

over, the missionaries once again settled down, but the uncertainty of life and the departure of missionaries left the whole burden of work on a very depleted missionary staff.

Bronson was forced to leave the little Christian group in Nowgong in charge of a native leader who had had little training himself. After eighteen months the membership had dwindled to five; making one less than it was when the church was organized. Other missionaries, owing to the strain of mutiny and disease, were obliged to take furlough so that in 1858 there was but one missionary in all Assam.

The mutterings of civil war and the slavery question were agitating the people in America. The churches in the South withdrew from working with the Missionary Union. Other strong differences of opinion rose among those of the North and among the missionaries on the field. Many of the missionaries resigned, among whom was Dr. Nathan Brown, as mentioned. For the next ten years, except for new missionaries learning the language, there were seldom more than two men in charge of the whole Assam field. Each station was left in charge of single lady missionaries, and often a station was left without any missionary at all for long periods of time.

The year 1867 marked another epoch in the history of the Baptist mission in Assam. It was almost another reversal of policy, namely, a change of emphasis from the plains to the hills. While the chief centers of the mission were located in the valley, there was, nevertheless, a considerable amount of work done indirectly among the people of the hills. The sturdy hill men whose minds had not as yet been indoctrinated by Hinduism attracted the attention of the missionaries. The Mikirs, a hill tribe near Nowgong, visited that station frequently and came in contact with the Christian workers there. They seemed to be interested in Christianity, making it impossible for the missionaries to ignore them. Several missionaries had been chosen to work among the Mikirs; but none of the appointees had succeeded in reaching the field as all of them were either forced home because of illness, or because pressing duties kept them at Nowgong, or they were removed by death.

The Cacharis appealed to Danforth at Gauhati. Their open and friendly attitude impressed him. He spent several weeks touring among them in 1857 and held many personal conferences with those who came to see him at Gauhati, while some of them became Christians. There is no record of any organized work among them until many years later.

The deputation which visited Assam in 1855 and