

which has been mentioned in a previous chapter was very much pleased with the possibilities of the Assam mission as a whole. Dr. Peck, the chairman of the deputation, in his report to the Executive Committee appreciated the great opportunity but realized that missionaries could not be supplied. He wrote:

"The mission . . . is not adequately manned; not even on the presumption, could it be entertained, that the missionaries will all continue at their stations, and all be strong to labor at all times. The field is too broad, and interests and instrumentalities too numerous and varied and complex, for the force employed. . . . The breaking up or virtual abandonment of a station or of a department of labor, should not be staked on the health of a single individual . . . there is no one of the Asiatic missions, in my judgment, blessed with a better climate . . . none commanding a fairer prospect of health and long life to its missionaries, than the field of this mission."¹

The deputation was particularly impressed with the promising fields among the many surrounding hill tribes that were untouched by the gospel, and they felt that these tribes were the most inviting portions of the Assam mission. The claims of the hills had been presented before but had not won the regard to which they were entitled. Dr. Peck concluded his report by stating, "In my own apprehension, — and I think it is the judgment of the missionaries, — the hill tribes are the hope of Assam."²

The Garos had appealed to the missionaries and to the government alike. Major Jenkins contemplated the Christianization of this great tribe even before the Baptist mission began. In 1837, or less than one year after Brown's arrival in Sadiya, Major Jenkins suggested the establishment of a mission station at Gauhati "with a particular view to the Garos".³ Brown

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agreed that "the Garos would present a field of extensive usefulness" although he was primarily concerned about the Shans and the hill tribes of the northeast.

The Board was unable to furnish missionaries to meet all the needs, and were, in fact, hardly able to care for the work to which they had committed themselves. The Garos were left untouched, therefore, until in 1847, when the government established a school at Goalpara, for Garo boys, hoping by this method to influence this fierce and untamable tribe. It was hoped that by means of education the government would be able to gain some influence and control over them. Ten boys attended the school, and it is interesting to note that seven of these boys later became Christians, three of whom became ordained to the ministry. Two of those three have become famous in the Christian history of the Garos. Omed and Ramkhe became their first missionaries. While at school they were aroused to a Christian consciousness by the reading of a tract which had been left by a Bengali missionary. After a few years, the school was discontinued, and Omed went to Gauhati and joined the police. Ramkhe joined them later. While in Gauhati they came in contact with Kandura, the Baptist evangelist. They soon decided that Christianity was the best religion and made up their minds to embrace it. On February 8, 1863, they were baptized by Mr. Bronson.

The burden of Christianizing their own people became so heavy upon their hearts that they procured dismissal from the government service. They purposed to devote their entire time to Christian work and went out as mission assistants. While they were in the employ of the mission they were under the immediate

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