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## CHAPTER XVI SUMMARY

The foregoing chapters depict, to a limited extent, the external accomplishments of the missionaries and their native brethren who have labored in Assam during the last one hundred years. Much of the work was sunk, as it were, in the foundations, and this labor will never be revealed. The many scrapped manuscripts, the hours of conference with pagan inquirers which bore no visible fruit, the many sermons preached in dusty bazaars, the long miles tramped on muddy roads, the hours of sleepless nights, tossing to and fro on hard camp cots in sweltering heat, the days and days of aching bones and chills from malaria fever, and the keen disappointments which the missionaries experienced when their "brethren in Christ" reverted to paganism, have not been recorded.

When Carey made a map of the world and hung it on the walls of the humble shack to look at while at work, he was appalled to see so vast a portion of the human race with no knowledge of the gospel. When he arrived at Calcutta, that need became still more appalling. The poor benighted people of Assam became a special object of his missionary zeal. He gave of his time and money. He did much to pioneer the way for the missionaries by sending his translations of the Bible ahead as a means of preparation to the Assamese. To be sure, this translation was extremely faulty and practically unintelligible, but still it prepared the

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## SUMMARY

soil in which the missionaries afterwards sowed and from which they later harvested.

The assistance given the missionaries by government officials can hardly be over-estimated. Many of them were indeed true missionaries, and it seems that their ambition to advance the kingdom of God in Assam was as great as that of the men who had come for the purpose of preaching. Men, such as Major Jenkins and Captain Gordon, fall naturally within the scope of the religious history of Assam. They were the instigators of the spread of Christianity. They opened the path for the missionaries and made it possible for them to enter territories that would otherwise have been closed. They shared their homes and their comforts with the evangelists from foreign shores.

The period of sowing was long and tedious; perhaps, altogether too long. Perhaps a better organized scheme would have reduced the time of this early period. The discerning reader can see differences of opinion among the missionaries. It is evident that they were not always united as to where the main emphasis should be placed. Whether the plains or the hills should receive the chief attention was a constant question for debate. The missionaries often failed to look upon the field as a whole, but bent every effort to promote their own work, in the particular tribe or station in which they were personally interested. Young missionaries often came out for certain tasks; but changed their minds upon arrival on the field, persuaded perhaps by "older heads" to do so, leaving the original need uncared for. Individualism perhaps played too important a part for a healthy growth.

The American Baptist missionaries came to Assam, not with the purpose of Christianizing the province but

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