Babu Mohonroi, was appointed Stipendiary Magistrate,—a post which he filled with distinction. After his death, Babu Dohori, B.A., was appointed his successor. To Babu Dohori, now known and honoured throughout the Hills as the Rai Bahadur Dohori Ropmay, a valued deacon and leader of the church, and to his lamented friend, U Solomon, belongs the distinction



Haflong Chapel.

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The Training Class, Silchar School.

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of being the first from among the Khasis to gain University degrees,—Dohori, in 1898, taking his degree of B.A. at Calcutta University with Honours in English.

Through the generosity of the late Miss Hannah Jones, Rhyl, work was begun at this time, in accordance with her desire, in a number of new districts "where the Gospel had not been preached before." Schools were opened in the hitherto untouched district of Lyngam, forming a part of the Nongstoin territory, and extending to the borders of the Garo Hills. The Lyngam country is exceptionally wild, covered with dense jungle, and extremely difficult to travel. The villages number 320, and the population is estimated at twenty thousand. Owing to their isolated position, the Lyngams differ in many respects from the ordinary Khasis and are notoriously filthy in their habits. Previous to the advent of the British, the Lyngams were reputed to be cannibals. For safety, all their live stock, cows, goats, pigs and fowls, are sheltered during the night with the family within the house. No attempt is made to clean the houses, a belief prevailing that the use of a broom will be punished with blindness! The family wealth is invested in women's necklaces, it being no uncommon sight to see a woman loaded with as many as two hundred cheap metal necklaces! The first converts from this part of the field, four in number, were baptised in 1902 by the Rev. E. H. Williams. Work was also begun in 1904 in Ri Jirngam (the "green country"), another wild and inaccessible portion of the Hills, lying in the north-western corner, through the opening of a school in Nongbri. By to-day a number of schools and churches are to be found in each of these outlying districts.

Towards the end of the year 1904 the joyful news of the Great Revival in the churches of Wales reached the Mission field. The accounts of the remarkable effects witnessed in the homeland, reported month by month in the *Nongialam Khristan*, aroused the churches on the Khasia Hills to a state of great expectancy. Prayer meetings were held daily and nightly, earnestly beseeching that a like gracious visitation might be given to the "children of the Mother-church." A

foretaste of the coming blessing was experienced in the Assembly at Cherra, in February, 1905. Three weeks later a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit was given at the Presbytery held in Pariong, Mawphlang District. The Revival fire spread rapidly throughout the country, reaching ultimately as far as the Lushai Hills. Indescribable scenes were witnessed—all classes, young and old, missionaries and natives, believers, backsliders and heathen, being deeply and strangely moved. Before the end of the year as many as 4,568 enquirers were received into the churches on probation, and the total number of adherents increased from 22,565 in 1904, to 26,101 in 1905. The effects of the Revival continued, in a greater or lesser degree, for three or four years. The following statistics from 1904 to 1907 show some of the fruit :

	1904	1905	1906	1907
Churches and Preaching				
Stations	405	415	420	416
Communicants	6180	7778	8640	9013
Total in the Churches	17800	21983	23891	24471
Sunday School Members	16404	19411	20295	20813
Day School Pupils	7918	8351	8253	9650
Hearers	22565	26101	27491	27588

Remarkable though the above results of the Revival may be, the "fruit most delightful to behold" was the strongly increased desire of the churches to extend the Kingdom. This desire found practical expression in the Assembly held at Mairang in 1906, when it was resolved to make a special collection of 10,000 Rupees as "a thank-offering to God for the blessings of the Revival,"—the interest of the Fund to be employed in furtherance of the Home Mission. The enthusiasm of the churches secured practically double the amount aimed at, the total collection by the time the Fund was closed amounting to nearly 20,000 Rupees.

Within less than nine months after his return from furlough, on the 23rd July, 1908, Dr. John Roberts passed away. His strenuous missionary career had extended over thirty

seven years, twenty-one of which were spent as Principal of the Theological College. As missionary, preacher, teacher, author and translator, his memory and influence will long remain among the people whom he so deeply loved and so faithfully served. The Rev. Robert Jones, who was in charge of the Shillong District, was appointed Dr. Roberts' successor as Principal of the Theological College, and the Rev. J. Gerlan Williams was transferred from the Plains to Shillong.

During the furlough of Dr. Edward Williams, in 1905, the Directors accepted the offer of two years' service made by Dr. G. Russell Jarvie, engaged at the time on a Tea Garden in the Plains. In 1906 Dr. Jarvie was given the status of a missionary, but resigned three years later. A new missionary, the Rev. J. M. Harries Rees, arrived on the Hills before the end of 1908, and was stationed at Shella, succeeding the Rev. Owen Evans, whose connection with the Mission terminated after seven years' service. The senior missionary on the Hills, the Rev. John Jones, returned on furlough in 1909, but owing to failing health was unable to resume his work in India. For thirty-four years he laboured quietly, patiently and whole-heartedly; and, as already stated, commenced the successful work still carried on among the backward tribes of the Jaintia Bhoi. About the same time the Mission was deprived of the services of Mr. Gerlan Williams, the state of his wife's health necessitating their return to this country. Later Mr. and Mrs. Williams joined our Mission staff in Brittany.

Generous interest in the work of the Mission was shown during these years by the Chief Commissioner of the Province, Sir J. Bampfylde Fuller. Writing of the Mission's operations he stated: "I have the very highest opinion of the benefits which your Mission has conferred, and is conferring, upon the Khasi race. Till I witnessed the results of your labours I shared the view held by so many, that mission work in India was so disappointing as to be almost hopeless. But with the record of your work before him no one need despair; I do not forget that it is only 50 years ago, when you first broke ground in Cherra, that the officers of Government pronounced officially the opinion that, while your efforts

merited the encouragement of the State, they seemed practically hopeless. A marvellous change in half a century !”

One of the many proofs of the Commissioner's interest in the welfare of the Khasis was the establishment in 1907 of the “ Fuller Industrial School,” in Shillong, under the superintendence of the Headmaster of the High School, together with the provision of fifteen stipends annually, enabling Khasi youths to receive three years' training in useful trades as joiners, blacksmiths, etc. The school has proved of great benefit not only in providing good occupations for an increasing number of young men, but also, through the sending of skilled craftsmen to various parts of the country, in improving the quality of the Khasi dwelling-houses, and securing more substantial chapels and buildings.

In 1908 a movement was initiated, small in its beginnings, which, with the passing years, has grown into remarkable proportions and proved of incalculable blessing to the work,—the *Khaw Kham* or Handful of Rice Collection. The suggestion was first brought to notice by one of the evangelists, Babu Joel, in an article published in the *Nongialam Khristan*. The plan suggested was as follows : that a handful of rice be taken from the quantity usually set apart for the family meal, and sold periodically, the amount realised being devoted to the Lord's work. At first the proposal was regarded with misgiving, many of the women fearing that to offer so little would be “ an insult to the Lord.” Gradually the movement grew, until in recent years the Women's Collection, as it is now regarded, has become the largest of all the Church Collections, amounting in 1929 to £1,700, with which over 120 schools and teachers are entirely supported.

The appointment of a number of new missionaries, together with the loss of a number of experienced workers, are to be recorded in these years. In 1911, the Rev. G. Huxley Thomas was sent to Mawphlang ; Miss Beatrice Jones to Shillong in 1911, followed in 1913 by her sister, Miss Rosie Jones, daughters of our faithful missionary, the Rev. John Jones,—the first resigning in 1919, and the second in 1920 ;

Miss M. J. Francis, B.A., to the Girls' School, Shillong, in 1912 (resigned in 1920); Dr. H. Gordon Roberts to Shillong in 1913; the Rev. D. J. Davies, B.A., to Shillong High School in 1914 (resigned in 1919); the Rev. D. S. Davies, M.A., to Shangpoong in 1914. Early in 1917 Mr. Davies, together with the Rev. Shai Rabooh, accompanied a Labour Corps of Khasis, numbering over seven hundred, for service in France. Unfortunately he contracted a serious illness, and his connection with the Mission terminated in 1920. The Rev. W. M. Jenkins died while home on furlough in 1913; and the Rev. Robert Evans also passed away three years later,—both of them enthusiastic missionaries, who had given long years on the field, and by their own strong faith had taught others the power of prayer. Losses were sustained also in the ranks of the native workers, among others, the Rev. U Dorkha, and his son-in-law, the Rev. Rai Bhajur,—the latter, greatly beloved not only in his own country, but likewise by many with whom he came in contact during his visit to this country. In his desire to help his fellow-countrymen, especially those living in the malarious Bhoi villages, Rai Bhajur came over to this country for a short medical course. Among the most pleasurable of his recollections of his visit to Wales, was the privilege given him of meeting Mr. Lloyd George, who at the time had accepted office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Learning of the desire of one of Rai's daughters to receive an English Bible, Mr. Lloyd George presented her with a copy, bearing the following inscription: "From a British Chancellor of the Exchequer living amongst the Welsh Hills to a little maiden in the Hills of Khasia, this copy of the greatest book the world has ever seen. August 17th, 1910.—D. Lloyd George." Two years after his return to India, the faithful worker was called to his reward.

The educational institutions connected with the Mission made excellent progress during these years, and contributed largely to the success of the work by providing better equipped leaders and teachers. Early in 1912 a new home was provided for the Theological College. Hitherto a room in the Mission bungalow had served the purpose. A large sub-

stantial building was now erected in Cherra at a cost of 25,000 Rupees. In these later years the number of students had increased rapidly,—young men from the Plains, and from the Lushai Hills, and also from the Naga Hills, a field occupied by the American Baptists, coming to Cherra for their theological training, the Mission College being the only Theological College in the Province. Shortly before Dr. Roberts' death a generous gift of £500 was made by a warm supporter of the Mission, the Rev. John Davies, Bontddu, to be applied for the support of students in the Theological College. The Principal was assisted by the Rev. U Khnong, U Mondon and U Holinson,—the first named, U Khnong, having been Dr. Roberts' faithful helper almost from the beginning.

The Shillong High and Normal School had also made striking progress. At the time of the amalgamation of the Government and Mission schools, in 1891, the students numbered a little over 200; in 1912, 700 names were on the roll. For 25 years this School remained under the charge of Mr. Ceredig Evans, to whose indefatigable labours its success must be largely attributed. In 1919 the Rev. Oliver Thomas, B.A., who since the end of 1913 had been stationed in Sylhet, was appointed to the headship. One of the many difficult problems connected with this school, particularly in recent years, is the great variety of the material with which the school has to deal. As many as twelve different languages are spoken by the 800 or 900 students, who comprise Khasis, Bengalis, Nagas, Lushais, Garos, Assamese, Gurkha, Mikir, Abor and Cacharis. In religion also a great diversity is found,—Hindus, Muhammedans, Animists and Christians. The remarkable success of the school in Government and University Examinations has been maintained throughout the years, the percentage of passes being often-times the highest in the Province. In 1924 two young men from the Lushai Hills, and one from the Naga Hills, who had studied in Shillong, graduated in Arts, the first from their respective countries to gain degrees. In addition to these successes, the influence of the school and of the social life of its Hostels is carried to distant parts of the Province, some of the boys becoming the

first messengers of Christ in their own lands, others rendering invaluable assistance with the translation of the Scripture into their own language.

A former student of the Shillong High School, Granville Pugh, in 1920 secured the distinction of being the first of the Khasis to gain the double degrees of B.A., B.D. Entering the High School at twelve years of age, he matriculated in the first division at sixteen, gaining a scholarship with which he proceeded to Calcutta, there obtaining his Arts degree with Honours. He afterwards joined the Serampore Theological College, and in spite of impaired health, owing principally to change of climate from the highlands of Khasia to the sweltering city, he succeeded in completing his B.D. course at twenty-three years of age. The large church in Mawkhar, Shillong,—the largest church on the Hills, now numbering over 1000 members,—extended to him an enthusiastic call,—this again being the first “call” given by an individual church on the Hills to a pastor. To the inexpressible sorrow of all the churches, early in 1920, and within less than three years after the completion of his brilliant College course, this “earnest student” passed away.

The High School for Girls also, under the care of Miss Thomas and Miss Francis, made progress that is truly remarkable, especially when the low value set on female education in India is borne in mind. By the year 1912 as many as 300 students were enrolled, the number steadily increasing year by year until by to-day 420 girls, drawn from all parts of the Khasia Hills, and from all parts of the Province, from the borders of Tibet to the borders of Burmah, are receiving higher education—a fact highly significant of the change of public opinion, and highly significant also for the country's future. As far back as 1902 one of the girls, Ka Annamon, had passed the Calcutta Matriculation Examination,—a feat regarded as well-nigh impossible for a Khasi girl. In 1918 Enola Khain secured her B.A. degree,—the first Khasi female graduate; two years later, two other Khasi girls obtained the same distinction, Hilda Bhajur (daughter of Rai Bhajur) and Lariam Kongwir. These, however, were but the beginning

of a series of similar successes which rapidly followed. Ka Annamon (who later became the wife of the Evangelist U Sisorai Siem) retained her connection with the school as a most valued teacher for thirty-five years, until the time of her death, in 1929. In 1925 Miss Thomas, in order to devote herself to evangelistic work among the women, resigned the headship of the school after twenty-eight years of invaluable service,—service richly rewarded not only in the academical success of the school, but also in its strong and definitely religious influence. Miss Hilda Jones, B.A., who had joined the staff in 1923, became Miss Thomas' successor. Owing to the rapid growth of the Institution, the old school buildings became inadequate ; and by the aid of a liberal grant from Government of 10,000 Rupees, a large and commodious new school was erected, the building being formally opened in 1926 by the Governor of Assam, Sir John Kerr.

Side by side with the growth of the educational work must be noted the growth of the medical work. In Jowai a new Hospital, containing 40 beds, was opened in 1914,—the Government contributing two thirds of the cost, in appreciation of the work previously accomplished. Dr. Edward Williams at the outbreak of the War had returned on furlough, and being unable to return to the field until the cessation of hostilities, was engaged in medical service with the Forces. In his absence the charge of the Jowai Hospital was given to a young Khasi lady doctor, Miss Eribon Passah, Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

After Dr. Jarvie's resignation, Dr. Edward Williams was the only medical missionary on the Hills until Dr. Gordon Roberts' arrival in 1913. During the War, Dr. Roberts, at the request of Government, became Civil Surgeon in Shillong, and, in consequence, the building of a Hospital was delayed. His appeal for aid in erecting a commodious, well-equipped Hospital, received a remarkable response, inspired largely by his own generous contributions, amounting to several thousands of pounds. The total cost of buildings and equipment amounted to nearly £40,000, towards which special contributions of over £30,000 were received. The Hospital,

which contains 140 beds, Private Wards, Maternity Ward, Operating Theatre, and X-Ray apparatus, is regarded as one of the best constructed and best equipped Hospitals in India. The buildings were formally opened on the 25th March, 1922, in the presence of a large gathering of Europeans and Indians, by His Excellency Sir William Marris, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., the Governor of Assam, who generously contributed the sum of 1000 Rupees towards the Hospital Fund, and expressed "the warm admiration with which he had watched the work of the Welsh Mission in the Province."

Early in 1926 Lord Reading, Viceroy of India, visited the Hospital, and wrote the following official Note of his visit:—"I was greatly impressed by what I saw and heard of the Khasi Mission Hospital, Shillong. I am filled with admiration for the great enthusiasm, energy, and business capacity shown by Doctor H. Gordon Roberts, of the Welsh Presbyterian Mission, in collecting funds to establish and maintain the Mission Hospital, which is unique, in many ways, in the Indian Empire; and for the high degree of scientific attainments which have made the Hospital and his name household words both through the length and breadth of Assam, and outside the Province also. . . . I came away deeply impressed by the extent of the good work done here, by the patient cheerfulness and contentment of the patients, and the obvious general efficiency of the arrangements and the staff."

At the end of 1919 Nurse Buckley went out to assist Dr. Roberts, followed in 1923 by Nurse Hopkins, and in 1924 by Nurse Muriel Owen. Not the least important part of the work in the Hospital is the training of nurses from among the Khasi women themselves. Owing to the nature of many of the duties which a nurse is called upon to discharge, the work was regarded at first with repugnance, and as an exceedingly menial occupation. About forty Khasi young women receive training together; and a number of those who have completed their course have settled in various villages, carrying with them the blessing of skilled training to the sick and the suffering.

The following new missionaries, in addition to those already named, were sent to the Hills during the last ten or twelve years : the Rev. Sidney Evans, B.A., in 1920, appointed to temporary charge of the High School, removing to Cherra in 1923 ; the Rev. Edwin Adams, B.A., in 1921, stationed at Mairang, and transferred later to the Plains ; the Rev. J. R. Williams, B.A., to Laitkynsew, and transferred to Wahiajer in 1922 ; Dr. John Williams, B.A., in 1924, to Shillong (resigned) ; the Rev. R. Gwilym Jones, B.A., in 1924,—first appointed to the Plains, and later to Lushai, and now on the Khasia Hills ; the Rev. A. L. Hughes, in 1927, to Shangpoong ; (returned home in 1928 owing to Mrs. Hughes' breakdown in health) ; the Rev. H. Pritchard Williams, B.A., 1927, to Cherra and Laitkynsew (invalided home end of 1929) ; Dr. C. E. North, to Shillong, in 1927 (resigned) ; Nurse Bullock, to Shillong, in 1928 ; and the Rev. T. E. Pugh, M.A., in 1930, appointed Head Master of Shillong High School in succession to the Rev. Oliver Thomas, who, in consequence of the state of his wife's health, was obliged to return to this country in 1927.

The death of Dr. Edward Williams, in 1925, and of the Rev. Robert Jones, in 1929, deprived the Mission of two workers who had given inestimable service in their respective spheres. Dr. Williams served the Mission for thirty-three years with whole-hearted devotion, superintending the Hospital in Jowai, and travelling widely through the Jaintia districts, preaching the Gospel and healing the sick. Mr. Robert Jones gave to the Mission thirty-five years of excellent service, deep and lasting in its influence,—eighteen years in the Shillong District, and seventeen years as Principal of the Theological College.

After Mr. Robert Jones' death, the Rev. Sidney Evans was appointed Principal of the Theological College, and is assisted by the Rev. U Holinson, U Harrisingh, and Welburn Manners, B.A. The Theological College is now divided into three Grades : the First, into which young men who have received a good Elementary education (Middle English) are admitted ; the Second, for men who have received Secondary education ;

and the Third for Matriculants, their course being a preparation for the diploma Licentiate in Theology. The classes in the Third Grade are conducted in English. The recent decision of the Khasi church to undertake the entire support of one teacher in the College is a welcome proof of its increasing interest in the education of its ministers, and of its desire to raise the standard of its ministry.

Inspired largely, no doubt, by the example of the mother-church in Wales, the church on the Hills has given a pre-eminent place in its life to preaching. The open-air services held in connection with the Presbyteries and Assemblies draw large gatherings, estimated at five or six thousand, who listen with rapt attention to the preaching of the Word. A number of preachers of exceptional power have already risen on the field. The premier place among Khasi preachers must still be given to the late U Juramon, frequently spoken of by the missionaries of his day as the "John Jones, Talsarn" of Khasia,—a preacher of remarkable and cultured eloquence, and of great dramatic power. The old evangelist, U Ramjan, one of the early converts, in spite of his lapses and occasional coarseness, wielded great influence over Khasi congregations. The late U Dorkha, friend and companion of Jerman Jones, and evangelist of the malarious Bhoi villages, although not possessed of outstanding popular gifts, was always listened to with delight. The Rev. U Amirkha, the senior Khasi minister now living, ordained in 1895, is a preacher of exceptional power, a man of sound judgment and whole-hearted devotion, superintending as many as 23 churches with a total membership of over 2,000, in the Rangthong District. The Revs. U Khnong, U William Lewis (son of one of the Rev. William Lewis' first converts, U Jarkha), Siang Blah, Shai Rabooh,—to name but a few of the oldest ministers now on the field,—are men of influence and strong spiritual power.

A number of important developments, particularly in the organisation of the churches, are noted in the last few years. At the Assembly held in Sylhet, 1918, the churches on the Mission field resolved to enter into the union formed among the Presbyterian and other churches in North India,—a move-

ment having as its aim the closer union of all Christian churches in the land. The churches on our field now constitute one of the seven Synods into which the United Church is divided, and are designated the Synod of Assam. At the Assembly held in Mairang, in 1924, a new Constitution, adapted to the needs of the vastly increased church, was adopted, the fruit of many years' deliberations and discussions in various Presbyteries and Assemblies. According to the new Constitution the field is divided into eleven Presbyteries,—four on the Khasia and Jaintia Hills; three on the Plains; three on the Lushai Hills, and one in North Cachar. The Presbyteries meet twice a year, and consist of all the ministers, missionaries, evangelists and deacons within their respective boundaries, together with duly elected delegates. Four Assemblies are also constituted: the Khasia and Jaintia Hills Assembly; the Plains of Sylhet and Cachar Assembly; the Lushai Hills Assembly; and the Hill Tribes in Cachar Assembly. Each Assembly meets once a year. A Supreme Court, known as the Synod, or General Assembly, meets triennially, the membership consisting of all the ministers throughout the field, and delegates appointed by the Presbyteries and confirmed by the Assemblies. Owing to the diversity of languages among the delegates, the proceedings of the Synod are carried on in English. Several interesting and important developments are found in the new Constitution, clearly indicating a growing sense of responsibility in the Indian churches. Among the most significant changes is the admission of women as church officers.

In drawing this brief sketch of the work on the Hills to a close it is pleasing to be able to refer to signs of progress made during the last few years, in spite of losses and the serious lack of workers. In many parts of the Hills which had previously proved hard and difficult, signs are evident of a desire for schools and teachers. Within the church, also, commendable readiness has been shown to make the native pastorate more general and more effective. Some years ago a Pastoral Fund was formed, from which more than three-fourths of the

native pastors have since been supported. At the Jowai Assembly, held in March, 1930, the suggestion of forming a Reserve Fund to supplement the Pastoral Fund was enthusiastically adopted. The amount aimed at is 30,000 Rs., of which nearly one half was subscribed during the Assembly, Rai Bhadur Dohori Ropmay, Shillong, and Babu Kubur Sing, a deacon in Cherra, giving a lead with a contribution of 2,000 Rupees each.

According to the Statistics for 1929 the present position on the Khasia and Jaintia Hills is as follows: Churches, 397; Preaching Stations, 302; Ordained Ministers, 38; Licensed Preachers, 58; Deacons, 337; Communicants, 15,724. Total in the churches (including children and candidates), 43,954; Sunday School members, 26,630; Day Schools, 504; Scholars, 14,006 (of whom 5878 are girls); total adherents, 47,564; total collections, Rs. 70515 (nearly £5,300 sterling). Encouraging though these figures are, and wonderful though the progress has been, it must be remembered that even on the Khasia Hills there remains yet much land to be possessed. The total number of adherents is but one sixth of the whole population; 200,000 are still outside the Church of Christ.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PLAINS OF SYLHET AND CACHAR.

THE Plains of Sylhet lie at the foot of the Khasia and Jaintia Hills; and the Plains of Cachar are on the eastern side of Sylhet. To the north of the Cachar Plains rise the Hills of North Cachar.

The area of the Sylhet District is 5,388 square miles; Cachar, 1859; North Cachar, 1,706; making a total of 8,953 square miles. (Compare with that of Wales, 7,340 square miles). The population is divided as follows: Sylhet, 2,541,341; Cachar, 500,484; North Cachar, 26,744; total, 3,068,569. (Population of Wales, 2,206,712). The Sylhet District contains 11,998 villages; Cachar, 1206; North Cachar, 329. The average population per village (excluding the few towns) in the Plains is 170. The largest towns are Sylhet, with a population of 16,912; Silchar, 10,204; Habiganj, 5,918; Sunamganj, 4881; Karimganj, 4552; Maulvi Bazaar, 3,334.

Two fields so closely adjoining as the Khasia and Jaintia Hills and the Plains of Sylhet and Cachar, and yet differing so completely in physical features and in the character and customs of the inhabitants, it would be difficult to find. The prevailing race on the Plains is the Bengali. Of late years a considerable addition to the population has been made by the importation of large numbers of coolies from other parts of India to work on the extensive Tea Gardens.

There is little or no reliable history of the District of Sylhet prior to the arrival of the British in 1765. Tradition asserts that the ancestors of the present Brahmins immigrated to this part of the country during the eleventh century. The story goes that Adisur, king of Bengal, desired on a certain important occasion to offer a more sacred sacrifice than usual. Finding that the Brahmins of his own Province were ignorant and unfit to perform the ceremony, he sent for five holier Brahmins

from Kanauj (Oudh). He afterwards persecuted the native Brahmins so relentlessly that many of them fled to remote parts of the country. From these exiles, it is declared, the present Brahmins of Sylhet are descended.

Formerly, the Cacharis, the original inhabitants of Cachar, were a numerous and powerful people, and occupied extensive areas in the Assam Province. They were gradually driven from their original home by the Kochs and the Jaintias. At the present time they number a little over ten thousand.

Between the years 1700 and 1750 the first Bengali immigrants from Sylhet arrived in Cachar, and brought with them the Hindu religion. The Cacharis, who, in their primitive state were Animists, began to look with favour upon Hinduism; and in 1790 their formal conversion took place. This was brought about by the wily Brahmins as follows: A plausible story was invented that the Cacharis were descended from Bhim, a brother of Pandu, to whom reference is found in the sacred books of the Hindus. Bhim and his brother, Arjun, were commissioned to seek the horses of Judhithir. In their search they travelled from Western India to Cachar, where they married two of the king's daughters. By so doing, however, they lost caste. The Sylhet Brahmins offered to restore the Cacharis to their original status on the payment of a large sum of money. The offer was readily accepted; but it was further required that the king and his brother should enter into a copper cow, from which, certain rites having been performed, they came forth Hindus, acknowledged henceforth, with their subjects, members of the *Khsattriya* or military caste.

The low level of the country, and the immense amount of water evaporated during the summer months, added to the fact that the country is only between 24 and 25 degrees north of the Equator, combine to make the climate extremely hot and moist, and exceedingly trying to Europeans. During the rainy season, the torrents that pour down from the neighbouring hills, together with the heavy local rainfall, convert the entire surface into a boundless ocean, the *tilas*, or raised sites on which the villages are built, appearing as small is-

lands. At this season the only means of communication is by boat.

In religion, the people of the Plains are Hindus and Muhammedans, the adherents of the two religions being almost equally divided. The following are the figures given in the Census Report (1921) :—

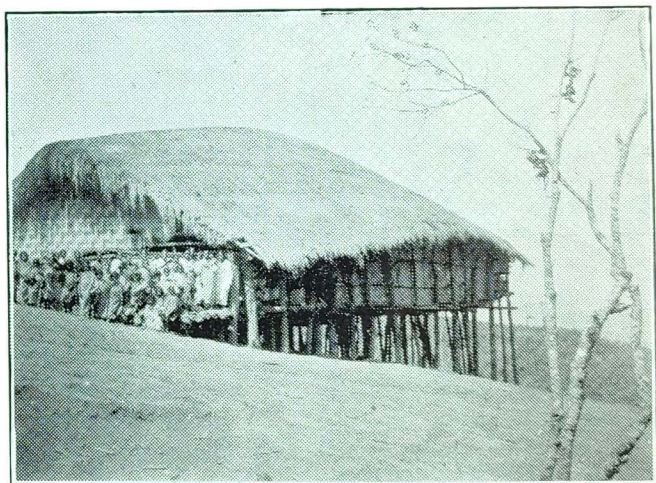
	<i>Hindus.</i>	<i>Muhammedans.</i>	<i>Animists.</i>	<i>Christian.</i>
Sylhet	1,099,745	1,433,390	6,016	1,756
Cachar				
(incl. Hills) ..	338,408	171,030	15,218	2,393

It is frequently claimed for the Hindus that, in their own way, they are the most "religious" people on the face of the earth. "They eat religiously, drink religiously, wash religiously, dress religiously and even *sin* religiously." The objects of their worship are countless. The number of gods in the Hindu Pantheon is said to be 330 millions! At the head of the Pantheon stand the "Hindu Triad,"—Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu (or Krishna), the Preserver; and Siva, the Destroyer. The wife of Brahma is Sarasvati, the goddess of knowledge; Lakshmi, Vishnu's companion, is the goddess of fate; and Kali, the most popular of all the goddesses, is the wife of Siva. The city of Calcutta, originally *Kali-ghat*, derives its name from this goddess. Kali is represented as a black woman, with four arms. In one hand she holds a sword, dripping with blood; in the other the head of the giant Durga, whom she has slain. Two dead bodies form her ear-rings, and a number of human skulls her necklace. Her clothing consists of a girdle of dead men's hands; her eyes are red, as those of a drunkard; her tongue protrudes, and her breasts are smeared with blood. The *Durga puja*, held in honour of Kali, is the most popular festival of the year.

In addition to innumerable gods and goddesses, the Hindus worship animals and reptiles,—monkeys and snakes in particular; also trees and stones. The cow is held in highest veneration, the killing of a cow being regarded as a more



Mary Winchester ("Zoluti").



A Zawlbuk.

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Group of Lushai Chiefs.

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heinous crime than the killing of a man. A mixture of the "five products" of the cow,—milk, curds, clarified butter, and the excreta,—has power to cleanse the vilest sin. The divinity of the Brahmins (priests) is also an acknowledged article of faith, the fear of the Brahmins being greater than the fear of the gods.

The social distinctions known to the West as *caste*, and to the Hindu as *jat* (race), or *varna* (colour), constitute one of the most remarkable features of Hinduism. The four original castes,—(1) *Brahmin*, or priestly; (2) *Khsatriya*, or military; (3) *Vaisya*, or agricultural; and (4) *Sudra*, the lowest,—have been divided and sub-divided until by now they number considerably over 2,000. The prevailing belief among the masses regarding the origin of caste is that the *Brahmin* emanated from the mouth of Brahma; the *Khsatriya* from his arms; the *Vaisya* from his loins, and the *Sudra* from his feet. On our own field hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants are found to whom no place is given within Hindu Society,—*outcastes*, *namasudras*. The number of these "depressed classes" throughout India is over 70,000,000.

Another important phase of the social life of India is the position of the female. The low place assigned to the woman in the family is the primal cause of India's degradation. A Hindu wife is not allowed to eat with her husband, her duty being to wait upon him; when his needs have been satisfied, the wife and daughters may eat together. It is the height of impropriety to enquire after a man's wife; the enquiry must be made, if made at all, in general terms after a man's household. The "*pardah*" ("veil" or "curtain") system was introduced into India on the arrival of the Muhammedans. Before their advent, women enjoyed the same liberty as the men. To protect the sanctity of their homes, the Hindus secluded the women of the family in the part of the house which they designated the "*Zenana*" ("women's quarters").

The custom of child marriage is also one of the most fruitful causes of the sufferings of Indian womanhood. Few Indian girls attained the age of twelve before being given in

marriage. The recent passing of the "Child Marriage Act," which came into operation on the 1st April, 1930, by which the marriage age of a girl is raised to fourteen, and of a boy to eighteen, helps to remove one of the most crying evils of Indian life.

The Muhammedans first arrived in Sylhet District towards the close of the fourteenth century. In marked contrast with their Hindu neighbours the Muhammedans possess the most deep-rooted hatred of idolatry. Their creed is summed up in the oft-repeated formula, "There is but one God, and Muhammed is His prophet." The position of woman among the Muhammedans, as among the Hindus, is low; polygamy is sanctioned, and divorce easy. Lack of appreciation of the value of education, together with the habit of borrowing money from Hindu moneylenders, at exorbitant rates of interest (the Muhammedans themselves being prohibited by their religion from lending money on interest), account to a large extent for the backward state of the Muhammedans in the District, as in other parts of India.

Soon after the arrival of our first missionaries on the Khasia Hills, the attention of the Directors was drawn to the populous field on the adjoining Plains of Sylhet. A number of Europeans resided in Sylhet town, who showed much sympathy with all efforts for the uplift of the people. William Pryse had visited Sylhet about the close of the year 1849, and being impressed by the opportunities offered, both he and William Lewis appealed to the Directors for permission to open a missionary station in the town. About the middle of 1850 Mr. Pryse removed to Sylhet. A school was opened, which, in a few weeks, numbered 27 scholars,—boys of the lowest caste. For some months the missionary's efforts met with much opposition, amounting at times to violence. Signs of success, however, were soon evident. Six months after the missionary's arrival, two Hindus sought baptism. The news caused the wildest excitement throughout the town, and practically all the boys were withdrawn from the school.

Before the end of the year the enquirers numbered seven, among them a Brahmin, Gour Mohun. When his decision became known to his family, funeral rites were performed on his account, his wife donning the garb of a widow. After some months' probation, four of the seven candidates were baptised in May, 1852,—Gour Mohun, Babu Ram, Bishowath, and his mother, Sibi,—the first-fruits of our Mission on the Plains.

Large portions of the extensive District at this time were unexplored by any European. Mr. Pryse travelled widely, in 1851 entering Cachar, and pushing forward as far as Manipur. Returning from one of these journeys he wrote that "the whole country was as hard as the flinty rock, and prejudice and superstition stood like mighty bulwarks against the Truth."

A school for girls was opened by Mrs. Pryse. The few scholars who attended were drawn entirely from the East Indian class, the Hindus and Muhammedans regarding female education with mixed feelings of amusement and contempt. Mrs. Pryse established an Orphanage, also, receiving generous support in this venture from Judge Skipwith and his wife. A second school for boys was opened in the eastern part of the town. By the end of the year the pupils attending the two schools numbered over 250. In 1857 the Government provided a small grant towards the expenses, and a strong representation was made by the Government Officers on the station that all Government schools in the District should be placed under the management of the Mission.

Early in 1857 a new missionary arrived in Sylhet,—Thomas Jones, Glyn, Bala; two years later he exchanged stations with Robert Parry, who, however, resigned in 1863.

A young convert of great promise was baptised in 1861,—Joy Gobind Shome. Having passed through Dr. Duff's College in Calcutta, he entered the University, and after a brilliant course gained his degree of Master of Arts with Honours. Impressed by his exceptional ability and evident sincerity, steps were taken for his ordination. Difficulties, however, arose, with the result that he removed to Calcutta,

where he became a prominent Pleader in the Courts. He remained a zealous Christian worker to the end of his days.

In 1856 a school was opened in Silchar,—the beginning of our operations in the Cachar District. This was followed by the opening of a High School in the town in 1863, the pupils within a few months numbering 150. The Government Agent, Captain Stewart, supported the work with enthusiasm, and arrangements were made for the opening of a large number of schools in the villages around. No records, however, are available to show how far the scheme was carried into effect.

After seventeen years of strenuous labour, and when it was confidently believed that the Mission on the Plains was on a fair way to success, the work sustained a heavy blow. As the result of a long enquiry, Mr. Pryse's connection with the Mission was terminated in 1867. He decided to remain in India, and entered into business. Two years later he died. Mr. Pryse was regarded as a man of exceptional ability, and had gained a remarkable measure of influence in Sylhet town and throughout the District. The superintendence of the work now devolved upon Thomas Jones, who, however, in 1868, owing to ill health, was obliged to leave the field. Advantage was immediately taken of the Mission's difficulties to open opposition schools, and a large number of pupils were drawn away. For a few months Hugh Roberts was sent to Sylhet, but the urgent needs of the work in Khasia necessitated his return to the Hills. The trials and anxieties of the Directors at this time were indeed great. Urgent appeals for missionary candidates received no response. With great reluctance the work on the Plains was abandoned at the end of 1872. The following are the last statistics published, and show the position of the work on the 31st March, 1872 : Congregation (average), 45 ; Church Members, 41 (22 adults); Sunday School Members, 35 (19 adults) ; Candidates, 3 (2 Muhammedans and 1 Hindu).

Seven years after the abandonment of the work on the Plains Griffith Hughes and Jerman Jones had occasion to go down

from the Hills to Sylhet in connection with Mission property in the town. Great was their surprise and joy to find that "the little lamp lighted by our Mission continued to burn, though feebly." In all, about 25 converts continued to meet together for Christian worship in the house of Babu Gour Churn Dass. At that time Babu Gour was in Government employ, and devoted his leisure time to evangelistic work. The continuance of the little church in Sylhet during these years must be attributed to his zealous labour. The discovery, it is evident, moved Jerman Jones deeply. He sent home stirring letters appealing for help and sympathy with "the forlorn and helpless little sister" in Sylhet. His appeal touched the heart of the home churches. No new missionaries being then available, the Hill missionaries visited the field as frequently as circumstances permitted. At the end of November, 1887, the Rev. J. Pengwern Jones and his wife, together with Miss S. A. John, sailed for India, to resume the work abandoned fifteen years previously. The resumption had a sad and almost tragic beginning: in less than a week after her arrival in Sylhet, Mrs. Pengwern Jones died from an attack of cholera.

By this time a number of the converts had died, or had removed to other parts of the field; and at the beginning of 1888 the church in Sylhet numbered only seven communicants (including the two missionaries), with a congregation of fifteen. Miss John opened a school for girls in the town, and another school was started on the Dudelly Tea Gardens, three miles distant, where a number of Christian coolies were employed. The two daughters of Gour Babu gave valued help. Miss John returned to Wales in 1890. On the 1st of January of that year Miss Elizabeth Williams began her labours on the Plains. The following year Miss Ellen Brownlow, who resided in Sylhet, and was connected with the second wife of Thomas Jones, our first missionary on the Hills, was taken into the service of the Mission as an assistant. Miss Brownlow later became the second wife of Mr. Pengwern Jones.

A further addition to the staff was made in 1891 by the arrival of the Rev. T. J. Jones, M.A., Ph.D.,—a missionary ordained by our churches in America and supported by them. A year later Miss Laura Evans and Miss E. A. Roberts entered the field. A new station was now opened in Silchar, under the superintendence of Dr. Jones, who was joined a few weeks later by Miss Williams and Miss Evans. The Municipal Girls' School was transferred to the Mission, and a school for low caste boys was opened. Work was also begun on the Rampoor Tea Estate. In 1892 Miss S. M. Dass, elder daughter of Babu Gour Dass, came to England at her parents' expense, to receive medical training, and was appointed a missionary in 1894. The same year Miss K. E. Williams (now Mrs. D. E. Jones), and Dr. and Mrs. O. O. Williams were appointed to the Plains.

For Government purposes the District of Sylhet is divided into five Sub-divisions as follows :—

	<i>Area.</i>	<i>Population.</i>
North Sylhet	1,034	538,922
Sunamganj	1,422	511,193
Habiganj	1,088	592,939
South Sylhet	1,064	418,022
Karimganj	1,068	480,265

On Dr. Williams' arrival a new station was opened in Karimganj. At that time railway communication between Karimganj and Calcutta had been opened, with the result that the population of the town had greatly increased. Miss Dass accompanied Dr. and Mrs. Williams to the new station, to work among the women.

Eight years passed by before the first-fruits of our second effort on the Plains were gathered. The first convert to be baptised was a young Brahmin in Silchar, Gonga Proshad, a name signifying "the gift of the Ganges." Soon after his birth, his mother, in performance of a sacred vow, had thrown him into the waters of the Ganges, as a sacrifice to the goddess. The child, however, was rescued. At his baptism, which took place on the 26th July, 1895, he adopted the

name Prem (" Love ") Ronjon Upadyha. Immediately after his baptism, Prem was removed to the Khasia Hills to avoid the vengeance of his family, who threatened to kill him. After a course in the Theological College, Cherra, Prem became an evangelist to his own countrymen.

The first converts in Sylhet—a Brahmin, Dulal Chandra Parma and his family,—were baptised three weeks later. Babu Dulal lived in a village 14 miles from the Mission station. The loss of a child set him " thinking,—a thing (he acknowledged) I had never done before." Intense dissatisfaction with his own religion arose within him. While in this state of mind he came to Sylhet, and turning by chance into one of the Mission Halls, he heard the singing of a Bengali hymn which spoke of " peace " and " joy " and " rest " and of a "gentle Jesus " Who could give these priceless gifts. Visits to the missionary followed, and at last Dulal broke *caste* by eating with him. Returning to his own village, whither the exciting news had travelled before him, he was met by his father, who angrily demanded him to depart. After much difficulty he succeeded in communicating with his wife, and in persuading her to join him. A vigilant watch was kept upon the movements of the two. Some weeks later, at midnight, Dulal brought a small boat along the river which ran within a few yards of his home, intending to flee with his family to Sylhet, under cover of darkness. The two children were handed out through the narrow window, and the mother with difficulty followed. One of the children, alarmed by its strange surroundings, began to cry. Seizing the children in their arms, husband and wife ran towards the river. The child's cry, however, had awakened the household, who immediately pursued. Half-way down the river the fugitives were overtaken, and a wild struggle followed. Blows fell freely, and knives were drawn, Dulal narrowly escaping with his life. Persecution continued for several months, and strong inducements were offered to him to retrace his steps,—one zealous Hindu offering five thousand Rupees, and another ten thousand, to enable him to make a penitential pilgrimage and thus be restored to *caste*.

A new station was opened in January, 1899, in Maulvi Bazaar by the Rev. T. W. Reese, who had arrived in Sylhet at the end of 1897. Maulvi lies 35 miles to the south of Sylhet town, and is the principal town of the South Sylhet Sub-division. The Rev. J. Gerlan Williams, B.Sc., at the close of 1898 joined the workers in Sylhet town, removing in 1901 to Karimganj during Dr. Williams' temporary location on the Hills, consequent upon Dr. Griffiths' return home. Miss Ellen Hughes, who arrived in Silchar in 1899, was within a few months transferred to the Eurasian School, Shillong.

In 1903 Dr. T. J. Jones, Silchar, terminated his connection with the Mission. A strong desire had arisen in our churches in America to have a field of their own. Ultimately the Sub-division of Habiganj was transferred to their care. Here they continued to labour until 1922, when, following the union of our churches in the United States with the Presbyterian Church of America, the District again became a part of our field.

By the end of 1897, ten years after resuming the work, three stations had been opened on the Plains,—Sylhet, Silchar and Karimganj; three churches had been formed, with 39 communicants, and a total membership of 84. In the day schools 66 pupils were enrolled, 26 of whom were girls. Ten years later again, in 1907, Maulvi Bazaar had been added to the number of stations; 10 churches were established, with 159 communicants, and a total membership of 337; 6 day schools, with 243 scholars, of whom 175 were girls.

During the years 1903-1913 the following missionaries were sent to the Plains: The Misses E. M. Lloyd, B.A. (1903); Florrie Evans (1908, returned 1911); E. Radcliffe (1909, retired 1914); Lilian Jones (1910, retired 1916); L. E. Morgan (1910, now Mrs. T. E. Pugh, Shillong); A. J. Reid (1910, retired 1917); Beatrice Jones (1911, retired 1919); M. A. Jones (1911, retired 1915); E. J. Jones (1912, returned home for family reasons in 1929, after 17 years' devoted labour); the Revs. J. W. Roberts, B.Sc. (1906), and Oliver Thomas, B.A. (1913).

With the arrival of Mr. Oliver Thomas organised work was begun among the students in Sylhet. A large Government College had for some years been established in the town, and a Government High School, the students attending the two institutions numbering close upon 2,000. After Mr. Thomas' transfer to Shillong, the work was resumed by the Rev. E. H. Morris, B.A., B.D., who joined our missionaries in Sylhet in 1924 (resigned in 1929). The importance of work among the students of India, the future leaders of the country, cannot be over estimated.

In the principal stations the educational work of the Mission is confined almost entirely to females. In the early years of the Mission a number of schools for boys were opened. In recent years the Government and the Municipalities have provided for the education of boys in the larger centres; but educational work among females owes its beginning and continuance almost entirely to missionary efforts, and in recent years has met with conspicuous success. Miss Elizabeth Williams' first attempts to establish a Girls' School in Sylhet were treated with open contempt. A frequent reply to her appeal to the parents to send their girls to school was, "You will next be asking us to send our cattle to school!" For many years the school had a chequered course; beginning with three or four pupils, by 1904 as many as 60 were enrolled; in 1908 17 only; in 1913 the number rose again to 50; by 1916, an average attendance of 126 is recorded. The growing success of the school necessitated the erection of a larger and more commodious building, and in this connection a striking tribute was paid to the influence of the Mission and its workers. On the 1st September, 1917, Miss Elizabeth Williams died. A movement was started immediately in Sylhet by the leading Hindus and Muhammedans to perpetuate her memory by erecting a "*Williams' Memorial School.*" An excellent site was presented by two Hindu gentlemen, and a handsome building erected, towards which the Government made a generous grant.

The Girls' School in Silchar has developed into one of the most important educational institutions in the Province.

When the school was transferred to the Mission by the Municipality in 1893, the pupils numbered eight, with a decrepit Indian widow as teacher. Before the end of the year the number of pupils had increased to 40, and a second school was opened in another part of the town. In 1907 the two schools came together in a new building provided by Government, the pupils now numbering over 100, with Miss E. M. Lloyd in charge. Six years later, in 1913, the number on the roll had increased to 180. The School was raised the same year to High School standard. A Class was also formed for the training of teachers, more especially from among Hindu widows, a movement serving the double purpose of providing the schools with more capable teachers, and also providing helpless widows with an honourable means of livelihood. In ten years (1914-1924) over one hundred women had passed through the Training Class. Large and well constructed new buildings were erected in 1917 to accommodate the rapidly growing number of pupils, the Government making a grant of 16,000 Rupees. At the end of 1929 the pupils numbered 234, with 21 in the Training Class.

The School in Karimganj also made, and still continues to make, good progress. In 1925 a new building was opened, the pupils numbering 179. Both the late Miss D. G. Edmunds, B.A. (who went out in 1914 and died in 1926) and the late Miss Gwen Lewis, B.A. (who entered the field in 1924, and died two years later) did excellent work in this school, as also Miss Aranwen Evans, who, after 21 years of excellent service, was compelled to retire, for reasons of health, in 1930. Miss Hetty Evans also, who went out in 1914, gave much help with the School, in addition to her work among the women.

The remarkable awakening witnessed throughout India during recent years among the Depressed Classes soon became evident on the Plains, among the Namasudras. A deputation waited upon Dr. O. O. Williams in 1910, seeking guidance and help. Advantage was immediately taken of this movement towards Christianity by the opening of schools for Namasudras in all the Districts. In 1911 600 Namasudra

boys and 300 girls were reported in the Karimganj district under education ; 20 schools were opened in Sylhet with 370 scholars ; 12 schools in Cachar, and 8 in Maulvi. The first converts, five in number, were baptised in Sylhet in 1913. It is a fact of much significance that the son of one of the first outcaste converts, a youth of the name of Abhaye, has taken the B.A. course in the Calcutta University, and is now preparing for the degree of B.D. Two other Namasudra boys have also secured their Arts degree. The work among these people still continues to make good progress. The difficulties in their way of accepting Christianity are enormous ; and owing to their natural timidity, and their state of utter helplessness, being at the mercy of bigoted landowners and others, who place every obstacle in the way of their uplift, any definite approach towards Christianity on their part will probably, if not necessarily be, as in other parts of India, in the nature of a great mass movement.

In recent years much attention has been given by the missionaries to work in the villages. The villagers are found to be more accessible and less prejudiced than the people of the towns, and show greater readiness to listen to the Gospel message. The needs of the village women, a sadly neglected class, claim special attention. Arrangements were recently made to release Miss Hetty Evans for this work, already begun in Karimganj District, but owing to lack of workers the scheme is held in abeyance. The work among the Garos (immigrants from the Garo Hills) who have settled in large numbers on the Plains, has met with considerable success.

An advance was recently made in Sylhet District through the opening of sub-stations in Sunamganj and Fenchuganj. The Sunamganj Sub-division contains 2,764 villages with a population of 511,193,—a district hitherto practically untouched. The two sub-stations are in charge of Indian workers. The first fruits in Sunamganj were gathered in 1925, a young Muhammedan, Jacob Emded, being baptised. After a course of training, he now labours as an evangelist in Maulvi Bazaar.

In 1920 the first native minister on the Plains was ordained, Hem R. Sircar, Silchar ; in 1926, Suresh Chandra Das, Sunamganj ; and D. K. Badshah, Karimganj. A Theological School for the training of Indian Evangelists was opened in 1930 at Bhatara, 20 miles from Sylhet, under the charge of Hridayesh R. Ghose, B.A., who for a number of years was an Evangelist and headmaster of the Boys' School in Sylhet.

The Habiganj Sub-division which, as previously stated, was occupied for a number of years by our American churches, was transferred back to our Mission in 1922, Miss Laura Evans and Miss Elsie Andrews (the latter having entered the field in 1920) taking oversight of the work. The Rev. and Mrs. Lewis Evans, formerly in the service of the American Mission, joined our staff. A Hospital for Women had been carried on by the American workers in Habiganj ; this, and other buildings on the station, were generously presented to our Mission. A lady doctor, Dr. Palmer Jones, sent out in 1925, resigned soon after entering the field. This extensive district contains 2,500 villages, and a population of 600,000. Excellent work has been carried on by Miss Evans and Nurse Ceridwen Edwards (who went out in 1925) in the Hospital, and by Miss Elsie Andrews (1920) in the Girls' School. The number of Hospital in-patients in 1929 was 2,414, with 300 out-patients. Recently, at the request of the Habiganj Local Board, Nurse Edwards has undertaken the training of Midwives for work in the surrounding villages.

The vacancy in Karimganj caused through the lamented death of Dr. O. O. Williams in 1926, after 32 years of faithful and fruitful labour, has not yet been filled. Dr. Williams' last reports show that as many as 10,000 patients received treatment in the Mission Hospital annually. The station in Maulvi Bazaar also is without a resident missionary. A handsome Memorial Chapel, erected in memory of the devoted workers, the Rev. and Mrs. J. Pengwern Jones, was opened in 1929. Mr. Pengwern Jones, who died in 1927, served the Mission with unabated vigour for 40 years, and was known in all parts of India as a man of great spiritual power.

The Rev. Edwin Adams was transferred in 1925 from the Hills to the Plains. In addition to those previously named the following missionaries were sent to the field: Misses J. Helen Rowlands, M.A. (1916); H. M. Jones (1919, now Mrs. E. H. Morris); Olwen Rees (1919); E. J. Evans (1919, resigned 1921); Leta Mendus (1922, returned for reasons of health in 1926); Eunice James (1923); J. Ellen Jones, (1924, now Mrs. R. Gwilym Jones); Hannah Roberts (1925, now Mrs. Dr. John Williams); Phyllis Jones (1926); Winifred A. Thomas (1928); L. M. Payne (1929); Margaret Rowland (1930), and Lucy A. Murray (1930). Space forbids even the briefest reference to the particular work in which the various lady missionaries are engaged,—educational, medical and Zenana. The importance of work among the women of India becomes increasingly recognised. Among the men religion is largely a matter of indifference; the women, however, still uphold the ancient customs with undiminished zeal.

An urgent need of the work on the Plains in recent years is Christian literature in the vernacular. When this short sketch is written, it is hoped that Miss J. Helen Rowlands (who, at the request of the Bengal and Assam Christian Council has acted for a number of years as Principal of the Language School for Missionaries, and who has recently pursued special courses of study in Indian Literature in Calcutta and in Paris) may be able to devote part of her time to the supplying of this need.

The North Cachar Hills District became part of our Mission field in 1905. Exceptional difficulties confront the work in this district owing to the number of small tribes who inhabit the Hills,—Cachari, Kuki, Naga, Khasi, Mikir, Hadem,—each tribe differing in language, customs and religion. Mr. Gerlan Williams took oversight of the new field while in charge of Silchar, and prepared *Readers* for the schools; on his removal to Shillong the work was superintended by Mr. T. W. Reese. In 1912 the Rev. J. M. Harries Rees was stationed in Haflong, the Government headquarters on these Hills. Remarkable progress has been made in this interesting

field : 20 churches have been formed, and 29 preaching stations opened ; 601 communicants are reported at the end of 1929, and a total membership in the churches of 1,462 ; 20 schools have also been opened, the pupils numbering 291. In 1929 a translation of the Gospel of St. Mark, made by Mr. Harries Rees with the assistance of two of the converts, was published in the language of the Zeme Naga, one of the most important of the tribes inhabiting these Hills.

During the last few years the work on the Plains has been seriously handicapped owing to lack of workers, and the heavy losses sustained through death and ill-health.

The latest statistics (exclusive of those for North Cachar) show 74 churches and preaching stations, with 822 communicants, and a total membership of 1,993. The success of the work on the Plains must not, however, be judged by figures. Results which cannot be tabulated are to be seen on every side ; prejudice has been largely overcome, and a readiness to listen to Christian teaching is more generally shown. In recent years the national spirit, with its strong and sometimes violent opposition to all things Western, has raised serious difficulties in the way of Christian effort ; nevertheless, the name of Christ, previously held to scorn, is to-day honoured, and His teaching acknowledged as the highest rule of life.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LUSHAI HILLS.

THE mountainous territory of Lushai lies on the southern border of the Plains of Cachar. It comprises an area of 7,227 square miles, with a population, according to the 1921 Census, of 98,406. The northern portion of the Hills, the portion in the occupation of our Mission, has an area of 4,701 square miles, and a population of 70,328; the southern portion, transferred in 1902 to the Baptist Missionary Society, has an area of 2,526 square miles, and a population of 28,078.

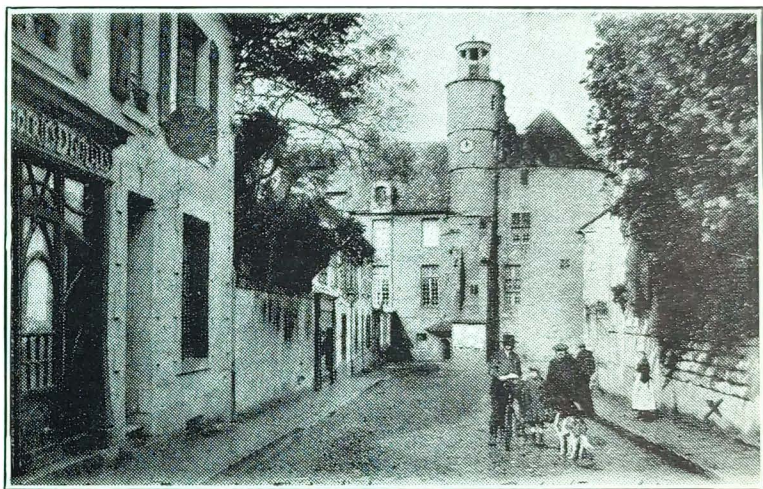
A reference to the country is found in "*The Lives of the Lindsays*," as early as 1776. The inhabitants were regarded by the few Europeans then residing in Bengal as the fiercest and most barbarous of all the Hill tribes within the Province, notorious for their head-hunting expeditions to the neighbouring Plains. The object of these raids was to obtain human skulls with which to adorn the graves of their ancestors, the belief prevailing that the spirits of the slain would become the slaves of their ancestors in the spirit world. Punitive expeditions were frequently despatched by the Government, but owing to the wild nature of the country, and the ease with which the Lushais retreated to their mountain fastnesses, effective reprisals could not be made.

Towards the end of January, 1871, the Lushais came down in their hundreds upon the villages of the Plains. A sudden attack was made upon a Tea Garden in Alexandrapur, Cachar. The proprietor, Mr. Sellar, and a friend, Mr. Winchester, and his little daughter, Mary Winchester, were at breakfast, when the savages burst upon them. Mr. Sellar escaped, but his friend was killed as he ran with his child on his back. The little girl was carried off by the hillmen. Active measures were now taken by the Government to put an end, once for all, to the Lushais' murderous raids. In this expedition

Lord Roberts, then a young officer, took an active part, as is related in his volumes "*Forty-one Years in India.*" The expedition met with long and stubborn resistance. The child, Mary Winchester, was recovered, together with upwards of one hundred British subjects who had been captured from time to time. The Lushais had shown much kindness towards "the little white girl," although at first the younger men were disposed to kill her. A determined attempt to kill her was made at the time of a long-continued drought, her presence in the land being taken as its cause. The woman to whose care the child had been given, Piklwangi, bravely protected her, even at the risk of danger to herself. (It is of interest to note that the kind-hearted Piklwangi became the grand-mother of our first Lushai minister). On leaving Lushai, where she had been captive for a year but a day, and where, among other things, she had been taught to smoke the native pipe, Mary Winchester was shorn of her flaxen hair, the Lushais begging for locks of it to remind them of "*Zoluti,*"—"the stranger in Lushai-land."

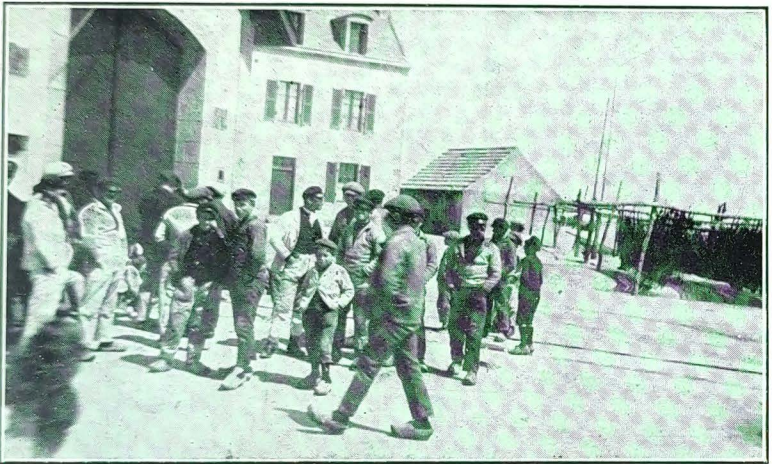
The Lushais are of Mongolian stock; short of stature, but, like the Khasis, stoutly built and exceedingly muscular. All the males wear their hair long, the prevailing custom being to tie it in a knot at the back of the head, securing the knot in position with long, heavy pins of iron or brass. The women's distinguishing ornament is the large ear-ring, fixed in the lobe of the ear. The ear is pierced in early childhood, and a small disc of wood or clay inserted. The discs are frequently increased in size, until the lobe is at length sufficiently distended to hold a piece of ivory an inch and a half or two inches in diameter.

The Lushai villages are generally built on the top of a ridge or spur. In former days the choice of a site was determined by its defensive position, each village being surrounded by two or three rows of stockades. As a rule the Lushai villages are larger than those of the Khasis. On the Khasia Hills a village of one or two hundred houses is considered large; in Lushai, the villages frequently number from four to eight hundred houses. According to the last Census, the total number



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of villages in the country was 516, with 18,939 houses. The villages are frequently moved. Having cultivated the land in one spot for five or six years, the entire village removes to another locality.

Each village is ruled by a chief, who is entirely independent and supreme in his own village. All disputes are settled by the chief. His house is the refuge of the poor and orphans; and others who have no means of support are received there, receiving food in return for their labour. Formerly, a person who had committed a serious crime could enter the chief's house and escape vengeance; in so doing, however, he became the slave of his protector.

An interesting institution in every Lushai village is the *Zawlbuk*, or "bachelor's quarters." Immediately a boy attains his twelfth year, he no longer sleeps at home, but in the *Zawlbuk*, with the other unmarried men of his village. The *Zawlbuk* is a large hall, with a huge hearth in the centre, and a sleeping platform at the far end. Meeting early in the evening, the young men spend hours together singing the old war songs of their country, and reciting the brave deeds of their ancestors. The large gatherings afford excellent opportunities for the missionaries to make known to the youth of Lushai the message of the Gospel.

In many of their religious notions and practices, the Lushais resemble the Khasis. A belief exists in a Supreme Being, *Pathian*, but his relation to the word is very distant. More important to men by far are the ruling spirits, *Ram-huai*, and especially *Khuavang*, who is sometimes regarded as on an equality with *Pathian*. The spirits have power for good or evil, at their will; and in order to secure favour, sacrifices must be offered according to the instructions of the *Pui-thiam*, or village priest.

Smoking, drinking and feasting comprise the supreme delights of the Lushai. Every circumstance,—birth, death, burial, marriage, sowing, weeding, reaping,—is made the occasion for drinking. On certain occasions a feast for the whole community will be provided by a villager ambitious for popularity. After a prescribed number of such feasts

have been given, the man is permitted to wear a cloth of a certain pattern, and also to have a window in his house.

A number of other smaller tribes are found in Lushai,—Pois or Chins (natives of the Chin country to the south, and, in former times, the enemies of the Lushais); Hmar, Ralte, Paite, etc., the descendants, probably, of prisoners taken in war.

As already stated, the Lushai Hills were first brought to the notice of the Connexion by the late Rev. William Williams, Shella, who visited the country early in 1891. From his letters it is evident that he desired to begin work in Lushai himself; but before any decision could be taken, Mr. Williams was suddenly cut down. The following year, 1892, the Lushai territory was formally adopted as a part of our Mission Field. In December, 1893, two missionaries of the Indian Aboriginies Mission, who for some time had been in Silchar awaiting the permission of the Government to proceed to Lushai, entered the field, and began missionary operations in Aijal, the Government head-quarters. It should be explained, however, that the intention of these brethren, Messrs. J. Herbert Lorrain and F. W. Savidge, was not known to our Directors when adopting the field, as was also the decision of our Directors unknown to them. Their stay in Lushai, however, was comparatively brief,—the late Mr. Arthington, of Leeds, by whom they were supported, desiring their removal to another sphere of labour.

On the last day of August, 1897, our first missionary arrived in Lushai—the Rev. D. E. Jones. He was accompanied by Rai Bhajur, who voluntarily relinquished his post as Sub-Inspector of Schools on the Khasia Hills in order to become an evangelist to Lushai. His uncle, a zealous Khasi, concluded that his nephew's mind was affected, and consulted a Bengali doctor, who prescribed a lotion with which to cool the young man's head. Rai good-naturedly submitted to the treatment, but after several applications of the lotion, vigorously rubbed in, his resolve to proceed to Lushai remaining unshaken, he was sorrowfully pronounced incurable!

Messrs. Lorrain and Savidge remained in Lushai to the close of the year 1897. A warm tribute must be paid to the zeal and energy of these excellent brethren during the four years which they spent in the country. Before leaving they had translated the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John, and the Book of the Acts, into the Lushai language, and had also prepared a Lushai Grammar and Dictionary.

A small school had been opened in Aijal by the Government, and a second was opened by Lorrain and Savidge; the latter school, however, was discontinued, and at its re-opening by Mr. D. E. Jones, the scholars numbered 30. The Government School was later amalgamated with the Mission School. On the last day of the following year, 1898, Mr. Jones was joined by the Rev. Edwin Rowlands, Rai Bhajur returning to his own country. Reference must be made to the valued help given at this period by another Kkasi, U Sahonroy, who had entered Lushai as a Government contractor. It is pleasing to record also that from the commencement of our work on these Hills, the most cordial relationship has existed between our missionaries and the Government officers. In the early years Major Shakespeare and Colonel Loch were especially helpful. A Printing Press, presented to the Mission by Colonel Loch, has proved of invaluable help to the work.

In less than two years after the arrival of our first missionary, two young men, Khuma and Khara, were baptised by Mr. Jones, on the 25th June, 1899,—the first-fruits of Lushai for Christ. Progress at first was slow. At the end of 1904 one church had been formed, with 32 communicants, and a total membership of 57; 12 schools were opened, attended by 450 pupils.

A turning point in the history of the church in Lushai was the breaking out of the Revival in 1906. The news of the great Revival in Wales and on the Khasia Hills was soon carried into Lushai. In their desire to witness its wonderful effects, nine young Lushais travelled to Mairang, on the Khasia Hills, a fortnight's journey, to attend the Assembly, held early in 1906. Although unable to understand a word

of the Khasi services, they caught the Revival fire, and returned homeward with souls aflame. On the 9th of April the Revival broke out in Aijal, and soon spread to the villages around; 89 converts were baptised within a few months, and 400 enrolled as adherents. The same year which marks the beginning of the rapid advance of the work, marks also the beginning of the persecution of the Christians, which, in some villages, became exceedingly severe. The preachers were subjected to ill-treatment, being stoned and beaten, and in some instances narrowly escaping with their lives. Young converts who refused to join in the village dances were cruelly beaten, and strong drink forced down their throats. Villagers who attended the services or listened to the preaching were heavily fined by the chiefs, driven out of their homes and villages, and boycotted in the markets, no one selling them even the necessaries of life.

During Mr. D. E. Jones' furlough, the Rev. Robert Evans ✓ was sent to Lushai, Mr. Edwin Rowlands having left the field in 1907. At the end of 1908, Dr. and Mrs. Fraser arrived in Aijal. The needs of the field from a medical point of view may be judged from the fact that Dr. Fraser, during his first year, attended 24,000 patients. A Dispensary was opened in 1910.

The Revival fire broke out anew in these years, and large numbers were added to the churches, in spite of the severity with which the Christians were persecuted. By the end of the year 1911, churches and preaching stations were to be found in 80 villages, and 1,800 converts. The zeal of the newly converted Christians knew no bounds. Bands of young men, calling themselves "*Kraws Sipai*" ("Soldiers of the Cross") travelled together over the Hills, carrying with them their supply of food, preaching the Gospel wherever they went. In 1913, 1914 and 1915, the Revival swept thousands into the churches. By the end of 1913 the number of adherents had grown to 4,832, as compared with 1,800 in 1911. In 1914, the converts numbered 6,134, and in 1915, 7,886.

Early in 1914, to the deep regret of all its supporters, Dr. Fraser's connection with the Mission was terminated. His

sacrifice of an important post in this country in order to enter the Mission field, together with his deep sincerity and entire consecration, had greatly endeared him to all the churches of the home-land, and to the people of Lushai, among whom he is still held in affectionate remembrance.

With the rapid growth of the churches, the need for more workers became urgent. In 1913, Chhuakhama, a highly esteemed evangelist, was ordained to the full work of the ministry,—the first Lushai minister. The field was now divided into ten districts, each under the charge of an evangelist. In 1914, Mr. D. E. Jones was joined by the Rev. and Mrs. F. J. Sandy, Mr. Sandy taking charge of the class for the training of evangelists. The class began with eighteen students, five of whom were sent to Aijal by the Baptist Mission in the South.

In collaboration with the Baptist missionaries, a complete translation of the New Testament into Lushai was published in 1916. The following year portions of the Old Testament also appeared. A copious Hymn Book had been published a few years previously, and was used by the churches of North and South Lushai. A monthly periodical, "*Kristan Tlangau*" ("The Christian Herald"), for the use of the Sunday Schools had also been launched; and in 1919 appeared the first Commentary in the Lushai language, on the Gospel of St. Luke. Commentaries on every book of the New Testament, with the exception of the Revelation, have been published subsequently,—printed at the Aijal Mission Press, some of them being substantial volumes of over 300 pages.

During the Great War, a Labour Corps numbering one thousand Lushais was sent to France. A striking proof of the evangelistic fervour of the Christians who joined the Corps, is found in the fact that a large number of the heathen recruits were converted and received as members of the church during their stay in Europe.

In the Spring of 1918 the Lushai Presbytery organised an "Evangelistic Campaign" on an extensive scale. Bands of Christians travelled from village to village, practically covering the whole of the field. The Revival spirit at this time

was intense in many of the churches. As a result of the Campaign the fire spread rapidly, and continued to burn strongly for many months. New churches were formed in several villages, and thousands were added to the number of Christians. In 1919 the total adherents numbered 17,838, an increase on the previous year of 4,688; in 1920 the total reached 21,171, a further increase of 3,333; and a still larger addition was made in 1921, when the converts numbered 25,145. As a result of this marvellous increase a number of villages became entirely Christian; and a still larger number were to be found with only two or three non-Christians within their bounds.

For the greater part of these strenuous years Mr. Sandy was alone, Mr. Jones being unable to return from furlough owing to the War, and also Mrs. Jones' health. Towards the close of 1921, the Rev. E. L. Mendus, B.A., sailed for India; and in the following year Mrs. D. E. Jones returned to the field, accompanied by Miss Kitty Lewis, B.A. The expenses connected with Miss Lewis' departure, and her entire support while on the field, were generously undertaken by her parents, the Right Hon. Sir J. Herbert Lewis and Lady Lewis. With the arrival of new workers, and for the more effective supervision of the work, the field was divided into three Districts: the South East District, stretching 100 miles to the North and 100 miles to the South of Aijal, was given to the charge of the Rev. D. E. Jones, together with the superintendence of the Printing Press, Bookroom, and the monthly magazine. The North District, similar in size to that of the South East, together with the new Theological School for Evangelists, were placed in the charge of Mr. Sandy; the West District and the Boys' School, Aijal, being superintended by Mr. Mendus. The Girls' School and Hostel in Aijal were placed under Miss Lewis's care, and the Bible Women's Training Class was undertaken by Mrs. D. E. Jones.

Consequent upon the re-arrangement of the work, Mr. Sandy removed to Durtlang, eight miles to the north of Aijal. A warm invitation to open a station in this village was given

by the chief, Suaka, an early convert of the Mission, and an earnest Christian, who presented the Mission with twelve acres of land on which to establish the Mission Compound. A commodious building was erected for the new Theological School.

Further additions were made to the staff in Aijal by the arrival of Miss Katie Hughes at the end of 1924, and also of Miss Morfydd Davies early in 1927. Towards the middle of 1925, the Mission was deprived of the valued service of Miss Kitty Lewis, who, in consequence of a distressing accident to her father, was obliged to return home. During her stay on the field Miss Lewis worked with whole-hearted devotion and energy, superintending the Girls' School and Hostel, travelling widely to the remotest villages, and giving a much-needed stimulus to female education on the Hills. Towards the end of 1923 Sir Herbert and Lady Lewis had visited the Mission field, remaining for some months in Lushai, their presence and counsel being greatly appreciated by the missionaries, and proving of great advantage to the work.

The unexpected death of the Rev. F. J. Sandy in November, 1926, deprived the Mission of an efficient and thoroughly consecrated worker. For nearly four years he had toiled single-handed, at a time when thousands were gathered into the churches, adding enormously to his labours and anxiety. A man of loveable character, strong, courageous, and deeply in earnest, his twelve years of faithful labour were signally blessed.

The Rev. R. Gwilym Jones was transferred in 1927 from the Khasia Hills to Lushai. Owing, however, to the state of his health, he returned the following year to his old field. At the end of 1927 Dr. John Williams sailed for India, and settled down in Durtlang. After Mr. Sandy's death, the work of the Theological School was transferred to Aijal, the School buildings in Durtlang being utilised temporarily by Dr. Williams as a Dispensary. Nurse Winifred Jones, at the close of 1928, went out to Durtlang to assist with the medical work. In 1929 a further addition to the workers was made through the arrival of the Rev. and Mrs. W. H. Williams on the field.

In consequence of the unsatisfactory state of their health, Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Jones were compelled to retire in 1927, after thirty years of service. Few missionaries have enjoyed a greater privilege than they, or witnessed greater success attending their labours. In addition to directly evangelistic work, Mr. Jones translated several portions of the Old and New Testaments, and other books, into the Lushai language, and laid the foundation of a church that is rapidly advancing towards self-support and self-government. The marvellous success of the work in Lushai will remain an imperishable monument to their zeal, and wisdom, and sacrifice.

According to the Statistics for 1929, 257 churches have been formed on the Lushai Hills, and 289 preaching stations opened; 13 native ministers have been ordained, and 47 evangelists licensed; the communicants number 16,817, and the total adherents 38,550,—more than one half of the population,—a marvellous result of a little over thirty years' labour! Much of the success of the work must be attributed to the zeal of the converts themselves, who, as already described, become voluntary evangelists, visiting the most distant villages, devoting their time and all that they possess to the furtherance of the Kingdom. It is a noteworthy fact that most of the ministers and evangelists are supported by the native church.

The outstanding needs of Lushai at the present time are apparent,—more and better equipped schools, teachers, and leaders; and also the raising of the status of the women. The Day Schools number only 100, and the pupils 2,354 boys and 306 girls. With the object of supplying the need for more capable teachers, Sir Herbert and Lady Lewis brought over to this country an intelligent young Lushai, Pasena, for training in school work, and to superintend, on his return, the training of the teachers and the work in the schools. The need of leaders in the churches is also seriously felt. Many thousands have been swept into the churches, whose knowledge of the essentials of Christianity is exceedingly small, most for them, as yet, being unable to read. The task of the coming years will be the firm grounding of the converts in

their faith. A pleasing and an encouraging sign is the strong desire to learn manifested among the younger converts. The demand for literature has been exceptional, and the efforts to supply it by the Book Room and Printing Press in Aijal have been highly commendable. So far the range of books published has necessarily been limited, but a Catalogue of Lushai publications, collected by Sir Herbert Lewis, and presented to the National Library of Wales, shows no less than sixty four items. In some years the receipts for books has amounted to nearly £300,—a strong proof of the Lushais' thirst for knowledge. A few years ago the Government began the publication of a monthly magazine "of general information," to which the missionaries contribute largely.

The position of woman in the country still remains low. The Girls' School in Aijal, now under the charge of Miss Davies, has done excellent work. A number of pupils from this school have proceeded to Shillong for higher education; others to Shillong Hospital for training as nurses. Child Welfare Centres have been established by Miss Katie Hughes, which are proving of incalculable value in teaching cleanliness, and the care of the children and of the home. A Training Class for Village Teachers has also been carried on, and a Training Class for Biblewomen. An outstanding feature of the work in recent years has been the successful efforts made by Miss Hughes in teaching the Lushais to sing. A marked improvement in congregational singing is already found in scores of churches. A choir of young people from Aijal and around has advanced sufficiently to master some of the most difficult Choruses from the great Oratorios. Their visit to the Sylhet Assembly in 1928, where they sang the *Hallelujah Chorus*, *Worthy is the Lamb*, *Unto us a Child is born*, and other Choruses, produced a remarkable impression upon Indians and Europeans alike.

In closing this brief sketch of our work in Lushai, it is pleasing to state that cordial co-operation between the Baptist missionaries in the South and our own workers in the North, has been maintained throughout the years. By mutual agree-

ment Church members moving from the one area to the other can, without difficulty, be transferred as members of the Church in the other area, and the services of workers from one District are always welcomed in the churches of the other District,—an arrangement making for Christian good-will, and giving a much valued sense of solidarity and strength.

The story of the work in Lushai will forever remain an inspiration to the churches of Wales, and a clear demonstration of the saving, and transforming, and uplifting power of the Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER VIII.
THE BRETON MISSION.

BRITTANY,—known to the ancient Gauls as *Armorica*, to the Welsh as *Llydaw*, and to the Bretons as *Breiz Vihan* (Little Britain)—comprises the five Departments which form the north-western peninsula of France. In area the country measures 13,130 square miles, and contains a population of over three millions, one third of whom, principally in the southern portion, are returned as monoglot Bretons.

The first glimpse of Brittany and its people is obtained in Caesar's History of the Gallic Wars, from which it is evident that frequent and regular intercourse between the Celtic tribes of Armorica and the Britons of the south west of England was carried on two thousand years ago. Tacitus also makes the statement that "the people of the parts of Britain nearest Gaul resemble the people of that country in customs, superstitions and language." From the testimony of these and other ancient historians, and the declaration of the "Welsh Triads," the inference is drawn that Britain was first peopled from Brittany, and not Brittany from Britain.

No reliable history of Brittany can be found until the beginning of the fifth century. The Saxon invasion of England drove the ancient Britons to the West,—to Devon, Cornwall, and the hills of Wales. Large companies crossed the channel to the northern shores of France, drawn thither, no doubt, by the knowledge that the country was inhabited by their own kindred. Each company was led by a monk or "saint." The "Lives of the Saints" show that the greater number of settlers crossed over to Armorica during the early years of the sixth century, corresponding with the advance of the Saxon invaders into the western provinces of England. The names of a number of the "saints" are preserved in the names of the towns and villages of Brittany

—S. Samson, S. Briec, S. Malo, S. Cadoc, S. Guenole (Winwaloe), and others.

The history of Brittany during the succeeding centuries is sad and perplexing, internal strifes alternating with wars against the Normans, who sought to bring them into subjection. Through the marriage of Anne, the last of the Duchesses of Brittany, with Charles VIII. of France, in 1491 Brittany became a province of that realm, the formal union being made in 1532. Brittany retained a separate Parliament, however, until the time of the Revolution.

The Breton language possesses many striking resemblances to the Welsh. A large number of words in daily use vary but slightly in the two languages. Like the ancient Britons, the ancient Bretons were Druids. Menhirs, dolmens, and cromlechs, abound in the country. The people



are strongly conservative, clinging tenaciously to ancient customs and beliefs. Nominally, to-day, they are Romanists. In bygone years the Church of Rome had no more loyal adherents in any part of Europe than the Bretons, and it is a surprising fact that their country remained entirely untouched by the Protestant Reformation. In the interior villages the people still retain their primitive habits, their simple outlook upon life, and their quaint dress. Along the coast fishing villages abound, and it is stated that ninety per cent. of the men in the French Navy hail from Brittany.

In the early years of the nineteenth century much interest was aroused in Wales "in the circumstances of the Welsh people in France," whose very existence, apparently, had been well-nigh forgotten for centuries. Apart from the revival of interest in Celtic antiquities, it appears that the presence of Breton soldiers among the French prisoners of war sent on parole to various parts of Wales, had a large share in reviving interest in "our own flesh and blood beyond the sea." A letter written by the Rev. John Parry, Chester, published in "*Goleuad Cymru*," 1814, recounts his conversation with a Breton soldier from Languedoc. Others also in North and South Wales, learned from similar sources of the "distressing circumstances" of the Bretons.

An attempt to inaugurate missionary work in Brittany was made in 1821 by a number of Baptist ministers in Monmouthshire; the effort, however, proved abortive. The attention of the Calvinistic Methodists was drawn to the needs of the country by the Rev. David Jones, son of the Rev. Thomas Jones, Carmarthen, who visited France in 1824, and was commissioned by the Bible Society to make enquiries what portions, if any, of the Scriptures, had been translated into the Breton tongue. His investigations elicited the fact that "no integral part of the Bible was to be found in Breton, either in print or manuscript." The work of translation was entrusted to M. le Gonidec, a distinguished Breton scholar. Only the New Testament, however, was published, it having been found that the translation was too classical in style to be understood by the simple Bretons.

A second effort to establish a Mission in Brittany was made by the Baptist Churches of Glamorgan and Monmouth in 1834, when the Rev. John Jenkins was sent to Morlaix. Mr. Jenkins' name will ever have an honoured place in the history of Protestant efforts among the Bretons. In 1847, with the assistance of M. Ricou, he prepared a translation of the New Testament, which, nearly forty years later, was revised by his son and successor in the work, the Rev. A. Ll. Jenkins.

With the formation of a Missionary Society for the Connexion, it appears to have been taken for granted that a Mission in Brittany would follow as a matter of course. A fellow student of Thomas Jones and William Lewis, our first missionaries to India,—James Williams of Laugharne,—was accepted for work in this field, and on the 17th August, 1842, arrived at S. Malo. Failing to obtain liberty to preach in a number of villages in which he attempted to settle down, in March, 1844, he removed to Quimper, where a small Protestant congregation was to be found. Here, on the last Sunday of June, he preached his first sermon to a congregation of fourteen.

Quimper, the principal town of the Department of Finistère, with a population of about 17,000, has been described as "the most priest-ridden town in Europe,"—a Cathedral city, the residence of the Lord Bishop, and the home of an exceedingly large number of institutions for the training of young priests. The influence of the Roman Church was to be felt everywhere, and met the missionary at every turn. Enraged by his presence in the town, the priests, from the pulpit and in private, denounced vehemently both his teaching and his books as "wicked" and "blasphemous," and the Protestant New Testament was declared to be "full of the most dangerous heresies."

Soon after his arrival in Quimper, Mr. Williams and his little flock were obliged to vacate their chapel, the spot on which it stood having been chosen as a site for the public market. To safeguard the missionary against interruption of his work through influences which might be brought upon

the owner of rented premises, the Directors resolved to erect a chapel and manse—at Mission expense. Immediately the intention became known, every effort was made by the priests to prevent the purchase of a site. Having failed in that attempt they sought to draw away the workmen, the priests visiting them daily at their work and sternly rebuking them for “helping the heretics to spread their dangerous errors.” The chapel was formally opened on the 9th and 10th May, 1847.

About this time an attack upon the Protestants was published by the Bishop, to which Mr. Williams promptly published a reply, which proved so effective that the Bishop felt compelled to issue a second pamphlet. One of the charges levelled against the Protestants was the “circulating of corrupt editions of the Scriptures.” The Church of Rome, it was affirmed, “weighed carefully every word and syllable of the Holy Scriptures before placing them in the hands of the faithful.” The statement gave the missionary an opportunity of making several surprising revelations, drawing special attention to a deliberate mis-translation to be found in a recent edition of the New Testament, approved by the Bishops, in which the 33rd verse in the tenth chapter of Mark,—“And they shall deliver Him (the Son of Man) to the Gentiles”—is translated as follows: “And they shall deliver Him to the *Huguenots*” (the Protestants).

The appearance of Mr. Jenkins’ translation of the New Testament in 1847 was the signal for a great outburst of hostility. Mr. Williams journeyed through the Province, selling Testaments and distributing tracts, but wherever he went he discovered that the priests had been “thundering dreadfully,” warning the people against buying his “wicked books,”—one priest declaring that the cattle of whoever bought a Protestant book would die, and another throwing out the hint that a stout, heavy bludgeon was an excellent weapon with which to drive away “a wolf”!

In spite of opposition, Testaments were bought, and read, and many enquirers came “by night” to seek for fuller light. Early in 1847 Mr. Williams reported that two young men

had offered their services to help him. The first, M. le Bescont, had been educated for the priesthood, but while prosecuting his studies in Quimper was brought to see the errors of Popery, and joined the little Protestant church. Immediately his decision became known, the Conscription Law was set in operation, and the young man was forced to join the Army. All efforts to secure his release were frustrated by the priests. After over twelve months in the Army a substitute was found, the directors providing the "ransom money." Le Bescont joined the Mission, and laboured in Quimper until 1851, when, his life there having become intolerable, he crossed over to America. The second candidate was a Swiss Protestant, M. Jacques J. Planta, who, after a period of probation, was sent for training to Geneva.

The difficulties of the work increased year by year. Owing to the Tahiti incident, the relations between France and England had become strained, and the missionary, together with all British residents in France, were regarded with suspicion. In 1848 France, for the second time, was in the throes of a great Revolution; the Monarchy was overthrown, and a Republic proclaimed. The bigoted prince-adventurer, Louis Buonaparte, became President, and the clerical party soon gained the ascendancy. One of the first effects of the change of *regime*, as it affected Protestant efforts, was the making of the law regulating the sale of books far more stringent, the sole aim being the prevention of the circulation of the Protestant Scriptures. A time of unexampled difficulty now began. The Protestant ministers in all parts of France were hampered and hindered by innumerable irritating regulations, and no part of their work could be carried on without constant danger of falling into one of the countless snares cunningly laid for them.

Mr. Williams fell an early victim. In February, 1851, he and le Bescont were summoned before the Common Court on a charge of distributing the New Testament "without the necessary authority." Two pleaders who had promised to undertake their defence, at the last moment withdrew, owing, it was evident, to the influence of the priests upon their wives.

The Rev. Achille le Fourdrey, pastor of the Protestant Church in Brest, a convert from Roman Catholicism, and a former barrister, hurried to his friends' aid. The charge against "the law-breakers" was laid before the Court in a long oration by the Public Prosecutor, who declared that the books circulated were of a "very injurious character, calculated to lead their readers to disobey the laws of the country." In reply M. le Fourdrey asked permission to read portions of the Book circulated: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers"; "Render, therefore, to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due"; &c., &c. The reading produced a deep impression, and the prisoners, to their own great surprise, were found not guilty! The matter, however, was not allowed to rest there. The Public Prosecutor appealed for another trial at Vannes, eighty miles distant, and it became evident from the moment when the trial began that the mind of the Court had already been made up. The Public Prosecutor addressed the Court for an hour and a half. The "prisoners" were immediately found guilty; a fine of eight pounds was imposed, together with the costs of the two trials, amounting in all to twenty-eight pounds!

All efforts on the part of the missionary to obtain the necessary permit for Bible distribution proved unavailing. Religious Societies in Paris and elsewhere came to his aid; petitions and deputations were sent to responsible Ministers of State; but all to no purpose. A leading Minister of State declared that "the Government must be exceedingly careful with regard to the distribution of all books, because the Anarchists are circulating so many injurious tracts and books,"—evidently unable to distinguish between Protestant ministers and lawless agitators. A further law enacted about this time forbade the assembling together of more than twenty persons, except in duly registered places of worship, thus making services in the villages or in the market squares impossible.

Mr. Williams' efforts were not confined to Quimper. About 1845 he visited the town of L'Orient, forty miles to the east, and for a time made it his headquarters. M. Planta, on his

return from Geneva in 1851, took oversight of the little church formed here, and in the face of incredible opposition, a chapel was erected. Work had also begun in Quimperle, to the north of L'Orient, but after two years' labour, the influence of the priests proved too strong, the workers failing to retain possession of their meeting room. The position of Protestants at this time was exceedingly difficult, not only in Brittany, but throughout France; from various parts of the country reports came of the closing of chapels and schools, and of ministers and teachers being fined and imprisoned. Spies kept careful watch upon the missionary's movements in Quimper; "anxious enquirers,"—in some cases betraying their true character by their over-anxiety,—came tempting him to sell his books. The craftiness of his opponents was met by James Williams in an ingenious manner. "It is true," he said, "that the law prohibits the *selling* of a Testament, and the *giving* of a Testament, but there is not a word in it against *lending* a Testament; and during these troublous years, I *lent* more books than at any period of my life!" *Twelve years* passed by before the long-sought permit to distribute the Word of God among the people was received!

By this time, however, after twenty-five years of patient toil, the missionary's health had become undermined. No missionary from Wales was available; but Providence was preparing men from Brittany itself to help to carry on the work. The first was M. Pierre J. Rouffet, a young Professor in Quimper College. The reading of one of Mr. Williams' pamphlets raised doubts in his mind as to the claims of the Roman Church. To the consternation of the whole city the brilliant young Professor joined the Protestant Church early in 1868. As in the case of le Bescont, the Conscription Law was set in operation, and once again the Directors provided the "ransom." In September, 1869, M. Rouffet joined Mr. Williams in his work, and two years later was ordained. About the same time reports of an interesting convert were received from the Rev. Racine Braud, who, in 1865, had succeeded M. Planta at L'Orient. A young monk of the strict Trappist order, M. Pierre le Groignec, becoming "disgusted with the

corruption of monastic life," and having heard of the "Protestants," determined to see for himself what they "protested" against. After hearing the Gospel from M. Braud's lips, he became convinced of its truth, and joined the church in L'Orient. Soon afterwards he was engaged by the Bible Society as a Colporteur.

In October, 1869, owing to failing health, Mr. Williams returned to Wales. James Williams possessed, in a remarkable degree, qualities which well suited him for his work among the Bretons. Of a bright and lively nature, with overflowing humour and a ready wit, combined with an inoffensive spirit, he succeeded in gaining the people's favour wherever he went. His ministry of word and song, and his numerous tracts and pamphlets, kindled a light in Brittany which shines to this day. An original collection of "*Sacred Songs*," adapted to well-known Breton airs, in which the life, miracles and parables of Jesus Christ are narrated, proved exceedingly popular, and were sung in all parts of the country. His translation of the Psalms into Breton was published by the Bible Society in 1873. Before the close of his days he was permitted to visit his "dear *Llydaw*" more than once—the country for which he laboured and endured amidst enormous difficulties for twenty-seven years.

The outbreak of the Franco-German war in 1870 suspended all missionary operations, and made the position of the Protestants even more difficult than before, the priests declaring them to be sympathisers with, and co-religionists of the Prussians. M. le Groignec was arrested more than once as a spy, and both he and M. Rouffet were forced to join the Army. In 1876 le Groignec was taken into the employ of the Mission as an evangelist; and in 1877, M. Rouffet became the Superintendent of the Paris Evangelistic Society. For two years, 1878-1880, the Rev. Hugh Roberts, formerly a missionary in Khasia, carried on the work in Quimper.

Owing to lack of workers, the faithful le Groignec being now the only agent of the Mission, the work in Quimper and L'Orient was temporarily transferred to the Brest Presbytery. In 1882, however, the Rev. William Jenkyn Jones offered

for service in Brittany, and four years later was joined by his brother, Mr. Evan Jones. The work was now carried to other towns and villages,—Pont l'abbe, Douarnenez, Lambourg, Concarneau, Audierne, Lesconil, Leschiagat, Guilvinec and St. Guenole.

The remainder of the story of our work in Brittany must be told in a few words. In a number of the fishing villages encouraging success followed the efforts of the workers, particularly in Lesconil. A handsome little chapel was built in this village in 1912, towards which Mr. Jenkyn Jones collected over £450 from friends in Wales. In that year the converts in Lesconil numbered 57, and the total adherents, including children, 132. Douarnenez, Kerity, Pont l'abbe and Leschiagat, also showed considerable promise. In 1908 the evangelist Le Groignec resigned owing to advancing years, after thirty-nine years of most faithful service. A young Breton convert from Morlaix, M. Dilasser, was appointed in his place, but, to the great loss of the work, died six years later. Another helper was appointed, M. Guegaden, an elderly Breton of much originality, who went about selling and distributing books and tracts.

On the 23rd June, 1910, Mr. Evan Jones passed away, after serving the Mission for twenty-four years. A man of unassuming character, quiet and retiring, he won the deep affection of the people among whom he laboured. In January, 1911, Mr. Gerlan Williams, who, as already mentioned, had spent a number of years as a missionary in India, was appointed to Brittany. A few years later the service of two evangelists was secured, M. Droniou and M. Buanneec, both of whom are still in the employ of the Mission.

Early in 1925 the senior missionary in Brittany, and, at the time, the senior missionary of the Connexion, the Rev. W. Jenkyn Jones, was called to his reward. Forty-two years of his life were spent in Brittany, and his interest in the people, their history, their language, and antiquities, was unbounded. Throughout France he was recognised as a high authority on Celtic Studies, and was elected a member of the *Société Archéologique*. Together with Professor Le Braz, he trans-

lated the Book of Genesis into Breton, and shortly before his death had begun a revision of the Breton New Testament. In addition to many smaller publications he published a collection of hymns, "*Telen ar Cristan*," which became very popular. In 1922 the University of Wales conferred upon him the degree of M.A., in recognition of his work. As a missionary, his enthusiasm and optimism remained unabated to the end, in spite of the difficulties against which he had to contend. During his stay in Brittany he was the means of establishing eight new churches and preaching stations, and their total adherents at the time of his death numbered nearly four hundred. Through his departure the Protestant churches of northern France lost a trusted and honoured leader.

After the War, the work in Brittany has suffered greatly owing to lack of workers, and owing also to the lack of suitable rooms in which to conduct religious services. In some villages where the work was promising, the rented rooms became requisitioned for residential purposes. In Quimper, Douranenez, Kerity, Lesconil and Leschiagat, where the rooms are the property of the Mission, and also in Pont l'abbe, where a Mission house was recently built, the work is carried on by Mr. Gerlan Williams and his helpers as effectively as the small number of workers allows. Temperance work, especially in the fishing villages, has proved an exceptionally successful feature of the work throughout the years.

As in France generally, conditions have changed greatly in Brittany since our Mission began. At that time the Bretons were staunch supporters of the Roman Church, and the authority of the Church was supreme. To-day, and especially since 1906, when France severed her political connection with the Pope, the Church has largely lost its power, and religion (by which the people understand religion as practised in the Church of Rome) has lost its appeal. The task of the future in Brittany will not be the proselytising of adherents of the Roman Church, but the saving of the country from the blight of Materialism and rank Atheism.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

NO reference has been made in the foregoing brief sketch of our Mission work as a Connexion to the short-lived Mission to the Jews, inaugurated in 1846, when the Rev. John Mills, of Llanidloes, was appointed to work among the Jews in London. The first convert, Henry Wolf, was baptised in 1851, at Rose Place Chapel, Liverpool, during the Whitsuntide preaching services. Owing to the apparent lack of success, and also considerable disapproval of the missionary's methods of working, strong opposition to the Mission arose, especially in the North Wales counties. In 1859 John Mills resigned. It transpired, however, that his efforts had not been as fruitless as was imagined; a number of Jews in London, and other places, in later years made public confession of faith in Christ as the result of his labours.

It is impossible within the space at our disposal to make any detailed statement regarding Home Operations. The most outstanding fact in this connection is the gradual and increasing liberality of the churches. In 1867 (when the Statistics for the whole Connexion were first published) with 91,717 communicants, the average contribution per member was 5½d. Twenty years later, 1887, 8½d.; in 1929, 1/10. Two gifts of the late Mr. Robert Davies, Bodlondeb, Bangor, demand special reference. In 1891 Mr. Davies invested in the names of Trustees £27,000, yielding an annual income to the Mission of £1,080; and again in 1903 he transferred a further princely sum of £150,727, yielding an annual income of £5,020. It is needless to add that had it not been for these gifts, much of the advance made in recent years would not have been possible.

The brief sketch of ninety years' effort given in the preceding pages shows that our work has been carried on mainly on three lines: (1) Evangelistic; (2) Educational; (3) Medical,—the educational and the medical, it need not be added, having as their ultimate aim, the furtherance of the evangelistic work. At the end of 1929, when our review closes, the position of our Mission in India is as follows:—

Missionaries (male), 17; wives, 12; lady missionaries, 22. Native ministers, 55; native preachers, 141; deacons, 750. Communicants, 33,964. Total in the churches (including communicants, candidates and children), 85,437. Sunday School members, 50,177. Day schools, 659; High schools, 3. Day school pupils, 18,865 (including 7,145 females). Total adherents, 90,083. Total church collections, Rupees 93,119 (£6,983 sterling). Theological Schools, 3; students, (about), 60. Hospitals, 5, containing (about) 260 beds; out-patients (about), 60,000.

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*Made and Printed in Great Britain at the Press of Hugh Evans & Sons, Ltd.,
356, 358, 360 Stanley Road, Liverpool.*