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**THE ROLE OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST  
MISSIONARIES  
IN THE 19TH - CENTURY  
SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN ASSAM:  
CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC DIMENSIONS**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
OF  
TEZPUR UNIVERSITY**



**BY  
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1998**

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This is to certify that Mr. Brojen Bordoloi, B. E. (Gau), M. S. (New York), Administrative Project Manager, New York City Transit, New York, USA, has worked under my guidance and supervision for the thesis entitled '**The Role of the American Baptist Missionaries in the Nineteenth-Century Social Transformation in Assam - Cultural and Artistic Dimensions**', which is being submitted to Tezpur University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The thesis is the result of his own investigation into the subject. Mr. Brojen Bordoloi has fulfilled all the requirements under the Ph.D. regulations of Tezpur University. No part of the thesis was submitted to any other University for any research degree.

Dated, **Tezpur University**

the *15<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1998*

  
Birendranath Datta

**To  
the memories  
of  
my beloved parents**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	i
Chapter I	1
A. Objective and Scope of the work	
B. Assam and its Socio-Cultural Milieu . A Historical Overview till the Advent of the American Baptist Missionaries	
Chapter II	33
Chapter III	48
The Effect of Christian Proselytization and Philanthropic Activities on the Contemporary Socio-Cultural Milieu of Assam	
Chapter IV	70
Rehabilitation of the Assamese Language : The Historic Role of the American Baptist Missionaries	
Chapter V	90
Miscellaneous Activities of the American Baptist Missionaries Reflecting New Academic Approaches : Assamese Journalism, Collection and Publication of Old Manuscripts, Textual Criticism, Numismatics, Ethnography, Folklore and Material Culture	
Chapter VI	119
The Entry of Assamese Literature into the Modern Age : The Catalytic Role of the Missionaries	
Chapter VII	151
From Manuscripts to Printed Books · Introduction of New Book Production Techniques and Formats	

	Page
Chapter VIII New Trends in Performing and Visual Arts as well as Objects of Material Culture	168
Chapter IX The Assamese Cultural Resurgence : The Seeds Sown by the Missionaries	219
Chapter X Summary and Conclusion	231
Bibliography	242
Appendices	250

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Chapter I	
<u>Illustration Section</u>	
(a) Haystack Monument, Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA.	28
(b) Photograph of Rev. (Dr.) Nathan Brown	29
(c) Photograph of Tomb and Epitaph of Rev. Nathan Brown	30
(d) Photograph of Rev. (Dr.) Miles Bronson	31
(e) Photograph of Tomb and Epitaph of Rev. Miles Bronson	32
Chapter V	
<u>Illustration Section</u>	
(a) Reproductions of Ethnographic Materials	115
(b)-(d) Reproduction of articles of Material Culture	116-118
Chapter VII	
<u>Illustration Section</u>	
(a) An old Assamese Manuscript, found at Connecticut, USA	162
(b) A specimen from the <i>Nama Ghosa</i>	163
(c) A specimen from the <i>Guru-Charita-Katha</i>	164
(d) A few passages from the <i>Orunodoi</i>	165
(e) A specimen from the <i>A Few Remarks on The Assamese Language, And on Vernacular Education in Assam</i>	166
(f) A few specimen from the <i>Charup Asrai</i> (1840) and the <i>Summary of the Faith and Practice of the Baptist Church of Christ in Assam</i> (1845)	167
Chapter VIII	
<u>Illustration Section</u>	
<b>Music</b>	
(a) <u>Items related to music :</u>	186-202
( Illustration have been made in following order : Staff notations and song texts of both English and Assamese )	
(i) Notation and song - 'There is a Green Hill Far Away'	
(ii) Assamese translation of the above song	
(iii) Above : Notation and song - 'Awake, My Soul and with the Sun'	
Below : Assamese translation of the above song	

- (iv) Above : Notation and song - 'Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow'  
Below : Assamese translation of the above song
- (v) Notation and song - ' How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds'
- (vi) Assamese translation of the above song
- (vii) Assamese texts of three songs in Assamese tune  
( *Papak Joy Korila, Jeesu Buli Ebar Mata, Xunore Jokhola* )
- (viii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Papak Joy Korila*
- (ix) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Jeesu Buli Ebar Mata*
- (x) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Xunore Jokhola*
- (xi) Assamese texts of three songs in Assamese tune  
( *Sansar Sagarat Jeesu, Jeesu Naam Amiya, Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim* )
- (xii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Sansar Sagarat Jeesu*
- (xiii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Jeesu Naam Amiya*
- (xiv) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim*
- (xv) Assamese texts of two songs in Assamese tune  
( *Baikunthare Pora, Jessue Matise* )
- (xvi) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Boikunthare Pora*
- (xvii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Jeesue Matise*

**(b) Graphic arts :**Items related to graphic arts

203-209

- (i) A folio of painted manuscript from *Hastividyanava*
- (ii) A folio of painted manuscript from *Bhaktiratnavali*
- (iii) A folio of painted manuscript from *Dharmapurana*
- (iv) A folio of painted manuscript from *Gita Govinda*
- (v) A folio of painted manuscript from *Lavakusar Yuddha*
- (vi) A few specimen of wood block relief printing from the *Orunodoi*

**(c) Plastic arts :**Items related to Architecture :

210-216

- (i) A specimen of brickwork in English bond, with an arched lintel
- (ii) Above : Photograph of a Namghar with upright tower  
Bottom : Photograph of a Church with upright tower
- (iii) Above : Photograph of a Namghar showing rows of window  
Bottom : Photograph of a Church showing rows of window
- (iv) Above : Photograph of a ventilator in a Namghar  
Bottom : Photograph of a ventilator in a Church
- (v) Specimen of Architectural details of windows in a Church
- (vi) Specimen of Architectural styles of doors and windows in a Church
- (vii) Above : Photograph of a front door in a Namghar  
Bottom : Photograph of a front door in a Church



	Page
(d) <b>Material Culture</b>	
<u>Items related to material culture :</u>	217
(i) A few specimen of material culture from the <i>Orunodoi</i>	
(e) Tomb and Epitaph of Nidhi Levi Farwell	218

## LIST OF APPENDICES

	Page
<b>A.</b> Extract of letter written by Captain Jenkins to the Board of the American Baptist Missionaries	250
<b>B.</b> A chart of the Missionary service in the Assam Mission	254
<b>C.</b> Map of Sibsagar town in 1844	256
<b>D.</b> Statement of printing, executed at the American Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagar, from January 1, 1846 to September 30, 1851	257
<b>E.</b> A few riddles : published in the Orunodoi	258
<b>F.</b> Photograph of Rev. P. H. Moore	259
<b>G.</b> Epitaph of Rev. W. Ward	260
<b>H.</b> Photograph of the Island City Baptist Church, Eaton Rapid, Michigan	261
<b>I.</b> Staff notations of a few Christian songs in Assamese, Bodo, Dafla, Saora and Hindi tune	262-271
<b>J.</b> A few tribal Christian songs :	272-280
(i) Munda song	
(ii) Sadana song	
(iii) Bodo song	
(iv) Saora song	
(v) Mikir song	
(vi) Dafla song	

	Page
(vii) Apatani song	
(viii) Miri song	
(ix) Nepali song	
<b>K.</b> A few Christian songs and notations with Assamese translations	281-296
<b>L.</b> Cover pages of a few books published by the American Baptist Missionaries	297-322
(i) <i>Dharmapustak</i> , 1813	
(ii) <i>Dharmapustak</i> , (Holy Bible), 1833	
(iii) <i>A few Remarks on the Assamese Language, and on Vernacular Education in Assam</i> , by a Native, 1855	
(iv) <i>A Dictionary in Assamese and English</i> by M. Bronson, 1867	
(v) <i>The Orunodoi</i> (The Peep of Day), 1895	
(vi) <i>Phulmoni Aru Korunar Vivaran</i> , by Nidhi L. Farwell, 1854	
(vii) <i>Twenty Years in Assam</i> by Mrs. P. H. Moore, 1901	
(viii) <i>Further Leaves from Assam</i> by Mrs. P. H. Moore, 1907	
(ix) <i>Autumn Leaves from Assam</i> by Mrs. P. H. Moore, 1910	
(x) <i>Stray leaves from Assam</i> by Mrs. P. H. Moore, 1916	
(xi) <i>Spelling book and vocabulary, in English, Assamese, Singpho, and Naga</i> with illustration, 1839	
(xii) <i>Gananar Kitap, Dutiya Bhag</i> , by Mrs. E. W. and Rev. N. Brown, with illustration, 1845	
(xiii) <i>First Reading Book in Assamese</i> by Mrs. E. W. Brown, 1842	

- (xiv) *The Gospel of Luke* Translated into Assamese, 1848
- (xv) *Life and Gospel of Christ* in Assamese, by N. Brown, 1854
- (xvi) *The Bible Study Union Lessons*
  - (a) Part I, 1912; (b) Part II, 1912; and (c) Part III, 1913
- (xvii) *What A Young Boy Ought to Know* by, Rev. A. Jewson, 1923
- (xviii) *Haridasi* by Dr. and Mrs. William E. Witter with Hindu and Christian Assamese helpers, 1922
- (xix) *Elokesi Besyar Bisoy* by, A. K. Gurney, 1877
- (xx) *Carup Asray* 1848
- (xxi) *Summary of the Faith and Practice of the Baptist Church of Christ in Assam* 1845
- (xxii) *Report of the Assam Orphan Institution, at Nowgong* 1847-48

## Preface

After obtaining my B.E. Degree from Assam Engineering College in 1964, I worked for the Public Works Department of Assam for seven years. While I found life in Assam to be serene and fulfilling, the prospects of adventure and opportunity lured me to America. In 1971, I obtained a permanent visa to pursue my profession abroad. My first year in America was filled with uncertainty. In retrospect, it proved to be one of the greatest challenges of my life. I was a stranger in a new world, foreign to everything in my environment - the people, the culture, and way of life. Gradually, I became acclimated with my new surroundings and began a new life amid a new culture, comforted by the arrival of my wife and infant son, the following year.

When I left Assam in 1971, I had not planned on settling in America permanently. However, in the midst of establishing a career and supporting a family, the years passed by quickly and I found myself regarding America as my second home. However, the rich culture and history of Assam were always prominent in my memory and in the practices of my life. Today, in my later years, I have grown more appreciative and curious towards the culture, values, language and literature of my homeland, Assam.

Over the years, there have been many Assamese who came to America. Although miles separate us across this vast country, we are all connected by a common thread that is intricately woven. The thread is the Assamese culture. In

an effort to promote this sense of unity for the next generation, we have successfully established an organization focusing on our Assamese roots and history. Assamese people from all over the country gather annually to meet each other and partake in Assamese songs, *Bihu* dances and other various cultural activities. With the help of my friends, I enjoyed bringing to life mythological dramas (*Bhaona*) from the epics of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana for the children. It delighted me to see the happy faces of youth enjoying and participating in their culture. Our annual conventions were also graced by the presence of noted artists and scholars from Assam such as Dr. Nagen Saikia, Dr. Lakshminandan Borah, Dr. Birendranath Datta and Dr. Bhupen Hazarika.

Perhaps due to nostalgia, I started writing a few articles that were published in Assamese magazines and newspapers in Assam. Upon leafing through one of these newspapers, I learned that Tezpur University was offering interdisciplinary opportunities for study and research work. I was aware of the valuable contributions made by the American Baptist Missionaries in Assam in the nineteenth century. I developed a desire to study the matter in depth. On a trip to Assam, I met with Professor (Dr.) K. M. Pathak, Vice Chancellor of Tezpur University, and expressed my interest to pursue research work on the contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries in Assam. Professor Pathak referred me to Dr. Birendranath Datta, Professor & Adviser of the Department of Traditional

Culture and Art Forms at Tezpur University. Professor Datta pointed out that the contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries encompassing all the cultural and artistic dimensions had not been properly explored. Professor Datta gladly consented to guide me on my research topic : 'The Role of the American Baptist Missionaries in the Nineteenth Century Social Transformation in Assam - Cultural and Artistic Dimensions.'

I made five trips to Assam, each approximately one month to collect data and meet with people who had already studied other related aspects of the contributions made by the American Baptist Missionary in Assam. I also made several trips to archival libraries and historical places of the American Baptist Missionaries in America to collect data and photographs of related historical objects.

I would like to thank Professor K. M. Pathak for giving me the inspiration to complete this research work. I would also like to thank Dr. Birendranath Datta who has generously provided his guidance, encouragement, and time to assist me in attaining my goals. However successful I have been in my endeavours thus far, it is only due to the consistent help and encouragement of my advisor Prof. Datta. I am expressing my sincere regards and thanks to Prof. Datta and I will always remain grateful to him remembering the memories.

I thank Rev. George Gillespie of Moorestown, New Jersey for his assistance, generosity and allowing me to use his personal library. My thanks also

to Dr. F. S. Downs of Cape Cod, Massachusetts for his time and suggestions. I also thank Dr. H. K. Barpujari, Dr. Nagen Saikia, Dr. Kabin Phukan and Dr. Jogendra Narayan Bhuyan for their time and consideration given to me when I met with them in Assam. I thank Dr. Dilip K. Datta for his help and encouragement. My special thanks to Dr. Kripanath Borah for his generosity, suggestions and in allowing me to utilize his personal library collections on Assamese literature. I thank Dr. Pranab Bhattacharjee for his inspiring suggestions. I thank Mrs. Eva Sarma who assisted me in recording an audio cassette of Assamese Christian songs with Assamese local tunes, sung by Mr. Satyaprasad Baruah of Nagaon. I thank Mr. Rupam Jyoti Sarma in providing me with the staff notations of the Assamese Christian songs of local tunes which I have included in my dissertation. I thank Mr. Brenner G. Momin, Mrs. Jaya Momin, and Mrs. Jesse Momin of Guwahati for assisting me in the documentation of the distinctive Assamese tunes of the Assamese Christian songs translated earlier by Dr. Nathan Brown and Dr. Miles Bronson. I would also like to thank Mrs. Christine Brock, engineer and my colleague for her assistance in bringing my dissertation draft to an appropriate format.

I also thank the following staff members at various archival libraries for assisting me in my research work: Ms. Beverly Carlson and Ms. Betty Layton of the Historical Society of American Baptist Missionaries, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania; Dr. Dana Martin and Ms. Keith Sebach of the Society of American



Baptist Missionaries, Rochester, New York; Ms. Diana Yount of the Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Center, Massachusetts; Mrs. Lynne K Fonteneau of the Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts; Mr. Donald M Vorp of the Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, Boston Public

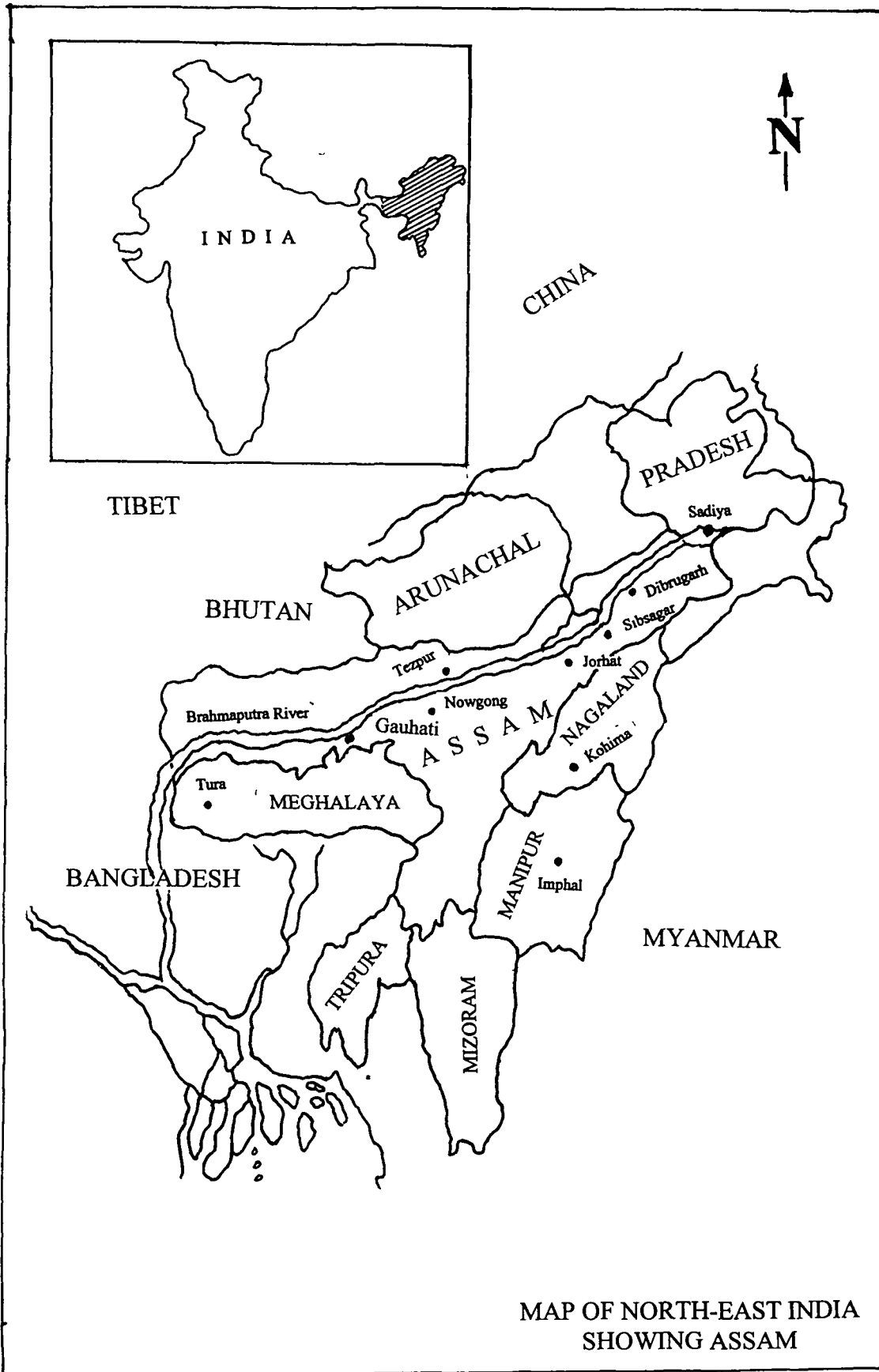
Library, Boston, Massachusetts; New York Public Library, New York, New York; New York University Bobst Library, New York, New York; Parsippany - Troy Hills Public Library, Parsippany, New Jersey; the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Pan Bazar, Guwahati; the Christian Literature Center, Pan Bazar, Guwahati, Assam; and the Department of Traditional Culture and Art Forms, Tezpur University, Tezpur, Assam.

I also thank my friends and others who have helped me in various ways in connection with my research work both in Assam and America.

Finally, I thank my wife, Kalpana, who always accommodated her own schedule to accompany me on my trips for collection of materials for my research work which were hundreds of miles away from my home. She was always by my side encouraging me to achieve my goals. I also thank my son, Pallav, my daughter-in-law, Poonam, and my daughter, Ruby, and all my family members in India and America for their moral support in my endeavour.

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## Chapter I

### Introductory

#### A. Objective and Scope of the work

#### B. Assam and its Socio-Cultural Milieu : A Historical Overview till the Advent of the American Baptist Missionaries

#### A. Objective and scope of the work

The Assamese people have a very close attachment for the American Baptist Missionaries<sup>1</sup> who worked in Assam in the nineteenth century. The contribution of the Baptist Missionaries in the rehabilitation of Assamese literature is always in the hearts of Assamese people, which leads to an emotional attachment towards the Baptist Missionaries. The subject is now a part of text books of Assamese language, literature and culture. The subject is even an integral part of Assamese history. The Missionaries also did evangelistic works in other parts of India, but we do not see such unique emotional attachment in those parts of India as that which exists in the minds of the Assamese people towards the Baptist Missionaries. Even in the present day the Baptist Missionaries are well received by the Assamese society as their benefactors. So far, quite an extensive study has been made of the contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries in the field of Assamese language and literature. Substantial numbers of text books and articles backed by original research work have been published on the subject by reputed scholars of Assam. The books written by Dr. Maheswar Neog, Dr. Herambakanta Barpujari, Mr. Dimbeswar Neog, Dr. Jogendra Narayan

Bhuyan, and Dr. Banikanta Sarma on the subject are noteworthy. The academic research work for the Ph.D. degree by Dr. Banikanta Sarma on the topic - 'Contribution of the Christian Missionaries to the growth and development of Assamese language and literature during the 19th century' (Gauhati University, 1980, unpublished dissertation), and by Dr. Satish C. Bhattacharyya on the topic - 'Assamese society and culture as depicted in the literature of the *Orunodoi* period' (Gauhati University, 1993, unpublished dissertation) are of extensive information. The articles written by Dr. Nagen Saikia, Dr. Kabin Phukan and Mr. Prasenjit Chowdhury throw light on the subject with critical analysis<sup>2</sup>.

From the religious point of view, the memory of the Baptist Missionaries is still cherished by the Christian people, particularly by the Christians of the hill areas of north-east India. The contribution of the Baptist Christian Churches has been very vital. Extensive studies of Church histories from the Christian point of view have also been made by Christians and non-Christians. A substantial number of books have been published by the reputed scholar Dr. Frederick S Downs on the subject. The work of Victor Hugo Sword is also noteworthy. In addition, we find a lot of articles written by other eminent Christian writers in the journals of Christianity.

I have read the works of both Christian and non-Christian writers. I feel that most of the Assamese writers are emotionally influenced by the dedicated service of the American Baptist Missionaries towards the rehabilitation of the Assamese language. A notion seems to be working in some of those writings as if the Missionaries went to Assam with the missionary goal of uplifting Assamese language and literature. Such writings focus on the literary contributions and

benevolent works of the Missionaries on center stage and do not pay enough attention to the goal of Christian proselytization of the Baptist Missionaries. On the other hand, the Christians in the hills emphasize the Christian gospel and Church activities without paying proper attention to the other important activities of the Missionaries. I feel that there are other aspects of the contribution of the Missionaries, such as their activities in the fields of socio-cultural upliftment and their academic works in such areas as ethnography, numismatics, material culture and artistic aspects in particular, which have not been placed in the right perspective. I feel that those activities of the Missionaries should get proper exposure, and I have tried to make a neutral assessment in my research work, allowing due importance to the positions taken by both the sets of writers. It was in my mind that a balanced study was needed, which will reveal a true picture of the contribution of the Missionaries in Assam.

Someone might ask me why I have chosen this topic for my research work. I must say that since I live in the USA I am in an advantageous position to collect information and data from various sources in the USA compared to others in Assam. Since I came to the USA, I became more concerned about my roots in Assam. While I studied the history of Assamese language and literature, I could see in more detail the involvement of American Baptist Missionaries in giving a new dimension to Assamese literature. I was born and brought up in an atmosphere of traditional culture of Assam. I have an acquaintance with both the traditional and modern age of Assam. I am from Jorhat, where the Missionaries maintained their educational, religious and medical institutions. Perhaps the existence of these institutions in my home town alerted me to think about the

contribution of Missionaries. Living in America when I came to know the past of the Missionaries, I realized that so many things from America are connected with Assam. Even at the present time the contribution of the Missionaries is a matter of live discussion among Assamese, and is really a living present. I was excited to see and explore first hand information such as the Haystack Monument. I felt a strong tie between Assam and America. I tried to delve deeper into the subject of the contribution of Missionaries in Assam. This was the homeland of those foreign Missionaries, the place where they went to during their service period in Assam. This was the place where the Missionaries sent correspondence to their home office from Assam. This was the place to which they made long voyages on the sea. Excitement and curiosity led me to locate the sources where the original old documents, reports, books and journals could be found. I took off time from my occupation and made trips to the places with a hope to collect some authentic information which might not have been turned up by others or might have been inadequately explored. Yes, I could gather some first hand information, such as the Haystack Monument, which are related to my research work and which are only available in America. Another advantageous position I had was the ability to meet with the knowledgeable people in America who worked actively in the missionary field in Assam. In America I met Dr. F. S. Downs at his residence at Cape Cod, Massachusetts. His suggestions were very valuable to me. It was my pleasure to meet his father Dr. E. S. Downs, a medical doctor presently at 96 years of age. Dr. E. S. Downs was at Tura as an American missionary for forty years. Recollecting the past, he also added his views on my research topic. Rev. George Gillespie of Moorestown, New Jersey guided me in locating the available

information, and helped by loaning me some of his own collection of materials. I have met all the notable writers of Assam who made studies in the field of the American Baptist Missionaries in Assam. I met with Dr. H. K. Barpujari at his residence in Guwahati and at Boston during his visit to USA. I met Dr. Nagen Saikia, Dr. Kabin Phukan and Mr. Prasenjit Chowdhury at Dibrugarh, Dr. Jogendra Narayan Bhuyan at Nagaon, Dr. Banikanta Sarma at Guwahati and Dr. Satish Bhattacharjee at Tezpur. Of course I discussed my topic with my advisor Dr. Birendranath Datta during my visits to Assam, and also by letters and telephone from the USA. All these gave me the insight and encouragement to pursue this research topic.

I made a trip to Eaton Rapid, Michigan where Rev. Miles Bronson had been living, upon his return from Assam. I took photographs of his tomb and epitaph located at Rosehill Cemetery. This gives us an authentic documentation of his date of birth and death. I made similar documentation for his wife Marry Donnelly Rankin. I also visited Maranatha Bible Chapel ground, located at East Charlemont, Massachusetts, and took photographs of the tomb and epitaph of Rev. Nathan Brown for documentation. I was surprised when I observed that a portion of the epitaph was written in the Assamese language. I also documented the records of birth and death of Eliza Whitney Ballard, the wife of Rev Nathan Brown, and also of their children who died in Maulmain, Sadiya and Jaipur. The photographs of tombs and epitaphs of Rev. Nathan Brown and Rev Miles Bronson are reproduced in this dissertation.

During my visit to Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts, I took photographs of the Haystack Monument from where the Foreign Missionary work

started in America in 1806. A significant number of valuable old documents and books relating to Assam are preserved in the archive section of the Williams College library. The books contain history of Assam, old documents, contemporary literature of the British and the Missionary era, Assamese literature both secular and religious, socio-cultural matters including ethnology, folklore and other items. I found some books that had been written in Assamese by the American Missionaries during nineteenth century in the archives of the Boston public library. These books are of both a secular and non secular type, and were published from Sibsagor Mission Press and Serampore Mission Press. The cover pages of some of the books are added in the appendix of this dissertation. In the archive section of the library of Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Center, Massachusetts, the original and microfilm of Bronson Papers are available. These Bronson Papers are really a treasure to learn of the actual expressions of Rev. Miles Bronson on so many important issues of Baptist Missionaries of Assam in the nineteenth century. In addition, valuable information on nineteenth century Assam could be extracted from these papers. In the archive section of the Foreign Mission of Historical Society of the American Baptist Missionaries, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, I could study the original annual reports made by the Baptist Missionaries to the Home Board in America. These reports contain lot of valuable information about missionary activities in Assam from its inception to the end of the mission period. In addition, the library has a good collection of books on nineteenth century Assam on all diversified matters. Some books written by the Missionaries based on their real experiences are very vivid and interesting. From these books we can draw a picture of socio-cultural and socio-economic life of the



entire area of north east India. One may gather a substantial amount of information on the traditional cultures of different tribal and non tribal peoples of the entire north east India of nineteenth century. In addition to the valuable books on Christianity and Assam Mission, the archive section of the Library of the Society of the American Baptist Missionaries, Rochester, New York, is preserving a substantial number of old Assamese books on Assamese literature. I made a Xerox copy of the rare Assamese book - 'A few Remarks on the Assamese Language, and on Vernacular Education of Assam' by a Native (1855). Rev. George Gillespie, who was a missionary in Assam for eighteen years donated a valuable collection relating to the activities of the Baptist Missionaries in Assam to this library. Rev. Gillespie guided me as to where to find my related materials and how. At the American Baptist Missionarie's Rochester Library, I found some Assamese Christian songs with their western notations. Some Christian songs recorded on gramophone records are also preserved. A part of the Rev. Gillespie's collection are kept in the archive section of the library of the Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. This collection also contains rare books on Assamese literature, and books on traditional cultures of all the ethnic tribal people of north east India, including works of Verrier Elwin. In the New York Public Library I got a few valuable books related to my research topic written by Dr. Maheswar Neog and Dr. Nagen Saikia, in addition to books written by western writers.

I am aware that the scholars Dr. H. K. Barpujari and Dr. F. S. Downs in addition to a few others, made visits to the above mentioned archive libraries and

included the findings in their published books as appropriate documents or references. Dr. H. K. Barpujari and Dr. F. S. Downs have made considerable contributions in diversified aspects of the contributions of American Baptist Missionaries in Assam. The notable books in this respect by Dr. Barpujari are : *The American Missionaries and North East India (1836-1900 AD)*, *Christian Missionary Sakal aru Unbingsha Shatkar Asom*, and *Asomor Nava Jagaron - Ana Asomiar Bhumika*. Dr. Downs wrote the following valuable books : *The Mighty Works of God*, *Christianity in North East India*; *History of Christianity in India* Vol. V, Part 5; *Essays on Christianity in North East India* and *The Christian Impact on the Status of Women in North East India*. However, I have not found any book which directly relates to my specific research topic which is the contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries in the socio-cultural and artistic perspectives. It appears to me that the contribution of the Baptist Missionaries in these aspects were not fully focused on by any previous writer. I have tried to put my findings appropriately in the different chapters of this dissertation.

#### Scheme of work and Methodology :

I have studied all available literary publications which are directly or indirectly related to my research topic. I have collected materials from those writings and have made use of them in my dissertation.

From time to time I have made trips to Assam to collect materials and to meet with and interview knowledgeable people who have made studies on the

missionary works in Assam. I have visited places where the Baptist missionaries had or have centers of missionary activities in Assam where the materials for my study are available. The places include Guwahati, Jorhat, Nagaon, Sibsagar, Golaghat and Shillong.

I have taken extensive photographs to document facts both in Assam and in the USA. Some of the photographs are used appropriately here to compare or to show intermingled or diffused phenomena of a cultural or architectural aspect. I used audio equipment to record the tunes of Assamese Christian songs. I also gathered information from different available sources by correspondence.

## B. Assam and its Socio-Cultural Milieu :

### A historical Overview till the Advent of the American Baptist Missionaries

Since I will be focusing on the socio-cultural and artistic contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries in the nineteenth century Assam, I would like to give a backdrop of nineteenth century Assam, its people and their socio-cultural life. This will give us a proper perspective for undertaking a proper assessment of the contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries.

The Baptist Missionaries came to Assam during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The concept of nineteenth century Assam is related to a historical development in Assam. The geographical boundaries of Assam at the time of the advent of the American Baptist Missionaries were quite different from

those of present-day Assam. Assam at one time included the bulk of the areas of present seven-sister states : Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal<sup>3</sup>. However, I will be limiting my research work mostly to the geographical boundaries of present-day Assam. Although some works were planned or started by the American Baptist Missionaries in the latter part of nineteenth century, effective missions became a reality only in the early part of the twentieth century. Their philanthropic activities will be focused primarily in the areas of the Brahmaputra valley.

Assam in ancient times:

In both of the epics of India, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the land of ancient Assam was referred as Pragjyotisha and it came to be known as Kamarupa in the medieval times. From available epigraphic evidence, the western boundary of Pragjyotisha was the Kosi River and Pragjyotisha touched Videha on the west at the beginning of the 6th century A D (Barua 1988 : 1-2).

Although there is much controversy as to the date of both of the epics, some scholars strongly suggest that the events of the epics were not completely imaginary and are not only myth. Whatever the case may be, we get references and geographical descriptions of the kingdom of Pragjyotisha and various events of the kings from the epics. According to a local tradition, the earliest rulers of Pragjyotisha belonged to the Danava dynasty. The first king of this dynasty was Mahiranga Danava. A most popular and colourful figure of this dynasty was King

Narakasura. According to existing tradition, Naraka ruled over a vast kingdom whose boundary was from the Karatoya River to the Brahmaputra Valley (Barua, 1956 : 16). Tradition further emphasizes that King Naraka met his death at the hands of Sri Krishna. He was succeeded by his son, Bhagadatta, who finds honourable mention in the *Mahabharata*. King Bhagadatta of Pragjyotisha who had participated in the Kurukshetra War was an ally of the Kauravas with his host of Chinese and *Kirata* troops. He fought valiantly from the back of his elephant and eventually died as a hero.

It is stated in the *Kalika Purana* that King Bana ruled in Sonitpur (modern Tezpur) when Naraka was ruling in Pragjyotisha. The Siva temple of Mahabhairav is attributed to King Bana, who was a pre-Aryan and a devotee of Siva. The well-known Assamese poetical work, *Kumara Harana*, describes the romantic story of Bana's daughter, Usha, who was secretly married by Aniruddha, grandson of Krishna, in most dramatic circumstances (Barua, 1988 : 3).

A comparable episode to that of Usha and Aniruddha is the marriage of Rukmini to Sri Krishna. Rukmini was the daughter of King Bhisma who ruled Kundila (believed to be modern Sadiya). Legend also tells the story of Chitrangada of Manipur and Hidimba of Assam. All these legends connect Assam with the outside Aryan world in the pre-historic times.

### Varaman Dynasty:

The authentic history of Assam can be said to begin with the Varman dynasty. The first king of this dynasty was Pushyavarman, who ruled in the second quarter of the fourth century, AD. Pushyavarman was a contemporary of Emperor Samudragupta.

The last illustrious and the greatest king of the Varman dynasty was Kumara Bhaskaravarman (594-650 AD). He was a worthy friend of and ally of Emperor Harshavardhana. He recovered the lost territory of his kingdom from the king of Gauda. He extended his kingdom, which covered almost all eastern India and enjoyed a great prosperous life. He was a devotee of Siva. (Barpujari, 1990 Vol. 1 : 110) It was during his reign, that the Chinese scholar Hiuen Tsang visited Kamarupa, and left a valuable report on ancient Kamarupa. Besides the report of scholar Hiuen Tsang there is much information about the great King Bhaskara Varman from the Nidhanpur and Dubi copper-plate inscriptions and from the *Harshacharita*, written by Banabhatta.

### Salastambha Dynasty:

The Varmana Dynasty was followed by the rulers of the Salastambha dynasty who were in power until the end of the tenth century AD. The notable kings of this dynasty were Harshadeva or Sri Harsha Vanamala Varmadeva. The powerful and prominent king Vanamala extended his kingdom far and wide

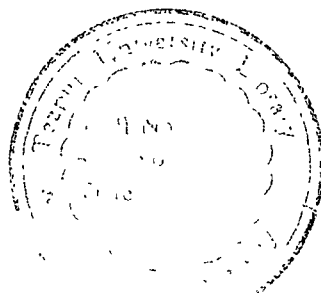
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including Pundravardhana in north Bengal. The prominent historian K L Barua writes, “ ...It is therefore reasonable to suppose that when Bhaskaravarman died, Salastambha who was the governor of the Mech country organized a revolt and that he dethroned the immediate successor of Bhaskara Varman and proclaimed himself as king.” (Barua, 1988 : 67)

### Pala Dynasty.

After the reign of Salastambha dynasty, the Pala dynasty came to the power. Brahmapala, who was elected by the people as their king, obtained the throne of Pragjyotisha-Kamarupa in about 900 AD (Barpujari, 1990 Vol 1 : 140) Some of the notable kings of the Pala dynasty were Ratnapala, Indrapala and Dharmapala. Tingyadeva, (1110-1126 AD) a vassal of the Palas of Bengal took over the throne of Kamarupa. Finally Vaidyadeva, a minister of the king of Gauda, defeated Tingyadeva and became the ruler of the region.

The next important and powerful ruler of the kingdom of Kamrup was Prithu. It was during his reign that first Mahammedan invasion of Kamrup took place under the leadership of Mahammad Ibn Bakhtiyar (1205-1206 AD) who was completely annihilated. However, in a later Mahammedan confrontation, Prithu could not prevent the invasion and he was finally overpowered in 1228 AD. After Prithu, two kings of his same dynasty ruled in the kingdom of Kamarupa. The last king of this dynasty was Sandhya, (1250-1270 AD) Perhaps around 1260 AD king of Kamrupa, Sandhya shifted his capital from Kamrup to Kamatapur (Devi, 1987 : 69).



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The scanty account of the Mahammedan expeditions does not give us enough information to know the condition of the region east of Karotoya river. They prove that the river Karatoya was the western boundary. To know about the eastern portion of the region, we have to turn to the *Buranjis* or chronicles of the Ahoms who entered the eastern corner of the Brahmaputra valley early in the thirteen century. The *Buranjis* support the theory that a line of Chutia kings ruled the country east of Subansiri and the Disang and that, several small Bodo tribes enjoyed independence in the south and south east. Further west, there existed the Kachari kingdom. Beyond this Kachari kingdom on the south bank and Chutias on the north, there were a number of petty chiefs known as Bhuyans. The Bhuyans were independent of each other but they joined forces when they were threatened by a common enemy. (Gait, 1992 : 35-36)

#### Kamatas and Koches :

The Kacharis became powerful in the western region and they extended their kingdom up to Central Assam. West of the Kacharis, there was the Kamata kingdom. Durlabhanarayan was a great king of Kamata. The Khyen line followed the Kamatas. The last Khayen king, Nilambara, was dethroned by King Hussain Shah of Bengal in 1493. After this, some local Bhuyans were prominent in the region.

Then came the Koch dynasty founded by Bisvasingha (1515-1540 AD). His son Naranarayana (1540-1584) was a great ruler. He extended his kingdom



up to North Bengal on the west and Brahmaputra valley on the east, in addition to the neighbouring kingdoms like Cachar, Tripura, Khasi and the Jaintia hills. He was assisted in statecraft and in military power by his brother Sukladvaja, alias Chilarai. Both the brothers were great patrons of literature, art and other kinds of cultural refinement. After Naranarayana's death the kingdom was split into two. The western part was controlled by Mahammedans and the eastern part eventually came under the Ahom power.

#### Ahom Dynasty :

The invasion of Assam by the Ahoms in the early thirteen century is very significant in the history of Assam. The appearance of Ahoms changed the political, social and cultural history of Assam. In actuality, the Ahom power unified and consolidated the scattered groups of people into a politically and culturally homogenous unit.

In 1228 A D, an army of Ahom of the Tai-Shan family came from Burma across the Patkai range and entered Assam under the adventurous leadership of Sukapha. In a series of skillful moves, they subdued the local chiefs and established themselves as masters over a large tract in a short period of time. They overpowered the Chutias and others in the north east, pushed the Kacharis to the south of Brahmaputra and formed an Ahom territory of contiguous areas. In the seventeenth century, the Ahom kingdom extended on the west to the Manah river. However by the eighteenth century, attacks by the Mughal power, internal strife,

including a long civil war known as the Moamaria uprising, and finally the series of Burmese wars brought to an end of the reign of the mighty Ahom power. The British intervention came to Ahom emperor in 1824, and in 1826, Assam passed into the hands of British with the signing the Yandaboo Treaty between the Burmese and the British.

The Ahom kingdom was attacked by the mighty Mahammedans of Delhi, time and again but they could not defeat the Ahoms. It was the greatest glory of Ahom, when Ahom commander-in-chief Lachit Borphukan defeated the Mughal army under the victorious general Ram Singha at the famous battle at Saraighat near Guwahati in 1671 AD. Out of the forty four Ahom rulers, the great conquerors are Suhungmung or Dihingiya Raja (1497-1539), Susengpha or Pratap Singha (1603-1641), Supatpha or Gadadhar Singha (1661-1696) and Sukrungpha or Rudra Singha (1696-1714).

Many of the Ahom rulers were also great builders and patrons of art. The names that excel in this field are Rudra Singha, his sons Sutanpha or Siva Singha (1714-1744), Susenpha or Pramatta Singha (1744-1751), as well as Surampha or Rajesvar Singha (1751-1769).

From their origins of being a race of foreign language and religion, the Ahoms adopted the Assamese language and Hindu religion, and in the course of time, became upholders for the cause of unification and advancement of Assam.

### Aryan Migration to Assam :

According to historian H. K. Barpujari, proper Kamarupa was inhabited by Proto-Mongoloid, Proto-Australoid, Tibeto-Burman and Alpine people. The Aryan culture was carried into Assam either by the Alpines from the west, or by the later Brahmanas who had already been mixed with other racial elements when they migrated to Assam. It is likely that these Brahmanas ultimately influenced the culture of ancient Assam. (Barpujari, 1990, Vol. 1 : 197) Despite the fact that the influence of this Aryan culture existed here and there, it cannot be denied that the population of Assam was predominantly Mongoloid in character and composition (Barua, 1956 : 15). As in other parts of India, the Aryan settlers mixed with the local social groups in Assam. In course of time they accepted and assimilated with the prevailing local people in all aspects of life including biological, linguistic and cultural and extended the intricately woven horizon of social life.

Although many of the people of the plain areas of Assam had an Aryan influence due to the migration from the west, the ruling power in Assam had always been of Mongoloid or tribal origin (Koches, Chutias, Kacharis, Ahoms and Jaintias). Among these Mongoloid or tribal origin kings, some of them were not only powerful administrators, but contributed to the uplifting of their people and land in all social, educational and cultural dimensions.

An opinion prevails now-a-days that the term Aryan does not refer to any ethnic group but it refers to the group of people who spoke the Aryan language (Saikia 1991 : 137). The possibility of intrusion of Aryans from North East India in addition to the migration from the west is questionable due to unavailability of authentic documentation (Barua 1973 : 243).

An early American missionary, Rev. P. H. Moore, described the plains people of Assam, in his paper 'General View of Assam' which was presented in the Jubilee Conference of the Assam Mission of the American Baptist Missionary Union held in Nowgong, December 18-29, 1886, as follows :

Take an Aryan substratum, mingle it with it a Mongolian element from the north; then with this mixture a Dravidian element from the west; add to this an element whose quality and quantity are both unknown; once more mingle with this a strong element from the Shan race; allow many centuries for the process of commingling; give now a sprinkling of Burmese; keep in mind that each one of these elements is preserved in every degree of change from absolute purity to the most thorough adulteration; take into account on the one hand a fluctuating immigration not hitherto mentioned, and on the other influence of the tribes on the hill sides that have preserved their aboriginal qualities in various degrees of purity, and you have the people of the plains of Assam (Moore, 1887 : 5).

#### Language and Literature :

Since very early times, the Indo-Aryan Assamese language came to be dominant language of the land. Not only it was spoken by the majority of the population, but it has rich heritage of written literature. According to Dimbeswar Neog, Assamese, along with Bengali, Oriya and Maithili, formed the easternmost group of modern Indian languages which are considered to have come through Magadhi Apabhramsa and to belong originally to the Indic sub-division of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family of languages (Neog, 1982 : 37). Although the Assamese language is of Aryan origin, the languages of non-Aryans living in the region had an extensive influence on it. With gradual changes, the Assamese language came to a distinctive form around the tenth or eleventh century. Even before this time, the stone and copper inscriptions of the fourth or fifth century gives us evidence of languages in Assam which were predominantly Sanskrit. Gradual change of Sanskrit language in later period (6th to 12th century)

gave rise to Pali, Prakrit and Apabhramsa. So, we can consider the Assamese language to have begun approximately the eleventh century. It flourished during the next two centuries.

It is true that literature is not the beginning of any language. The oldest specimen of Assamese literature can be found in the *Charyapadas*, which were composed and written during the period of tenth or eleventh century to the fourteenth century (Sarma, 1981 : 42).

Assamese language and literature achieved its peak during the Vaishnava era (15th and 16th century). The two great Vaishnava leaders, Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva, contributed to Assamese literature with their popular and brilliant compositions. A chronological description of development of the Assamese literature is included in Chapter VI.

The matter of language and literature of the tribal people was somewhat different. F. S Downs writes, “None of the tribes of the northeastern hills had a written form of their language when the Missionaries first came among them. Because of their Protestant emphasis upon the importance of Christian literacy, the first thing that the missionaries did when beginning work among a new tribe was to reduce its language to writing.” (Downs, 1994 : 207)

It has already be noted that the ‘non-tribal’ Assamese society has had a legacy of written literature dating back to at least the tenth or eleventh century and in the fourteenth century it had reached great maturity. The rich Vaishnava spiritual writings of Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva literally flooded in the Brahmaputra valley. So, Assam in the Brahmaputra valley was not a non-literate or pre-literate society. In fact the Missionaries studied the valuable manuscripts to

understand the religious motif of Hindu *Sastras*. So, the missionaries did not *create* any Assamese literature, but only revised and uplifted the Assamese literature to a modern style.

#### Culture and Religion :

Both tribal and non tribal people had their rich traditional cultures and beliefs from the past. The tribal societies are highly integrated. Distinctions cannot be made easily between religious, social, cultural and political elements in the tribal societies. The tribal people lived in their traditional way before the intrusion of the British and the Missionaries.

Before the advent of the British and the Baptist Missionaries, the people of Assam lived happily within its socio-cultural milieu. Assamese people of the Brahmaputra valley were deeply satisfied emotionally, intellectually and spiritually by the teachings of Neo-Vaishnavism introduced by Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva. The followers of Saivism and Saktism and the Muslim religion were also similarly content. All these people were leading a refined type of life. The barriers of caste, creed was minimal, and society was living in harmony and as a homogenous society. True, the Assamese were ignorant of the new scientific world. After coming in contact with the British and the Missionaries, Assamese people came to know about the new objects of modern world, which was a surprise for them. They were attracted by the new things, and their minds were inclined to know more about the new advanced world.

#### Conclusion :

The British administrators and the American Baptist Missionaries both were foreigners to the Assamese. Since both were from the western world they

had many things in common, such as language, habit and customs. But for the Assamese, the British and the Missionaries were not the same. They considered the British administrators as their superiors and maintained a distance from them. On the other hand, the Assamese had a close relationship with the Missionaries due to their philanthropic activities. As a result, there was a kind of mental rapport between the Assamese and the Missionaries. However, even though the Missionaries were closer to the Assamese, there was a social gap between the two.

The Missionaries openly petitioned the British administration for the removal of the Bengali language from Assam. The Missionaries published the first Assamese magazine, the *Orunodoi*, in which they wrote miscellaneous news of the world, and through which they introduced the Assamese people to the new world. The Missionaries criticized the old beliefs and prejudices of Assamese people in the *Orunodoi*, and created a new consciousness among the Assamese. The Missionaries were closer to the Assamese because of their effort to promote education, medical services and specially for their effort to establish the Assamese language in its own soil.

In reality, we cannot deny the contribution of the British administrative outfit in the modernization process except for the language issue. The British administrators opened schools in major towns, and also opened village schools. The British awarded scholarships and inspired Assamese youths to go for higher education.

A large group of Assamese students went to Calcutta for higher education, where they came in contact with the enlightened circle of Bengal. By that time, Bengal had acquired the modern trend of progressive life. Impressed by the new progressive trend at Calcutta, people like Anandaram Dhekial Phukan wrote

articles of lofty idealism in the *Orunodoi*, which inspired other Assamese. In addition to the British administrators, other British people, such as tea garden managers, and other business people came in contact with Assamese people in Assam. It is therefore a cumulative contribution of all these factors which gave rise to a new enthusiastic consciousness in the Assamese people.

The Assamese had a very good image of the American Baptist Missionaries because of their philanthropic works. Even some noted Assamese writers mention them as Angels. Coupled with their emotions, the gratitude shown to the Baptist Missionaries by some writers appear to be excessive. The motive of the Missionaries was not understood clearly even by the intellectual Assamese, much less the common people. The purpose of publishing the *Orunodoi* itself has to be viewed with some reservations. Quite a few Assamese scholars are of the opinion that it was published because of the love of the Missionaries towards the Assamese language. But we see some other intentions of the Missionaries.

In a letter to Mr. Danforth by Mr. Brown dated July 4, 1850; Brown writes:

‘The *Orunodoi* has been considered by the mission as one of the most powerful instrumentalities for gaining access to the mind of the Assamese, and nothing we have ever done has created such an interest among them --- - as did the *Orunodoi* for the first two or three years. No other instrument that we could use would exert half of the influence in enlightening the native mind and undermining their *shaster* as a paper of this kind ---- we found it to succeed beyond our expectation’ (Barpujari, 1986 : 156).

Annual report of Assam Mission (May, 1862) states :

‘The *Orunodoi* has an increasing circulation, and seems to awaken growing interest in the native mind. By this paper, we reach the hundreds of readers who cannot be reached by any other means, and who, if we attempted to preach them, - which we have not the means to do at present, - would not hear. But here we mix in the knowledge of gospel truth along with news



and matter which they are becoming eager for; and thus, all unawares to themselves, their modes of thought are undergoing a gradual but certain change.'

In recent years, some research scholars have expressed more rational views holding that the *Orunodoi* was 'the mouthpiece both of the evangelists and the imperialists' (Misra, 1987 : 91 ). The far-sighted Missionaries clearly understood that Assamese language was the only *lingua franca* of the region for the propagation of Christianity in the entire north-east India.

In fact, the British and the American Baptist Missionaries may be said to have worked hand in hand in Assam. Sometimes it was a passive understanding and in some cases it was open. Sometimes it was hidden in correspondences. The Missionaries did not unveil the 'unfair' objectives of the British, rather they praised them, perhaps expecting favour from the British. Not only the Missionaries, but even the educated Assamese also joined their hands in support of the British objectives, expecting to receive favours. The British were naturally happy to see good words for them in the *Orunodoi*.

There are evidences which can be cited in support of the view that the Missionaries' sympathy for the cause of the Assamese people was not always completely selfless. The American Missionaries did not raise their voice for the well-being of the Assamese without having a 'vested' interest. For example, it is appropriate to mention that they never raised the issue of independence of Assam. Rather, the death of martyr Maniram Dewan was reported in the *Orunodoi* in a very subdued manner (Neog, 1983 : 0.96). By the same token, the news of riots

at Phulaguri near Nagaon, were not properly focused in the *Orunodoi* (Bhuyan, 1986 : 30). The Missionaries also never properly raised the issue of the collection of unjustified burdensome revenue from the Assamese people.

However, in some instances, the Missionaries expressed their true opinions although the matters were against the will of the British administrators. The Missionaries fought with the British to prove that Assamese was an independent language and that it should be used in the courts and schools of Assam, replacing Bengali. The Missionaries also showed their leadership in the campaign for the eradication of opium. However, in some instances, the Missionaries gave an ugly picture of Assamese society. We cannot be certain that all Assamese people used opium in those days. It was probably not so. Even the common village people understood that opium eating was a bad habit. We notice this fact in the popular folk songs of Assam (Gogoi, 1985 : 254).

To ascertain the superiority of the Christian religion, the Missionaries wrote articles against the Hindu religion. The Missionaries criticized the rituals of Kamakhya temple, and made very derogatory remarks about the temple dancers of the Hayagriva Madhava temple located at Hajo (Neog, 1983 : 823). This matter is discussed further in Chapter VIII. Though the Missionaries came to enlighten the people through the Christian gospel, we notice their feeling of 'white supremacy' through some of their reports.

Combining all the activities of the Missionaries as a total, we must acknowledge the positive aspects of their contributions. The Missionaries

contribution toward the Assamese language and literature is invaluable. The Missionaries introduced an Assamese dictionary and an Assamese grammar for the first time. They introduced a new style of writing. There were so many subjects here and there without getting any attention in the field of literature, culture and history such as old manuscripts, material culture, ethnography, folklore, numismatics etc. The Missionaries valued these subjects as worthy of study, and drew the attention of the Assamese society by publishing articles in the *Orunodoi*. A detail discussion of these subjects is made in chapter V.

It is true that main goals and objectives of the Missionaries were to propagate and to convert people into Christianity. But while looking for a path to achieve their goals, whatever contributions they made to the socio-cultural life of nineteenth century Assamese people are precious to the Assamese society. And that is why the the Baptist Missionaries are dear to the Assamese people and their role is an established landmark in the history of Assam.

How the Baptist missionaries came to Assam is discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter I

### Notes & References

1. Since the name of the American Baptist Missionaries comes very frequently throughout the thesis, henceforth I have used "Baptist Missionaries" or simply "Missionaries" to mean the American Baptist Missionaries.

2. Writings on the American Baptist Missionaries can be classified in the following manner :

Textbooks written by Assamese scholars ; even secondary levels school textbooks dealing with Assamese language and literature contain information on the contribution of the Missionaries in these fields. This subject is fairly elaborately treated in standard histories of both Assamese and English literatures; the most prominent among them being - Mr. D. Neog, Dr. M. Neog and Dr. S. N. Sarma.

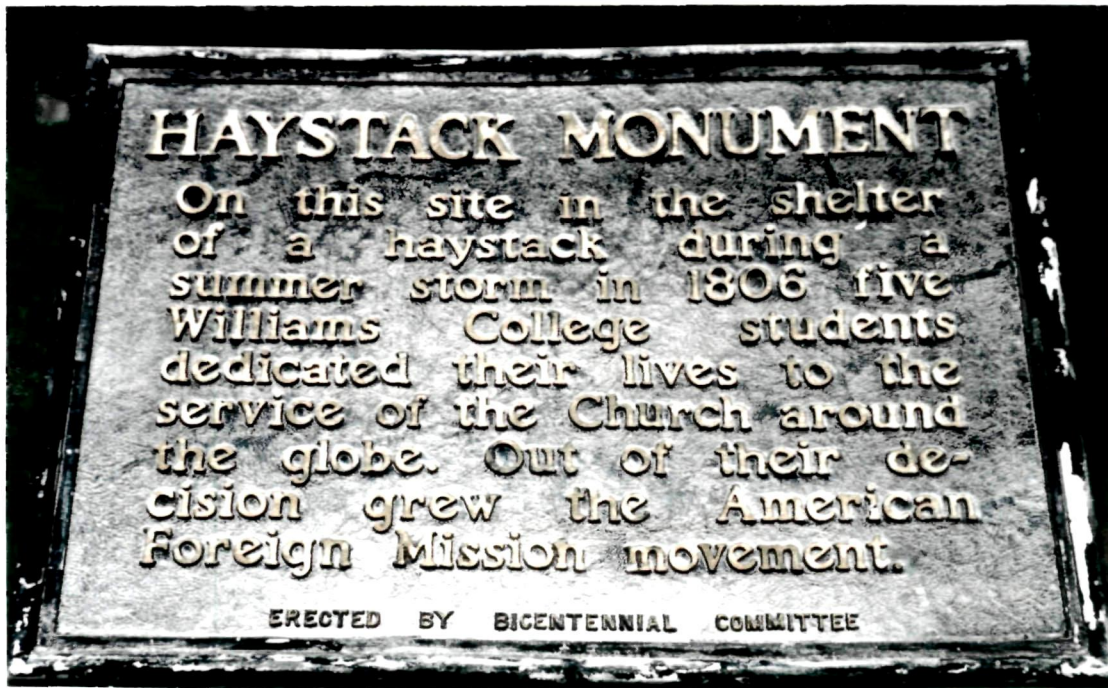
There are some important publications by eminent scholars containing valuable information on the subject such as Dr. H.K. Barpujari ( *The American Missionaries and North-east India [1836-1900 AD]* ), Dr. M. Neog (the *Orunodoi* [ed] ) and Dr. N. Saikia ( *Background of Modern Assamese Literature* ).

3. A map of north-east India showing present seven-sisters states : Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh has been put at the beginning.

## Chapter I

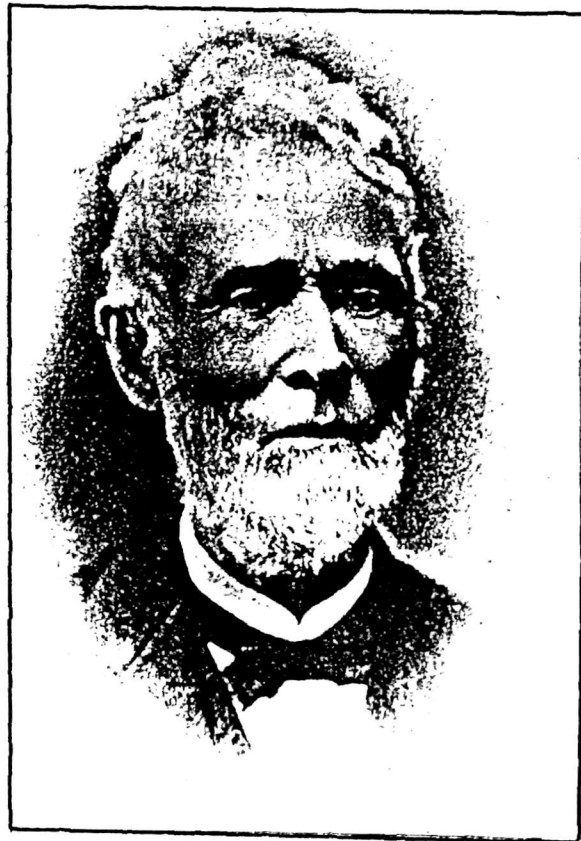
**Illustration Section**

- (a) Haystack Monument, Williamstown, Massachusetts, USA.
- (b) Photograph of Rev. (Dr.) Nathan Brown
- (c) Photograph of Tomb and Epitaph of Rev. Nathan Brown
- (d) Photograph of Rev. (Dr.) Miles Bronson
- (e) Photograph of Tomb and Epitaph of Rev. Miles Bronson

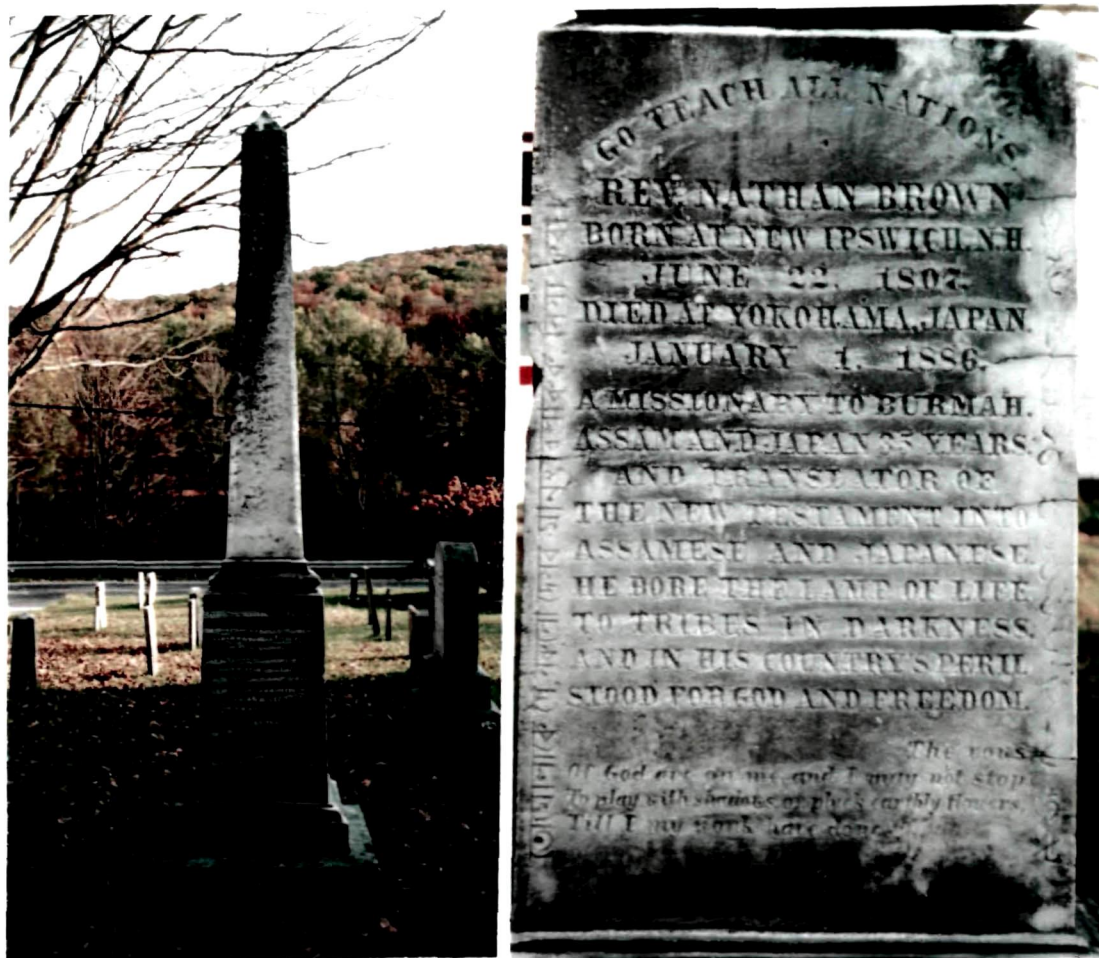


Haystack Monument, Williamstown, Massachusetts

Chapter I  
Illustration-(b)



Dr. Nathan Brown  
June 22, 1807 to January 1, 1886  
Source : Historical Society of American Baptist Missionaries,  
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania



Tomb and Epitaph of Rev. Nathan Brown

তোমোলাকে ঠা, মকলো দেয়ৰ মানুহহিলাকক সিয় কৰা।

GO TEACH ALL NATIONS  
REV. NATHAN BROWN  
BORN AT NEW IPSWICH, N.H.  
JUNE 22, 1807,  
DIED AT YOKOHAMA, JAPAN  
JANUARY 1, 1886.  
A MISSIONARY TO BURMAH,  
ASSAM AND JAPAN 35 YEARS.  
AND TRANSLATOR OF  
THE NEW TESTAMENT INTO  
ASSAMESE AND JAPANESE.  
HE BORE THE LAMP OF LIFE  
TO TRIBES IN DARKNESS,  
AND IN HIS COUNTRY'S PERIL  
STOOD FOR GOD AND FREEDOM.

*The vows  
of God are on me and I may not stop  
To play with shadows or pluck earthly flowers  
Till I may work have done.*

**BROWN**



Chapter I  
Illustration-(d)



Dr. Miles Bronson  
July 20, 1812 to November 9, 1883  
Source : Historical Society of American Baptist Missionaries,  
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

Chapter I  
Illustration-(e)



Tomb and Epitaph of Rev. Miles Bronson

IN MEMORIAM  
REV. MILES BRONSON  
BORN JULY 20, 1812  
DIED NOV. 9, 1883

FOR 43 YEARS A MISSIONARY  
TO ASSAM, INDIA

ERECTED BY HIS LOVELY CHILDREN

## Chapter II

### The Advent of the American Baptist Missionaries

The advent of the Baptist Missionaries to Assam is an important historical event which is directly related to the British annexation of Assam. Why and how the British Missionaries came to Assam for Christian evangelistic work will be discussed in this chapter. We have to go back to the end of the reign of Ahom rulers in early nineteenth century to understand the political and social situation of Assam at that time.

#### Final days of Ahom kingdom and British annexation :

The Ahom dynasty ruled Assam from 1228 to 1826. The intelligent and powerful Ahoms were successful in ruling Assam until 1811. After the death of Kamaleswar Singha, Chandrakanta Singha became the king of the Ahom dynasty in 1811 with his capital at Jorhat. Purnananda Buragohain continued to be the premier. This is the beginning of the waning years of Ahom rule, which followed the annexation of Assam by the British. Chandrakanta was too young to take responsibility as the king at the time of coronation. Purnananda was appointed as defacto ruler. Purnananda was practically in power for all the administration of the kingdom. In the meantime at the death of Kolia Bhomora Borphukan, Badanchandra Borphukan was appointed as viceroy and stationed at Guwahati.

Purnananda came to know the atrocities and gross exactions of Badan towards the people in Guwahati. Unfortunately, a situation of distrust came into being between the premier and the viceroy. When Purnananda realized that Badan was involved in a

conspiracy to plan to kill him, he became very firm against Badan. Purnananda deputed Moheswar Parvatia Phukan to arrest Badan. However, Badan came to know the plan and started to Calcutta by boat on September 26, 1815 (Devi, 1987:327).

Badan met the British Governor General at Calcutta, and requested military assistance to preserve the rights of the people of Assam. But the British Governor General refused to help Badan. Coincidentally at the East India Company meeting, Badan met emissaries from the king of Burma. Badan then approached the king of Burma Bodawpaya, at his capital city, Amarapur for help (Majumdar 1970 : 128). Badan again repeated the misrepresentation regarding the conduct of Purnananda, stating that because of his misuse of power, the lives of all in Ahom kingdom were in danger. He waited in Burma for sixteen months. At last Badan obtained a promise of help from Bodawpaya, the king of Burma, who had been persuaded by his wife who was one of Badan's relatives. Badan invaded Assam in March 1817 with the assistance of about sixteen thousand militaries. Purnananda confronted the Burmese and fought bravely, but the Burmese won the war. At this juncture Purnananda died, which was an unexpected situation. At that time Purnananda was a great leader in all respects. His loss was a terrible one for the cause of the Ahom kingdom. The Burmese continued their march and occupied the capital of Jorhat. Along their march to Jorhat, the Burmese burnt down the villages and tortured people inhumanly. The Burmese now occupied the capital and Badan was formally reinstated. Chandrakanta continued to rule with Badan as the defacto ruler. The Burmese were paid a large sum of money for the trouble and expenses of the expedition and returned to their own country in April 1817 (Gait 1992:215).

Badan became very revengeful towards his former enemies. Following a conspiracy led by the mother of the king, Badan was finally assassinated by Rup Singh. Chandrakanta was deposed, and Brajanath became the ruler with his ten year old son Purandar on the throne. The friends of the murdered Badan fled to Burma and informed the Burmese king of the situation. He sent a new force to Assam in February 1819, under general Ala Mingi. The Burmese again occupied the capital. Purandar fled to Bengal and Chandrakanta got reinstated. The Burmese became virtual rulers and started harassing the people. In that situation, Chandrakanta fled to Bengal. The Burmese ruled Assam from 1821 to 1825.

The days of the Burmese occupation of Assam were the darkest days in the history of Assam. Edward Gait states:

The oppression of the Burmese became more and more unbearable, and no one could be sure of his wealth or reputation, or even of his life. Not only did they rob everyone who had anything worth taking, but they wantonly burnt down villages, and even temples, violated the chastity of women, old and young alike, and put large numbers of innocent persons to death (Gait 1992:219).

During the Burmese occupation, many of the Assamese population fled to the jungle and gave up their cultivation. To be alive was the quest for all. Many fled to the hills of Jaintia, Manipur and other parts of the country (Downs 1971:3 and Gait 1992:220).

The Burmese, in their ambition to annex more territories, indulged in acts of aggression into the adjoining territories of East India Company. The Burmese were given a crushing blow in retaliation by the East India Company, leading finally to the treaty of Yandaboo, signed on February 24, 1826 (Devi 1987:339). According to the

Yandaboo treaty, the British gained Assam, Tanasarium and Arakan from the king of Burma, and he agreed, amongst other things, to abstain from all interference in the countries which constituted the province of Assam, and to recognize Gambhir Singh as Raja of Manipur.

When the Burmese left the Brahmaputra valley, the condition of the valley was most deplorable. At least thirty thousand Assamese had been taken away as slaves by the Burmese.

At first, a British agent administered the devastated area of Assam. The British had no interest in the depopulated upper Assam area, since they knew that the revenue will not be sufficient to maintain the area. Arrangements were made with the Bar Senapati of Matak and Sadia Khowa Gohain, rulers of tracts of land in the easternmost extremities of upper Assam. Finally the British decided to experimentally restore an Ahom royal member to the throne of upper Assam. Purandar Singha was installed in 1833 subject to several conditions. He was to heed the advice of a political agent appointed by the British. He was to reform the methods of administering justice. He was also to pay the Company an annual tribute of Rs. 50,000 which was actually very high considering the state of the region (Downs 1983:20).

From 1824 to 1833 a period of nine years upper Assam was under unsettled rule. Lahiri states :

No serious attempts were made by the British officers to heal the wounds caused by the misrule and confusion of the preceding half century. The interim administration set up by the British rather worsened the situation in many respects. The system adopted during these nine years was neither wholly British nor Ahom. It was an admixture of both, and during this interim period, the people neither got the blessings of the enlightened British administration nor the concessions of the indigenous system. Society was in a disorganized state (Lahiri 1994:191).

Claiming that Purandar Singha had failed to meet the conditions of the agreement, the British deposed him and annexed upper Assam in 1838. In 1842 Sadiya and Matak were also brought under direct administration, thus completing the annexation of the entire Brahmaputra valley (Downs 1983:21).

The newly acquired territory was administered as a division of Bengal from 1826 to 1874. The area was constituted into a province in 1874 and was administered by a Chief Commissioner. During the early part of the British rule several things happened. Rebellion against the British was organized by Gomdhar Konwar, Roopchand Konwar and Piyali Phukan in 1828-29. The rebellion was suppressed by hanging Piyali Phukan in 1828.

In consideration for geographical contiguity, historical ties and the convenience of the administration facility, the British annexed Goalpara, Cachar and Sylhet. Gradually annexation was extended to the hill districts - the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, the Naga Hills, the North Cachar and Mikir Hills, the Garo Hills and the Lushai Hills. The administration jurisdiction of the province was also extended to include the Northern and North-Eastern Frontier Tracts.

Leaving the chronological historical events, let us have a look at the commercial aspects of the British rule. The British were primarily interested in stabilizing N.E. India politically. They realized that the administrative cost would not be economical. Gradually they discovered the valuable deposits of Assam such as iron, coal and oil. The most valuable aspect was the cultivation of tea. They

established sawmills and coal mining, and explored oil at Digboi in 1890. To transfer these products, construction of rail roads began in 1881.

A change in the economic scenario started with the establishment of tea cultivation by the British in Assam in 1839. As early as 1823, an English adventurer, Robert Bruce, learned about the existence of wild tea in upper Assam. He sent some tea leaves to the superintendent of the Botanical gardens in Calcutta, who concluded that the tea variety was not suitable for drinking tea. However, Bruce continued to argue the matter that a cross breed of the indigenous and imported teas would definitely be a solution. Nothing more was done until 1832. Finally Bruce was appointed as superintendent of the Government Tea Forest, with headquarters near Sadiya.

Since the tea gardens near Sadiya were not prospering, Bruce transferred his work location to Jaipur near Naharkatia, where he found progressive output. In 1837, Bruce shipped 46 boxes of tea to Calcutta.

The tea garden areas of upper Assam were important field locations for the American Baptist Missionaries for propagation of Christianity. The tea planters could not procure the required labour force for the tea cultivation from the indigenous people. As a result they had to bring the labourers from other parts of India, such as Chota Nagpur. Some of the migrated labourers were already converted Christians. The *Chaotals*, *Munda* and other labour groups represent a distinct social group of Assam, with their own traditional cultural identity. The tea garden labourers did not have a deep rooted religion at the time of their initial migration period. As a result the



Missionaries had easy access to them, and were able to impress them with the teachings of the Christian gospel.

#### Impact of British annexation of Assam :

One of the main effects of the Yandaboo treaty was that for the first time in the history of the region, Assam was linked politically with the main stream of Indian history. Although there had been earlier cultural contacts with the Aryan India, North East India existed outside the political structures of the major powers of the rest of the India. The gradual extension of the British administration brought extensive changes to the entire area politically, socio-culturally and economically.

David Scott served as Commissioner of Assam from 1826 until his death in 1831. Scott was assisted by Captain Davidson. Franklin Jenkins was Commissioner of Assam from 1834 to 1861. These two remarkable men played key roles in developing administrative policies designed to serve the interest both of Government and the peoples of the region (Downs 1983:23).

Francis Jenkins was the son of an English clergyman and had strong evangelical commitments. Jenkins invited the first American Baptist Missionaries to Assam. It was not only an invitation. Jenkins helped the Missionaries, in many ways including providing government funds to support some of their non-evangelistic work. He also made his own contributions to the Baptist Missionaries.

#### Advent of the American Baptist Missionary :

During the years 1793 to 1813, the East India Company was persuaded from England to promote useful knowledge among Indians and to impart religious and

moral education. The British evangelicals proposed to include such a clause at the time of the renewal of the charter of the Company in 1793. However, court of directors opposed the move and the proposal was turned down. But in the same year William Carey, the first British Missionary arrived in Calcutta. Carey was not allowed to preach within the company territory. As a result Carey had to make his head quarter at Serampore under the Danish government (Neog 1983 : 0.59 & 0.67). Due to the public support in England the new Charter Act of 1813 permitted the British Missionaries to enter India for spread of Christian religion with some conditions attached. One of the condition was to observe religious neutrality and non-interference in the religions of Indian people. Carey translated the Bible into the local languages of India including one in Assamese. Krishna Pal, who was the earliest convert of Carey, was deputed to North East India for the spread of the Christian Gospel. Krishna Pal was not successful in conversion to Christianity excepting a very few. In 1829 a branch of the mission was started at Guwahati under James Ray, under the patronage of the British Commissioner David Scott. But upto 1836, only six individuals were baptized. William Robinson, successor of Krishna Pal also could not do any remarkable change in conversion of people into Christianity. Time to time frontier tribes carried their raids into the British territories. For the political and security reasons David Scott planned to open schools thinking that by providing education, it will be easy to control the disturbed areas. But there were no suitable teachers. Francis Jenkins assuming his charge as Agent to the governor-general in 1834 believed that spread of Christian Gospel will make it easier to control the Khamtis and Singphos and he contacted initially the Serampore Missionaries. As the

response was not encouraging, Jenkins extended invitation to the American Baptist Missionaries to establish a mission center at Sadiya (Barpujari, 1986 : X ii). Extract of Jenkin's letter to the Board of the American Baptist Missionaries which was published in the annual report, 1839 is added in the appendix<sup>1</sup>.

From 1795 to 1812, there was a spiritual awakening in America, called the Second Great Awakening. One part of the awakening took place in 1806 amidst a group of students in a college campus. This college was situated in Williamstown, Massachusetts. During a prayer meeting held in an open field, a sudden thunderstorm sent the attendees scurrying for cover in a haystack. A pledge made in that haystack became the inspiration that gave birth to the American Foreign Mission Movement - the Haystack Movement. A globe atop a pedestal marks the spot today. It is from this college that Dr. Nathan Brown, one of the Baptist Missionaries that later came to Assam, graduated in 1827. As a part of this movement, two American Baptists, Dr. Nathan Brown and Mr. Oliver T. Cutter arrived with their families at Sadiya, in the easternmost part of Assam from Burma. The Missionaries objective was much wider. The object of opening a mission in Assam was ultimately to reach Northern Burma and Western China, along with the intervening tribes. This is where the seeds of the American Baptist Missionary movement started in Assam.

Dr. Nathan Brown and Oliver T. Cutter were in Burma as American Baptist Missionaries. From Burma, after a stop over at Calcutta, Dr. Brown and Mr. Cutter, along with their wives, set out on the Brahmaputra river for Sadiya in three big country boats on November 23, 1835. They reached Guwahati on March 18, 1836 and finally arrived Sadiya on March 23, 1836<sup>2</sup>. It was a long hazardous journey to an

unknown place in country boats. They took up their residence in houses a short distance away from the British garrison. During their journey, and during the initial period in Sadiya, they spent their time in learning the Shan language, which they thought was the language of the locality. But it was a great disappointment when they realized the Khamtis and Singphos did not understand the Shan language at all. The language they spoke was totally different. Dr. Brown, who was an expert on linguistics, learned the language of the people - Assamese, in a short time.

Another disappointment to the Missionaries was that the population of the area was very low, contrary to their expectations. The language of the Singphos, who lived sparsely, had little similarity to the Shan language.

Rev. Brown requested a reinforcement of missionaries from the Home Board. As a reinforcement to the initial mission, Rev. Miles Bronson and Rev. Jacob Thomas, along with their wives, safely arrived in Calcutta on April 11 and Guwahati on June 3, 1837. They then proceeded on a country boat, facing strong currents on the Brahmaputra river. It was rainy season in Assam. However, they arrived safely at Biswanath near Tezpur. From Biswanath, the large country boat in which they traveled could not progress upstream at all, due to the heavy water current. On June 25th, Rev. Bronson fell dangerously ill of jungle fever. At the same time, it was impracticable to force the boat up the river against the rapid current. Rev. Thomas decided to go and to bring medicine for his friend. Rev. Thomas traveled in a small country boat. Rev. Thomas scarcely came within sight of the mission premises when a large tree from the riverbank fell on the boat. He was instantly bereft of life. The two

boatmen escaped injury. Mrs. Thomas along with Mr. and Mrs. Bronson, reached Sadiya on July 17, 1837.

It was a great misfortune for Bronson to lose his friend Thomas, who had a dream for Christian evangelistic work. However, the Missionaries continued with their objective, in whatever way they could. Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Cutter ran a small school for the Assamese speaking people. How they managed this school with a limited knowledge of Assamese, and without any books is a matter of surprise today.

The Khamtis were unhappy and could not tolerate the ruling of the British. Considering the unrest situation, Bronson was looking for a suitable safe place to relocate the center from Sadiya. At the request of Robert Bruce, the superintendent of the Government Tea Forest, who had already relocated to Jaipur from Sadiya, Bronson with his wife and Mrs. Thomas moved to Jaipur in April 1838 (Downs 1971 : 18-20).

One night in January 1839, the Khamtis attacked the British garrison. Mr. Brown was in the station at that time. Mr. Cutter was in Calcutta on official matters. When he heard the noise of fighting, Brown took shelter on a country boat for the whole night, however, the Khamtis did not do any harm to the Missionaries. The political agent, Col. White, was killed and eighty others were killed or wounded. The British retaliated and eventually forced the Khamtis to submit. The area became depopulated.

Since there were not enough people to teach or preach to, Brown, Cutter, Bronson and their families moved to Jaipur, carrying the printing machine with them, and the station at Sadiya was relinquished on May 12, 1839. The expenses of the

relocation were generously defrayed by Mr. Bruce, Superintendent of tea culture at Jaipur. (American Baptist Mission, Annual Report-Assam 1839 : 25)

At Jaipur, Bronson came in contact with the Nagas who lived in nearby hills. These Naga people were from Namsang village. He found the Nagas more friendly in comparison to Singphos. Bronson began to prepare a spelling book and simple catechism in the Namsanghea dialect. These were the first books written in the Naga language. In January 1838, Bronson decided to survey Namsang in order to establish a school and an outstation for the Christian evangelistic work. The Nagas received him with kind hospitality, and cordially approved the objects of his mission. The aged chief promised to send two of his sons to teach the missionary their language, to build houses and provide him with food, and to assist him in every way in their power.

The local British Commander Capt. Hannay and Mr. Bruce encouraged Bronson and donated money to use in producing the spelling book. The British Commissioner, Franklin Jenkins, even wrote the Home Board to send more help to Bronson. The British people thought that this would be a great help in controlling the frontier rebels, and in minimizing the administrative cost.

In late 1839, the Home Board appointed Cyprus Barker and his wife for Naga work. Bronson also recruited in his personal level. His sister, Miss Rodha Bronson, came with Barker. She was the first unmarried Baptist Missionary who came to Assam. Mr. and Mrs. Barker and Miss Bronson arrived at Jaipur on May 14, 1840. Miss Bronson joined her brother at Namsang but fell sick. She returned to Jaipur, but treatment could not save her and she passed away on December 8, 1840.

Although Bronson believed that it was still possible to work with the hill people, the Home Board did not approve his views. The Bronsons, the Cutters and the Barkers were all convinced that the original objective of the mission was impractical. They suggested that the Missionary objective to be turned to the populated Brahmaputra valley. Accordingly, stations at *Sibsagar* and *Nowgong* were adopted in 1841. The *Sibsagar* station was first occupied by Mr. Barker in May, 1841. Mr. Bronson moved from Jaipur to Nagaon in October, 1841.

In support of *Sibsagar* as the location of a new missionary station, a report was published in the annual report of the American Baptist Missionary (April, 1844), in which the Missionaries discussed their observations relating to the spoken language of Upper Assam and Lower Assam. *Sibsagar* was chosen because it was in close proximity to Rangpur, Gorgaon and Jorhat, the places where the original Assamese (or Ahoms) made the centres of their power and influence, where the king always resided and in which the Assamese language was spoken in its greatest purity. It also stood in the midst of a dense Assamese population<sup>3</sup>.

The first convert in the Brahmaputra valley was Nidhiram. His family was from Sadiya. He was a student in the school of Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Cutter. In addition, he worked in the Mission Press. His father died at Sadiya just after the Missionaries moved to Jaipur. In order to keep his job at the press, Nidhiram came to Jaipur with his mother. After two months his mother died of cholera. Nidhiram was about ten years old. He then lived with Cutter family where he found ample opportunities to learn religion along with other education. Nidhiram was very intelligent, and he later proved his capabilities as a writer and a committed Christian.

The Missionaries decided to change his Hindu name to Levi Farwell. But he became known as Nidhi Levi Farwell, a combined name. He was baptized by Rev. Bronson on June 13, 1841. The baptism of Nidhiram in June 1841 was the beginning of the Assam Mission.

Bronson finally decided to open a new centre at Nagaon. Barker also decided to move to Guwahati for a new centre in 1843. For the immediate future the American Baptist Missionary did not open any new centres. They performed the mission work from Sibsagar, Nagaon and Guwahati.



## Chapter II

### Notes & References

1. The letter was published in the annual report of the American Baptist Mission, 1839, page 27-28. From the content of the letter it is clear that the British administration worked closely with the Baptist Missionaries. In fact, Mr. Jenkins planned and developed the scheme of the Missionary's proposed work. An important statement made by Mr. Jenkins clearly indicates the feeling of "white supremacy" among the British officers.
2. A chart of the Missionary service periods in the Assam Mission, the American Baptist Missionary Union is added as Appendix-B.
3. A map of Sibsagar town published in the annual report of the American Baptist Missionary - Asiatic Mission, April, 1844 is included in the Appendix - C.

## CHAPTER III

### **The Effect of Christian Proselytization and and Philanthropic Activities on the Contemporary Socio-Cultural Milieu of Assam**

The American Baptist Missionary Union sent Rev. Brown and Rev. Oliver T. Cutter to Sadiya. They arrived with their wives on March 23, 1836. The first activity they undertook upon arrival was to set up schools for both boys and girls with the help of Mrs. Cutter. Thus the start was made with a philanthropic activity rather than with proselytization, although the first was done as a preparatory step for the second. The schools with their new objectives and methods set the model for a new life-style for the local population.

Whether the Missionaries were aware of it or not, the adoption of new changes in daily activities constituted a fundamental challenge to the traditional cultures of the indigenous people. However, as the evangelists could make the indigenous people aware of the new modern world with the illuminating light of education, science, sanitation, medicine and even culture with which we are dealing in detail presently, the local people seem to have adjusted themselves with the new standards.

The principal means by which the American Baptist Missionaries contributed to the process of adjustment can be listed as follows:

The Christian gospel and new code of conduct

Humanitarian service

Language and Literature

### **The Christian gospel and the new code of conduct**

The Missionaries in the nineteenth century who worked among the local population emphasized Christianity as a part of daily routine of life. To them, doctrine was important, but it was meaningless if not associated with conduct in conformity with the doctrine. They considered it so important that they expected a convert to value and practise a moral code of conduct presented by Christianity. On the other hand the new converts, mainly in the hill areas, could not abandon their previous social and religious beliefs.

The people of the Brahmaputra valley were even more serious in this respect. They were spiritually content with their religion. People do not change their religion as long as they are deeply satisfied with it. This was the case with Assamese Hindu people of the Brahmaputra valley. The teachings of neo-Vaishnavism by Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva was fulfilling to the Assamese Hindu society. They were so strong in their religious belief that the Missionaries were unable to attract them into Christianity. The situation with the immigrant tea garden labourers and the hills people was somewhat different. They did not have a strong determination in their religious belief like the followers of Vaishnava religion had. Those who converted to Christianity in the Brahmaputra valley were poor people and were of a lower class. Some of them accepted Christianity expecting to gain education to become employed with the Missionary or by the British administration.

Drinking of rice beer was closely associated with the traditional religious festivals and life-style of the hills people. The American Baptist Missionaries were not

in a rush to baptize anybody who wanted to become a Christian. They tried to look into the transformed 'true' Christian character of the person. The Baptist Missionaries believed that it was possible to change the religious aspects of indigenous people by changing the traditional 'immoral'<sup>1</sup> values, without destroying the original culture. The Missionaries tried their best to eradicate the habit of drinking rice beer, particularly among the hills tribal community. The Baptist Missionaries were partly successful. Abstinence from the use of traditional rice beer changed the earlier life-style to a new life-style of the hills tribal people.

**Humanitarian service :**

Campaign against opium eating habit :

The use of opium was an even more serious problem than that of drinking rice beer. The use of opium was regarded as a great offense, and disciplinary action was taken against the converted native Christians by the Missionaries.

The American Baptist Missionaries took bold steps to eradicate the opium habit. They educated people to follow strict Christian principles even though they had to close quite a few Churches in hill areas. The American Baptist Missionaries strongly opposed the British Government because of its regulation in promoting the use of opium. The worst social evil was also understood by the educated Assamese people. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, a great Assamese social reformer, worked closely with the American Baptist Missionaries in this matter. He strongly criticized the Government, who encouraged the eating of opium for its economic gain. He described its effects by the middle of nineteenth century thus :

The universal use of opium has converted the Assamese, once a hardy, industrious and enterprising race, into an effeminate (Sic), weak, indolent, and a degraded people. It has been universally the sole cause of undermining the health and physical constitution of the whole population. It is used by the young as well as the old. Women themselves are often not excepted; and in many parts of the country, opium is freely administered to infants and children. It is therefore high time for the Government to provide speedy and effectual remedies to preserve the country from utter ruin and degradation (Mills 1984: 110).

The American Baptist Missionaries joined with Assamese social reformers for the eradication of the habit of drinking alcohol and using opium by native people (Barpujari 1987:9).

The Missionaries attempted to eradicate the habit of opium eating in two ways. Firstly they tried to take disciplinary action against the converts. Secondly, they persuaded the government to declare its' use illegal. The Missionary Conference of 1893 adopted the following resolution:

**Whereas**, it is an admitted fact that opium is used to excess in the province of Assam,  
and  
**Whereas**, we believe that the use of this drug and that of spirituous liquors is greatly detrimental to all the best interests of the people, therefore  
**Resolved** : That we, as a Conference of Christian missionaries laboring in the province, do hereby express our abhorrence of these evils, and deplore the fact that a Christian Government sustains its present relation to them. And further that we most earnestly desire the success of those commonly called the Anti-opium party, and those who are striving to promote the cause of temperance in India (Downs 1995 : 34-35).

The British government prohibited the cultivation of opium, and only permitted the use of imported opium while continuing to collect a decent amount of tax money, securing a monopoly on the opium trade. By doing so, rather than improving the

problem of opium, addiction was getting worse. The American Baptist Missionaries passed a stronger resolution at the Missionary Conference of 1904 - 5.

Be it resolved that we rejoice to learn of the efforts being made to lessen the use of intoxicating liquors in the Province of Assam, and would be glad to see the entire abolition of the traffic.

Furthermore; whereas the sale of opium is making great havoc by the degrading influence of the drug of the native peoples on many of our mission fields [ in the province ], thus hindering and counteracting the civilizing and ennobling effects of the Christian religion upon these people; and

Whereas the baneful and degrading effects of this habit seems to us to be on the increase, and we know it to be in some sections among these peoples, and whereas the sale of opium is under the direct supervision and control of the British Government;

and

Whereas the British Government is founded upon and owes its greatness to the blessings of Christianity which are by this traffic in opium being greatly and seriously retarded in their progress in the Province of Assam ;

Therefore be it Resolved :

(1) That we, Christian Missionaries of the American Baptist Missionary Union, in Conference assembled, do deeply deplore the degradation and ruin wrought by this traffic upon the native peoples of this Province.

(2) That we do respectfully request and earnestly implore the British Government, through its representative, The Hon. J. B. Fuller, ICS, The Chief Commissioner of Assam, to do all in its power to abolish the sale of the drug, except it be for medicinal purposes, in the province (Downs 1995 : 34 - 37).

Gradually the use of opium became less of a problem within the Church and within the area of Assam in general. It is difficult to say who should get the credit for the eradication of the problem. But the Christian community, mainly the American Baptist Missionaries, played a significant role in ending its use within the Christian community (Downs, 1992:149).

#### Eradication of slavery :

Another social evil during the early years of the British administration was the problem of slavery in Assam. This evil predominantly existed among Singphos, Nagas

and Mizos. Rev Nathan Brown, who was from the northern part of America, was a full supporter of the anti-slavery movement in America. Mrs A.K Gurney writes about Rev. Nathan Brown:

In politics he was a pronounced anti-slavery man, and was one of the three delegates who waited on President Lincoln before the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation (Gurney 1887:250).

The Baptist Missionaries repeatedly petitioned the government to end the slavery practice within the territories under its administration - an effort that eventually led to its prohibition despite the apparent reluctance of the government to do so (Downs, 1992:151).

The British Commissioner of Assam Mr. David Scott was also not in favour of slavery in Assam. The British government studied the matter but did not take any action for complete abolition, considering the administrative strategy and the poor condition of slaves. Mr. Barooah states :

Where he felt he could Scott acted against slavery. Thus immediately after the liberation of Lower Assam he liberated some twelve thousand slaves and ordered Neufville to rescue and free the Assamese enslaved by the Singphos (Barooah 1970:173 ).

#### Improvement of health :

The Christian Missionaries placed emphasis on personal cleanliness and hygienic living conditions. They persuaded the hills people to bathe regularly, although the water to be carried from distant streams or springs. The Missionaries developed the water supply system, and even introduced technical innovations such as water pipes. The Welsh Missionaries in the Khasi-Jaintia region encouraged Christians to establish model villages where better standards of hygiene could be maintained. The

model village scheme developed by D.E. Jones near Aijawl, was an example of a modern life-style. The regulations adopted for residence were very valuable from the point of improved living conditions, and are as follows .

- 1 All houses must be at a distance of at least ten feet from one another [ to help prevent fire - the traditional practice of building houses close together resulted in whole villages being consumed when a fire started in one house ].
2. *Animals are to be kept in a separate building [ traditionally domestic animals had stayed either under or inside the houses - a practice considered unhealthy]*
3. The beams of the house must be at least six feet above the floor [to provide better ventilation].
4. Each house must have a separate latrine.
5. Drinking water must be boiled.
- 6 The inhabitants must go regularly to a place of worship (Downs 1983 :208)

This matter was given importance by the Missionaries, and living conditions were a matter of discussions in the Church meetings. So the Churches were not only a place of worship, but played an important role in uplifting the living conditions of the people. In the plains of Assam, touring sisters of various congregations also took part in the grihini schools (Downs 1992:155).

The Missionaries also paid attention to the personal appearance of the Christian people. The Missionaries encouraged the converts, both men and women, particularly in hill areas, to cover their bodies to a larger extent than was traditionally



done. In fact, the Baptist Missionaries did not seek to introduce the western style of dress. They recommended that ladies adapt the indigenous form of dress, rather than western dresses. Later Christians used western dresses because of their attraction to the western styles, however most women continued to dress in their local way. Gradually people in the hills cut their hair to look neat, which was due to the general impact of modernization.

Teachings against social evils :

The American Baptist Missionaries tried to reform the practice of child marriage and polygamy. At the same time they advocated for the marriage of widow. The influence of the American Baptist Missionaries was reflected by Assamese reformers Hemchandra Barua and Guanhiram Barua, on the matters of child marriage, widow marriage and polygamy (Barpujari 1987:9).

The Missionaries tried to solve the problem of warfare between the neighbouring villages of hill areas. They also attempted to abolish objectionable tribal practices like head-hunting.

In her book 'Sowing Seeds in Assam', Ms. Ella Marie Holmes describes a corrupt practice of social evil. Holmes states in her book thus :

I adopted three little brown girls. ---- Prova and Lecy were sisters, five and seven. Their mother was Christian. Their father ate hemp, which in effects similar to opium. The mother died and father was negotiating to sell these two little girls, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, to a Mahammedan for ten rupees. The Mahammedan would have kept the girls as house servants until they were about thirteen years of age when he would have sold them to some fellow Mahammedan for wives, receiving forty or even sixty rupees apiece for them. Prova is now married to a Christian and has two children. Leci is

completing her training as nurse and ready to serve in our first women's hospital to be opened in Gauhati this winter.

#### Women's rights movement :

Women in the plains or hills were not properly honoured in the early days of Assam. The Baptist Missionaries focused and educated people under Christian influence for the equal rights of women. Through Christianity, the relationship between men and women was improved in Christian homes. At first, it was considered a waste to send girls to school. Gradually this attitude changed for the Christian people, and eventually to all sections of society.

By the end of the 19th century, the Women's rights movement had already started in the west. The same movement was brought to the mission field by men and women. But women's activities in this respect were more challenging. The American Baptist Missionaries established a separate society - the Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. The women's society was mainly involved in educational and woman's work at first, and later in medical fields. The Women's society contributed in many areas, but its most important contribution was with regard to the changing status of women in the field of education. The American Baptists were the first to provide education for women in North-East India, with schools for girls being established at Sadiya and in other mission centres. The Nowgong Orphan Institution was the first co-educational institution in Assam. These schools were the basis for all changes that were to take place in the status of women - in all communities of the region, among Christians as well as people of other faiths (Downs 1992 163)

### Work in medical field :

Among all their humanitarian services, the most extensive activity of the American Baptist Missionaries was in the medical field. During the early period after the arrival of the American Baptist Missionaries in Assam, there was no knowledge of modern medicine or surgery. Both the hills and plains people believed that disease was related to evil spirits, and the remedy was to please the evil spirit by following religious rituals.

When the American Baptist Missionaries first arrived in Assam, disease was widespread. Cholera, malaria and *Kala Azar* (Black Fever) were major causes of illness and death. The death of Missionaries in early days was common. The early Missionaries picked up an elementary knowledge of first aid and medicine, and treated the simplest diseases with their very preliminary knowledge. Some of the Missionaries took some kind of medical training on their own initiative when they visited America in their home trips. The Missionaries had to play the role of healer of the body and soul in remote hill areas. Many of the Missionaries offered medical help to the surrounding sick people rather than trying to lead their attention towards Christian preaching. On the other hand, the patients went to see them for relief of pain, without any concern about Christianity. Love and concern was expressed by the Missionaries and was understood by the patients with gratitude. However, this paved a way for an easy conversion for the Missionaries.

In the annual report, July 1892 Mr. Rivenburg reports from Kohima :

I am convinced that in no other way could I have gotten so near the heart and confidence of the people as by helping them this point where they are so utterly helpless.

The American Baptist Missionaries was not the first who worked in the medical field in Assam. After first world war, the American Baptist Missionaries developed a strong interest in the medical mission, although they were opposed by the Home Board. Most works of the American Baptist Missionaries in the medical field were performed in early part of the twentieth century. Dr. Crozier was the first American Baptist designated as medical missionary to Tura for the Assam Mission. The second Baptist medical missionary was Dr. Kirby who came to Sadiya in 1901. In 1919 he was transferred to Jorhat, where he opened a small dispensary near the Jorhat Missionary School compound. Dr. Kirby on his own initiative moved the small dispensary to Borbheta in 1924. In 1933 a twenty five bed hospital was built. A nursing school was also opened in 1934 and in 1941, under the leadership of Dr. O.W. Hasselblad, the hospital was expanded and more facilities were added.

In response to the request of Women's Council of the Assam Baptist Convention, a women's hospital was opened in Guwahati in 1920, commonly known as Chatribari Hospital. This was the first hospital established by the Baptist Missionaries in the plains area of Assam. The location of Guwahati was selected because purdah was more strictly observed in lower Assam in those days. The women did not prefer to see a male doctor in those days.

After the second world war, missionary hospitals were expanded by increasing the capacity to accommodate more patients. The Missionaries received calls from the nearby villagers asking the Missionaries to prescribe medicine for them. In response to this, the Missionaries opened some health units in the villages, prescribed medicine and

helped with the vaccination for small pox. Even the native Christian Godhula took part in giving the vaccination to the people.

Other missionaries of different origins also opened hospitals in different parts of Assam. Even against the reluctance of the Home Board in America, the Baptist Missionaries served the people with strong determination. The Home Board was not in favour of establishing the hospitals because of limited funds. But the Baptist Missionaries were able to see the light at the end of the tunnel. They understood that this was one of the most important and effective means in gaining the attention, sympathy and good will of the people.

When the government started the charitable dispensary in Nagaon in 1863, Miles Bronson offered his help and fully cooperated with the project. He was very much on the alert so that all the poor people could get the benefit from the dispensary (Bhuyan 1990: 34-35).

#### Education :

Providing education to the people was the most important plan of the American Baptist Missionaries. Education was the bridge between the people and the new British administration. Establishment of schools by the American Baptist Missionaries for the propagation of Christianity, was a foremost action for the early Missionaries. Adoniram Judson, the early Baptist missionary, started schools in Burma. When the American Baptist Missionaries arrived at Sadiya they also instituted the opening of schools. The Baptist Missionaries wanted to educate the people to understand the truth in Christianity. The Missionaries realized that educating people

would make it easier for them to have a gradual conversion into Christianity.

The first school was opened at Sadiya by Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Cutter, just after their arrival. When the Missionaries moved to Jaipur from Sadiya, another school was opened. In later days the Missionaries opened new centres at Sibsagar, Nagaon and Guwahati.

Arriving at Nagaon, Rev. Bronson purchased land which had a small bungalow for the mission compound. Bronson had a master plan for the school at Nagaon. He looked for a permanent source for the future teachers for the schools and leaders to organize future Christian Churches.

#### The Nowgong Orphan Institution :

The Nowgong Orphan Institution, founded by Rev. Miles Bronson in 1843, was the first co-educational school in the plains of Assam. This institution was the source of converts in the plains areas of Assam. Later, similar schools were established in Guwahati and Sibsagar. In the Baptist Missionary annual report, May 1847, the objective of his 'Nowgong Orphan Institute' was reported as follows:

The object of the institution is to gather orphan and destitute children from every part of Assam, and train them up under a careful Christian influence; all who manifest a good degree of ability, to receive an education that will qualify them to become competent teachers and catechists; and those who manifest less ability, to be taught in connection with an elementary and Christian education, such trades and employments as will enable them to earn their own bread, and become useful members of society.

The annual report of the American Baptist Missionary, May 1850 and May 1852, confirms that the Orphan School at Nagaon included children of all the Hindu

castes, from the Brahmin down to the lower grades, together with Kachari and Mussulman children, and that the studies were conducted in Assamese, Bengali and English. Manual exercise was required daily for men, and the women were taught plain sewing, weaving, spinning and native house keeping.

By 1850 the school curriculum was revised to eight year duration, and the record shows the first six years as follows:

First and second year curriculum included writing, reading, spelling, math and geography in Assamese. The third year included Bengali and English, in addition to lessons from New Testament and the *Orunodoi*. Fourth and fifth years were devoted to histories of Assam, Bengal and India, including grammar and translation. In the sixth year courses English, history, philosophy and composition were taught ( Radtke 1995 : 2-3 ).

The first conversion in Nowgong Church took place in 1844, but until end of 1846, no one was baptized from 'Nowgong Orphan Institute'.

Rev. Bronson's ideas for the Orphan Institute may be summarized as follows:

1. The rescue of promising children.
2. Removal of the influence of caste by putting the children under the influence of the Christian religion.
3. Continuity of the education of the students, as parents or relatives would not remove them from schools.
4. Increased student attendance.
5. Prevailing superstitions would not influence the students.

6. Students would earn full belief and embrace Christianity.
7. School would have a religious dimension, and books will be chiefly religious along with secular subjects.

Rev. Bronson expected to form a community, and hoped that the students would become magnets for others to join Christianity. He wanted to connect teaching and preaching. Bronson's idea for the Orphan Institution gradually gained acceptance. He also proposed to hold a fund under government security, so that the financial problem in running the school could be avoided. The British, American and even native donors came forward to support for his cause.

The 'Nowgong Orphan Institute' was running in full vigour until the arrival of Rev. Solomon Peck from America in December 1853. Due to a financial crisis, the American Baptist Mission Union in America was planning to review their activities abroad. In the meantime, just before leaving to America, Bronson made an appeal for financial help for construction of an Orphan Institute building and a chapel at Nagaon. This was not appreciated by the Executive Committee. Upon the recommendation of Rev. Solomon Peck, some major changes took place. As a result, the Orphan Institute was directed to convert into a school with primary and normal departments, with main emphasis on training native teachers. Other conditions attached to this were : no student was to stay longer than three years in either department, the girls' department was to be separated from the institution and would have its own boarding school, the enrollment was limited to forty, no one under ten years would be allowed for admission, the instruction would be solely given in the vernacular medium.



Accordingly the changes were adopted. Gradually the number of students decreased, and finally by July 1856 the 'Nowgong Orphan Institute' was closed. The Bronsons continued to struggle through October 1857, when they furloughed and one native assistant took charge of the dwindling Nowgong Church.

Other educational institution :

Although the majority of the Christians were from hill tribal groups, some of its major institutions were located in the Brahmaputra valley. These included two large hospitals and nursing schools at Jorhat and Guwahati, a girls' high school at Golaghat, a theological college at Jorhat and its ecclesiastical headquarters at Guwahati.

The American Baptist Missionaries put a continued effort into the development of schools. In the early part of the twentieth century, they formulated a master plan under one management as Jorhat Christian School. The plan was to have four schools: a middle school, a high school, an industrial school and a Bible school. Later, a training institute was also added.

In the 1930's, the British successfully introduced commercial tea plantations in Assam. This opened an important new field in which the Baptist Missionaries could distribute the Gospel. Initially the Chinese tea makers and box makers were brought from China, which proved very expensive. The British trained local artisans for these purposes and resolved the problem in an inexpensive way. But the demand for unskilled labourers could not be resolved with the local available labour force. The British decided to bring tea garden labourers from outside of Assam. The largest labour force immigrated to Assam from the Chota Nagpur region of Bihar. Some of

these labourers were already converted Christians, and some were familiar with Christianity. The American Baptist Missionaries took the opportunity for evangelism and to distribute the Gospel. Some of the British managers helped the Baptist Missionaries in reaching their goals. The Missionaries opened schools, and started teaching and preaching among the *Kols* and other tea garden labourers.

It was the Missionaries who wanted to give an industrial education and training to the sons of the soil, which was a step towards achieving modern technology. However, the plan did not work out as expected due to lack of students. Finally after the first world war, it became a financial burden due to heavy stocking of materials in the industrial school. At the request of the American Baptist Missionaries, the government took over the management of the industrial school. It is still running under Government management as Industrial Training Institute at Jorhat (Downs 1971:106).

Education was started by the Missionaries for promoting evangelistic work. The purpose of education to native people was to read their own language and to create teachers and preachers for the propagation of Christianity. Nineteenth century missionary education served two basic functions. The first was to break down the barriers of superstition. The second was to provide a means of Christian instruction and access to the Christian scriptures, as well as other forms of Christian literature (Downs 1983:266-268).

### Language and Literature :

The contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries in developing the Assamese literature is so valuable, that a discussion will be incomplete without mentioning the name of the American Baptist Missionaries as pathfinders and leaders. Until the Missionaries arrival, Assamese literature was more or less confined to an oral state. Although the books (*puthis*) written by Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva and the *Buronjis* written at the time of Ahom Kings were prevalent in the past, the common people were not exposed to literature.

The American Baptist Missionaries brought the Assamese language to a more modern style. They provided the Assamese a modern form of literature both through their own compositions, and by the writings of Assamese literates, which were published from the Baptist Mission Press located at Sibsagar. This resulted in a great literary renaissance for the Assamese people. The Missionaries produced grammar, dictionary, text books for schools, religious Christian books translated to Assamese and even novels. Reproduction of *Buronjis* was an significant contribution to the Assamese literature. But their main literary vehicle was the periodical *Orunodoi*, first published in January 1846 and continued until 1880. The *Orunodoi* was the first periodical published in Assamese language.

Rev. George Gillespie has described the contents of the *Orunodoi* in his article *Orunodoi* which was published in the *Journal of the University of Gauhati* and reproduced in the *Indian Church History Review*, X11, No.1, 1978 as follows (Gillespie 1978:20) :

The paper covered local and foreign news, descriptions of the tribal people of Assam as well as of foreign countries, science, machines, animals of the World, the stars, coins, European and Hindu mythology, old Assamese manuscripts, book reviews, Christian teaching, and some news of the Assamese Christian community. It frequently had poetry, both original and translated. It called for many reforms, such as widow remarriage. For the Assamese people it was the only source of news from outside Assam.

The contribution made by Nathan Brown in developing the new literature, as well as in preserving the ancient manuscript is noteworthy. In establishing Assamese as the mother tongue in the schools and courts of Assam, thereby replacing Bengali, the leadership taken by Dr. Nathan Brown and Dr. Miles Bronson will always be remembered by the people of Assam.

Dr. B.K. Barua describes the impact of the Missionaries in the Assamese language and literature thus :

The missionaries definitely achieved one thing. Up till now Assamese literature was more or less an oral literature confined to the villages and the Ahom court. Now it takes a definitely urban complexion, and at Gauhati, Sibsagar, Nowgong and such other headquarter towns, literary circles sprang up. The old religious tone was replaced by a more secular one, and there grew up a literature dealing not with a mythical world of Gods and nymphs but with the life and society of the 'mortal millions' here and now. Western ideas began to spread along with the progress of English education in the land. In every town a literary society was born. Old beliefs, ways and concepts yielded place to new ones. The influence of western ideas began to be keenly felt in the domain of literature, which now enters a period of varied creative activity (Barua 1964 : 106-107).

The Christian proselytization changed the lives of the tribal people of the hills. Christianity brought the hills tribal societies in contact with modern civilization. It helped in the eradication of the old objectionable customs, which had existed in some parts of the hills such as head hunting. Christianity also played a major role in the

process of integrating the hills people in the north east with the rest of the India. Christianity, along with the British administration, gave birth to a process of modernization which included cash economy and previously unknown commodities, road and rail communications, modern education and medicine, newspapers and books, models of new life-styles and a new judicial and political system (Downs 1983:3).

Christianity, along with education, helped the indigenous people to see the new world. In those early days, Dhaniram and Sibaram, two Assamese students from Nowgong Mission School, made a voyage to Boston, America. They were the first Assamese to visit America. They traveled with the American Missionaries and were excited to see so many things for the first time in their life. They wrote letters to Assam expressing their feelings on being in a developed country. In the future they hoped to see Assam become as prosperous a country as America (Neog 1983 : 365).

As a result of the education and technical training made by the Missionaries and British administration, a group of professional people emerged with a new innovational outlook. To some extent, the habits of people were changed by the influence of western culture. We notice a change in style of dress by men and women. Most indigenous people did not have an outlook for business. The concept of trade and commerce came to their mind after seeing the activities of the western business people.

An important joint contribution of the British administration and the Missionaries was the intellectual revolution of the Assamese literate. It gave birth to a

social and intellectual life. It was a renaissance to modern Assamese literature. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, a great reformer of Assam, clearly understood the stagnant sphere of Assamese society. He encouraged the Assamese people to gain morals. His book *Asomia Lorar Mitra* was of immense value to the Assamese society. In the same spirit, he was followed by Hemchandra Barua and Gunabhiram Barua. Both Baruas realized that social reformation was absolutely necessary for progress of the Assamese society. They exposed the social evils of Assamese society without any hesitation. Hemchandra Barua depicted the degraded picture of Assamese in his satirical writing *Kania-Kirtan* (1861) and *Bahire Rong-Chong Bhitore Kowabhatari*. Gunabhiram also in his drama *Ram-Navami* (1857) highlighted the conservative society (Sarma S. N. 1981 : 294-296).

In different areas of old Assam, the names of the Missionaries are engraved in the heart of the people for their services to the society. Such is the case with Dr. Nathan Brown and Dr. Miles Bronson in Assam. It is they who laid the foundation of Assamese literature in the modern age.

How Assamese literature was rehabilitated in Assam with the help of the American Baptist Missionaries are discussed in more detail in chapter IV.

## Chapter III

### Notes & Referencès

1. The conception of “immoral “ values to the Baptist Missionaries as well as the British administrator is questionáble. From their point of considerations both the British and the Baptist Missionaries considered some of the traditional cultures of hills tribal people as “immoral”. But evidences support that if the practices are within Christian culture, the “immoral” becomes “moral”.

## Chapter IV

### Rehabilitation of the Assamese Language :

#### The Historic Role of the American Baptist Missionaries

Assamese was the language in the courts of Assam before the advent of the British. Even after the annexation of Assam by the British, Assamese was the language of the courts in Assam for about ten years. The language was used in almost every department of public office with great facility and convenience, and to the complete satisfaction of the people of Assam. The Act XXIX of 1837 gave full authority to the British Government to adopt the vernacular of the respective provinces in lieu of any foreign language. By exercising the law, the Persian language, which was introduced in Moghul era, was abolished from the courts of Bengal and other provinces of India under the British rule. But in the case of Assam, an unfortunate situation occurred. Instead of abolishing foreign languages, the Bengali language was introduced in courts and schools of Assam, by the British

Assamese was a distinct language of India. Although the Bengali language was introduced in the schools and courts of Assam, the people could not follow it. This resulted in a confused state in the field of education as well as in the courts.

The American Baptist Missionaries, particularly the noted linguistic scholar Dr. Nathan Brown, emphasized that the vernacular language of the people of Assam was Assamese. He was the first who opposed the introduction of Bengali in the village schools of Assam (Barpujari 1987 : 5). The Missionaries tried to establish the fact by



publishing books in Assamese and educating the children with their vernacular language. However, the British people were not convinced. Those British official who were entrusted to manage the public instruction continued to believe that the Assamese and Bengali were one and the same language.

The British occupied Bengal long before they occupied Assam. Due to early exposure to the British regime, the Bengalees were more advanced in general education and in communication using English language. Following the Yandaboo treaty on August 24, 1826, Assam came under the power of the British rule. Assam maintained an independent status from the past, and could not accept the sovereignty of the British in an easy manner.

After occupying Assam, the British administration felt the necessity of people who had a fair knowledge in English to assist them in administering Assam. Since there were none in Assam to meet the need, The British had to bring the Bengalees who had a fair knowledge in English, to perform clerical work. Gradually, an influx of Bengalees took place in Assam, and they became the right hand people to the British administrator. Neither the British nor the Bengalees understood the Assamese language. Since both the Assamese and Bengali languages had roots in common to origin Sanskrit language, the Bengalees could understand a few words here and there. They influenced the British people, and convinced them that Assamese was a dialect or an identical language to Bengali language. Most Assamese scholars agree that the Bangalees were instrumental in trying to have the Assamese language downgraded since lot of evidence supports the high-handed nature of Bengalees towards the

Assamese language in those days. Mr. Talukdar writes that the root cause of this was the conspiracy of the Bengali petty officers (*amolahs*) [Talukdar 1993 : 9]. Mr. D. Neog states :

They [the Bengalees] happened to catch a word or two of Sanskrit origin from the lips of the people and failing to make any head or tail of the rest of their vocabulary chose to call it at random a patois of Bengali and advised the rulers, who were then equally innocent of the language, to replace it by the Bengali language. It was the matter of a minute as it was the question of whims; and the mischief was done. It was indeed, a Himalayan blunder ( Neog 1982 : 340 ).

Noted historian of Assam, Dr. H. K. Barpujari is of the opinion that it was a plan of the British people to introduce the Bengali language in place of Assamese in schools and courts of Assam to make it easier for the British to govern. In support of his opinion, Dr. Barpujari refers to a long letter of a popular Commissioner of Assam, Francis Jenkins, to the Lieutenant Governor ( Barpujari 1987 : 87-93 ).

However, for good or bad, knowingly or unknowingly, the British officially imposed the Bengali language in the courts and schools of Assam in 1836. As a result the Assamese were deprived of the prestige owed to their rich indigenous language and the Bengali became the administrative language in law courts and in the schools of Assam.

The early part of the nineteenth century was the darkest era for the Assamese language and literature. The environment for the Assamese people was in all aspects like a boat without a boatman floating in a river. The memories of inhuman oppression by the Burmese, famines and earthquakes did not fade away in the minds of

the Assamese people. The hope for a secure life under the British was out of the question to the Assamese. The whole Assamese society was morally degraded. It was more frustrating when the Assamese had to lose their own language while living in their own sweet home. There was nobody to take a stand boldly against this. The society was in a turmoil. It was the most critical time for the Assamese in their social, cultural and economic life.

In the same year when the Bengali language replaced Assamese in courts and schools of Assam, the American Baptist Missionaries entered Assam to throw the light of Christianity on the people of Assam. It really was something like a miraculous coincidence for the Assamese : as if the Baptist Missionaries had come at that particular time to rescue them from a miserable situation.

Mr. David Scott was the first Commissioner of Assam under the British rule. Mr. Scott was a good hearted person who proposed the formation of an English school so that the Assamese people would have proper education, and they could be self dependent and better employed. Due to his early death, he could not fulfill his plan. Mr. Jenkins, the next Commissioner of Assam, was also a person who worked towards the uplifting of the Assamese people, by providing good education and employment. He proposed the formation of an English school in every district of Assam. With his sincere effort and public donations, Mr. Jenkins started the first English school at Guwahati in 1835, and the second English school at Sibsagar in 1841. Mr. Jenkins invited the American Baptist Missionaries to promote education and Christianity in Assam, and he was the person who primarily advocated replacing

the Assamese language with Bengali in Assam.

It has already been mentioned how the American Baptist Missionaries arrived in Sadiya. Within three months of their arrival, the Missionaries instituted a school at Sadiya. They felt that the school was needed to teach the local people reading and understanding the Bible. The medium of language in the school was Assamese, Tai and English and the subjects taught were reading, writing and math. In the beginning, Dr. Brown also thought that the Assamese language was some form of Bengali language. But for the great linguist Brown, it took no time to realize that the Assamese was a sweet language, independent of Bengali, with distinct words and vocabulary.

Dr. Nathan Brown and Mr. Oliver T. Cutter carried a printing press with them when they arrived at Sadiya. The Baptist Missionaries established their printing press at Jaipur in 1839, which was later moved to Sibsagar in 1843. The establishment of the printing press actually ushered in the history of book printing in Assam, and of Assamese printed books.

The Missionaries understood clearly that without learning the Assamese language they would not be able to be closer to the Assamese. The Missionaries also understood that it would be a futile attempt to divert the Assamese people from the faith of deep rooted Hindu Vaishnava religion. However, they tried truthfully and dedicated their services to the Assamese people to help them establish their own language. Although the Missionaries had in mind to convert the people to the Christianity they worked relentlessly to establish the Assamese language, which

actually elevated the language to a contemporary modern style.

Observing the demoralized situation from the past unhappy situations, the Baptist Missionaries were determined to create consciousness in the Assamese society. The Missionaries wanted to work as a team for the re-establishment of the Assamese language.

The Baptist Missionaries started the publication of the *Orunodoi*, the newspaper-cum-magazine, from Sibsagar in January, 1846. From the beginning, the magazine described itself as “ A monthly paper, devoted to Religion, Science and General Intelligence”. Although religion was a part of the magazine, it was not used as a focal point. However materials on Christianity were published and news of the Baptist world were flashed. Under Science and General Intelligence, the paper tried to publish materials so that readers could get an extensive knowledge of the modern world. Various scientific topics, advancement of engineering and technological materials, were published to keep abreast the readers. Dr. M. Neog states :

It explained global geography and gave descriptions of the night sky with its stars and planets. The news of great events in India and in foreign countries were brought to the door of the Assamese even as they took place. They could have the intelligence of scientific inventions and discoveries in a simple and digestive form. Beyond all these somewhat startling matters, looking like coming from another world, which tended to reshape the Assamese mind, there were ‘newsy’ and ‘sensational’ matters from a familiar sphere meaning from different parts of Assam. The mind of the readers was thus treated to a very much rich fare ( Neog 1983 : 0.66 ).

The Missionaries studied the history of Assam and published the old chronicles in the *Orunodoi*. It campaigned against the social evils for example opium, rice beer, and others like polygamy, slavery and female infanticide. The creation of new writers,

both native Christians and others, along with the readers, formed a group of people with progressive minds. Although the *Orunodoi* was for the Assamese people, the editor did not publish any news or significant events that were political in nature. The Missionaries perhaps did not want to confront the British administration in their political affairs. But we see some exceptions to this in their fight for the eradication of the habit of opium eating and to re-establish the Assamese language in the place where it belonged.

The most important contribution of the Baptist Missionaries are the literary works in the Assamese language. They rehabilitated the language for the future generation, brought self confidence to the people of Assamese nation, encouraged the nation for hope and inspired the people to march to a new modern world. But to achieve this goal they had to struggle in a long battle with the British administration.

In 1872, a committee was formed under the name - 'Assam Language Improvement Society' for the purpose of re-instatement of Assamese in place of Bengali. The petition was signed by 216 persons, and Rev. Miles Bronson and Rev. K.E. Neighbor were also signatories. The petition was submitted to the Deputy Commissioner of Nagaon on 10th April 1872, by the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Futtic Chunder. The text of the letter is as follows :

I am directed by the 'Assam Language Improvement Society' to forward to you the accompanying Memorial from the 'Assamese Community at Nowgong' to His Honour the Lieutt. Governor of Bengal, praying for the introduction of Assamese Language in the courts and schools of Assam, and to solicit the favour of your submitting the same for the consideration and orders of the Government of Bengal (Bhuyan 1990 : 16).

Dr. M. Neog refers to a memorandum dated March 9, 1872 in the *Orunodoi* that stated the public sentiment to reintroduce the Assamese language. Dr. Neog also cites that the memorandum was signed by 216 persons and submitted under the name - 'The humble Memorial of the Assamese Community of Nowgong, Assam' Dr. Neog states that Dr. Bronson himself led the agitation as the president of the community. Dr. F. S. Downs also states Rev. Bronson was president of the committee (Downs 1983 : 248 ). Perhaps both the memorandums mentioned above are the same. Dr. Neog also adds : 'It can be easily referred that representations of a like nature came up from Sibsagar, Gauhati and other places through the inspiration of the Baptist leaders, and that all these memorials went to remove in an effective manner, the misgivings that were working inside the Government machinery, through the machinations of officer like William Robinson' ( Neog 1983 : 0.64 ).

A report - *A few remarks on the Assamese Language and a vernacular education in Assam* by a 'Native', was published from the American Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagar in 1855 and was distributed among the educated people of Assam. Undoubtedly this 'Native' was Anandaram Dhekial Phukan. Anandaram's report was written with facts covering all available applicable documents to justify establishing the Assamese language in place of Bengali. Anandaram's view points were very strong, appealing and justified. Following few references will establish the value of his report for the Assamese forever.

Anandaram quoted two passages in Assamese and Bengali having same meaning with their translations in English. At the end of the passage Anandaram

grouped the words under three categories - (a) the words that do not have the slightest affinity with the Bengali, (b) those words that bear some distant resemblance and (c) those words which are more or less similar. Out of a total of 287 words, 112 were in no way connected with Bengali, 98 were derived from Sanskrit, the common source of both the languages, and only 77 words were either derived from or had a resemblance to Bengali ( Native 1855 : 10 ).

To illustrate the distinctiveness of the Assamese language, he grouped another 114 Assamese words denoting the most common objects in nature, and used by all nations in daily life. Out of 114 words, 90 words did not have any connection whatever with Bengali, and of the rest, only a few had any resemblance to Bengali ( Native 1855 : 17 ).

Considering a conversation specimen of the colloquial language of Bengal and Assam, Anandaram illustrated that the significant differences were wider between the two languages. Using a specimen of writing, containing a large mixture of Sanskrit words, that be understood easily in other parts of India, Anandaram translated the writing into Hindi, Bengali and Assamese, and the result indicated that the words bore a close resemblance to each other. Considering this fact, probably Bengali should also replace Hindi.

Anandaram explicitly stated '--- it is by means of the language spoken and understood by all classes, that popular education can be successfully carried on : and, if this theory be correct, it can no longer be denied, that the Assamese ought to have their own language as the medium of acquiring knowledge' ( Native 1855 : 27 ).



The first book that was placed in the hands of the Assamese youth, in the so called Government Vernacular School was the Bengali primer - the first words which he or she learned to spell, are not those that he or she had been accustomed to hear or speak. Even by studying for four to five years, the students could not express their thoughts in Bengali correctly, nor they could translate correctly. Anandaram boldly expressed the manifold disadvantages of using a foreign language in the dispensation of justice.

Anandaram included in his report that Bengali was scarcely said to have existed as a written language until the beginning of nineteenth century. On the other hand, Assamese literature existed since the thirteen century of the Christian era. Anandaram documented all kinds of early Assamese literature in his report to support his cause.

Anandaram was a close friend of Rev. Bronson, and he worked closely with Bronson for the re-establishment of the Assamese language in Assam. The contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries in establishing the Assamese language in Assam will always be noted as a milestone. In Anandaram's own words

The American Missionaries of Assam, like their worthy brethren of Serampore, have been the only zealous supporters of the Assamese language during the last 20 years. It is to them, that we owe our first publications in Assamese; and the credit of reviving the Native language, is due to them alone. Long will the rising generation have cause to be thankful to the missionaries, for their timely efforts to preserve the language and literature of their country. While the missionaries have for their primary object, the issue of the Bible and Religious Tracts in Assamese, they have not forgotten the all important subject of education. They have published several elementary works in Assamese on History, Geography, Arithmetic, and other subjects : and an invaluable Monthly Magazine in Assamese, written a popular style, and devoted to

Religion, Science, and General Intelligence has been started and continued since 1846. Other useful and instructive works are also in course of preparation by them ( Native 1855 : 56 ).

Rev. Bronson wrote a letter to the editor of *The Friends of India*, on May 25, 1855, expressing his views and concern for the unsatisfactory progress of education of Assam :

You are aware that the Assamese, like all other people, have a mother tongue; and you will not have forgotten that the Venerable Dr. Carey, who put forth the first efforts to benefit the Assamese, found it necessary to employ that medium, as his translation of the Assamese Scriptures and other works abundantly show. At a later period also when the Serampore Mission appointed Messrs Robinson and Rae to Assam, their opinion as to the necessity to use the Assamese language is evident from their having revised and printed Street Luke's Gospel and other works in Assamese.

Rev. Bronson even cited the example of Sankaradeva to justify the identity of Assamese language:

He [Sankaradeva] came down to the level of the people and translated from the Sanskrit these portions of the Hindu sacred books, and presented them to the people in their own familiar dialect. --- They took among them like wild fire, and are to this day increasingly popular ( Neog 1983 : 0.64 ).

Rev. Bronson also mentioned from the experiences of the Missionaries, that both the Bengali medium and Bengali teachers were useless in the vernacular schools of Assam.

Rev. Brown left Assam in 1856. Rev. Bronson had to return home in 1857 for an illness in his family. Mr. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan passed away in 1859. Rev. Bronson returned to Assam in 1861 and resumed his old effort for the re-establishment of Assamese language.

Mr. A. J. Moffat Mills, Judge of the *Sudder Dewani and Nijamat Adawlat* was deputed to Assam during the early part of 1853 to inquire into the existing administrative condition of Assam. Mr. Mills submitted his 'Report on the Province of Assam', in 1854 to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal. Mr. Mill felt necessary to include the report - 'Observations on the Administration of the Province of Assam' by Baboo Anandaram Dhekial Phukan as 'Appendix - J' to his report. It will be appropriate to quote the following from the report of the Dhekial Phukan under section 'Education and Schools'.

--- A certain number of institutions styled Vernacular schools has been established in the country. Instructions in these schools are imparted in a foreign language, viz., the Bengalee, which is but imperfectly understood by the teachers themselves, not to speak of the pupils. The education which they afford is of the simplest and most elementary kind; the students seldom aspire to a higher knowledge than a mere acquaintance with simple reading and writing. The few books that are used on the different branches of elementary learning are composed in a foreign tongue, which necessarily prevents their being of any popular use. Much time is in the first instance wasted in acquiring a knowledge of the Bengalee, and the reason assigned for the substitution of Bengalee for the vernacular Assamese, is, that 'Bengalee is the language adopted in the courts', as if the object were to make the Assamese a nation of judicial officers; and strange to say, notwithstanding the proposed object of the schools, very few ex-students of the Vernacular institutions in the interior have ever qualified themselves to fulfill offices of trust or responsibility in the courts of the Province. The knowledge which they acquire seldom makes them fit for discharging any higher duties than those of a Gaon Kakoti, or village accountant, so that very few youths from the respectable classes ever resort to them. The teachers, too, engaged in the Government Vernacular Schools are generally men ill qualified to impart instruction in any of the higher branches of knowledge. We therefore think that little argument is necessary to prove that popular education will never advance in the country unless the system at present pursued in the Vernacular schools be re-modelled. In our humble opinion, the following arrangements appear to be best calculated to promote the cause of education - viz., the substitution, in the schools, of the Vernacular language in lieu of the Bengalee, the publication of a series of popular works on the different branches of Native and European knowledge in the Assamese

language, the establishment of a Normal school to train up a body of teachers, and the creation of a separate department for the study of Sanskrit in the several Vernacular schools ( Mills 1984 : 105-106 ).

In his long report Mr. Mills supported and endorsed the views of Mr. Phukan. Mr. Mills clearly states in his report that it was a mistake on the part of the British administration to insert the Bengali language and he recommended for re-instatement of the Assamese. He also honoured Dr. Brown as a best scholar in the province. Text of paragraphs 92 and 93 in his report states thus :

That the Schools have not done more good is attributable to the indifference of the higher classes to instruction, but more particularly to inefficient schoolmasters, the want of proper class-books, and defective supervision; but there is I think good cause for the unpopularity of our schools. The people complain, and in my opinion with much reason, of the substitution of Bengallee for the Vernacular Assamese. Bengallee is the language of the courts, not of their popular books and Shasters, and there is a strong prejudice to its general use. It is because instruction is imparted to the youths in a foreign tongue that they look only to Government for employ. Assamese is described by Mr. Brown, the best scholar in the Province, as a beautiful, simple language, differing in more respects from than agreeing with the Bengallee, and I think we made a great mistake in directing that all business should be transacted in Bengallee, and that the Assamese must acquire it. It is too late now to retrace our steps, but I would strongly recommend Anundaram Phookun's proposition to the favourable consideration of the Council of Education, viz., the substitution of the Vernacular language in lieu of Bengallee, the publication of a series of popular works in the Assamese language, and the completion of the course of Vernacular education in Bengallee. I feel persuaded that a youth will, under this system of tuition, learn more in two than he now acquires in four years. An English youth is not taught Latin until he is well grounded in English, and in the same manner, an Assamese should not be taught a foreign language until he knows his own.

The American Missionaries have published some elementary educational works in Assamese, and would readily undertake to publish more, so that the change might be introduced at once (Mill 1984 : 27-28 ).

The contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries towards the rehabilitation of Assamese language is so significant that all the Assamese have to acknowledge it forever. The Baptist Missionaries were the pioneers in so many aspects of modern Assamese language and literature. Their pioneering works in public relations, installation of a printing press, the modern style of writing prose, literature in the field of novels and poems, children literature, collection of old manuscripts and their publication, writing of dictionary and grammar and their publication, text books, book review etc. will always be recognized as a golden gift of the Baptist Missionaries to the Assamese language and literature. Dr. Brown truthfully made the statement 'For beauty and softness, the Assamese language is much superior to the Bengali ----- It is not inferior, in copiousness, to any of the Indian languages' ( Bhuyan 1986 : 51 ).

The vast literary works of the Baptist Missionaries may be divided into two classes - secular and non secular, or into three divisions - religious works, literary pieces and text books.

The first printed book in Assamese was the *Old Testament* of the Bible which was translated by Atmaram Sarma, a pundit from Nagaon, under the direction of Dr. William Carey, and was published from Serampore Missionaries Press of Bengal in 1813. However, Cary's Assamese Bible was loaded with Sanskrit vocables and the Assamese could not understand its contents. Rev. Brown therefore undertook a plan to rewrite an Assamese version in January 1838. It took a long time to complete, and publication was only done after the translation passed through several hands.

The printing press of the American Baptist Missionaries was established by 1844 in Sibsagar<sup>1</sup>. In the same year, the Missionaries printed the first History of Assam, compiled by Kasinath Tamuli Phukan and Radhanath Barbaruwa. In January 1846 the first Assamese journal, the *Orunodoi*, was published from the Sibsagar Mission Press which was continued up to 1882.

The first Assamese grammar was written by Rev. W. Robinson in 1839, which was published by the Serampore Mission Press. The first grammar was written in English with specimens of Assamese language in Roman character. Rev. Robinson, who was always against the Assamese language, did this pioneer work not for his love of the Assamese language, but so that other British officers stationed in Assam could learn the language for public relations and administrative purposes. On the contrary, Dr. Nathan Brown, the scholar and linguist, loved the Assamese language from his heart. Dr. Brown had his grammar published in 1848 from the Sibsagar Mission Press. In the introduction, Dr. Brown expresses that he wrote the book under the title *Grammatical Notes on the Assamese Language* for his private use. In case of orthography, Dr. Brown followed the rules maintained by Jaduram Dekabarua, who ventured the first Assamese dictionary which was not published.

Dr. Brown prepared the grammar by following the style of English grammar. Due to this view, the initial Assamese grammar had a touch of modern style of English grammar. Dr. Brown in his preface to the *Grammatical Notes on the Assamese Language* (1840), advanced certain irrefutable arguments justifying the rehabilitation of the Assamese language, and these arguments became the basis of the missionary

campaign for the cause. Dr. Brown specifically discussed some Assamese words which could not be pronounced in Bengali. Some of the letters ( like ঞ ) used in Assamese were absent in Bengali.

Dr. Nathan Brown published the *New Testament* in Assamese in 1848 which was reprinted four times until 1873 (Neog, 1982 : 343). The fifth edition was printed in 1898 from Calcutta. Another work of Brown - *Khrishtar Vivaran Aru Subhavarta*, was published from Sibsagar in 1854. Out of about 330 hymns rendered into Assamese, as many as 60 were done by Dr. Brown. He wrote several other books. From his missionary experiences in Assam, he wrote *The Whole Walford Kin*, which includes vivid descriptions of Assam. Another important work of Dr. Brown was that he collected the old manuscripts (chronicles) in 1840. The details of these manuscripts are added in chapter V. The Sanskrit Arithmetic of Lilavati rendered into Assamese verse by Bokul Kayastha, was published by Dr. Nathan Brown in 1845.

The most important monumental contribution of Dr. Miles Bronson to Assamese literature is his Anglo-Assamese Dictionary containing about 14,000 pure Assamese words with their equivalent English words. It was published in 1867. Dr. Bronson's dedicated labour to this work helped in re-establishment of the Assamese language. His valuable preface in his dictionary is a historical document in Assamese literature. Dr. Bronson states :

Assamese is the language usually spoken by the entire population of the Brahmaputra valley, and in most cases it is the only medium of intercourse with the bordering hill tribes. There is nothing to show that the Assamese race and their language have not existed in this Valley from time immemorial; and it is surprising that during the change of rulers, the oppression and misrule to which they have been subjected, there are no traces of any material change in their

language. The Ahoms, a branch of the great Shan or Thai race, conquered Assam at an early period, and governed it for many hundred years, until it passed into the hands of the present Government; but scarcely a trace of their language is found in the Assamese. The Burmese, Muhammadans, and powerful Cachari tribes have in turn waged war upon Assam without affecting the language. This may serve to show the love of a people for their own tongue ( Neog 1982 : 347 ).

Even after publication of the dictionary, mischievous attempts were made by reactionaries who were against the Assamese language. It was argued that most of the words in his dictionary were Bengali. The Government forwarded the dictionary to the eminent Bengali scholar Mr. R. C. Dutt. Mr. Dutt reported that Assamese was a distinctly different language although some words indicated a resemblance. Mr. Dutt further states :

I have hardly been able to make out even the purport of the Assamese preface to this Dictionary. I have known an educated young Assamese for many years, and I could never understand him when he spoke Assamese, or quoted from Assamese poetry ( Neog 1982 : 348 ).

The other Baptist missionary writers who contributed to the Assamese language also deserve appreciation from the Assamese people : The contributions of Rev. P.H. Moore, Rev. Cutter, Rev. Ward, Rev. Gurney deserve special attention. Mrs. Cutter published her *Assamese Words and Phrases*. Rev. William Ward was a poet and translator of many Christian Psalms. Rev. Gurney had significant contribution in rendering the Old Testament which published in 1899, and for his book *Kamini Kantar Charitra*, which is considered as the first Assamese novel. Mrs. Eliza Brown contributed with her *Gananar Kitap* (1845), *First Story-Book for Juveniles in Assamese* (1840) and *First Reading Book in Assamese* (1842). Nidhi Levi Farwell,



the first Assamese convert, contributed to Assamese literature with his consistent writing in the *Orunodoi*. His *Bharatiya Dandabidhi Ain* was published in 1865. Farwell wrote on different subjects such as history, story-book, and poems. He also translated Christian devotional songs into Assamese.

We can see that the abundant literary contributions of the Baptist Missionaries lay the foundation of modern Assamese literature.

Due to the leadership of the American Baptist Missionaries and their dedication to Assamese literary work, along with the support of the educated Assamese people, specifically from Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, the Assamese got back their own Assamese language.

On 25 July 1873, the Lieutenant-Governor issued orders under Act XXIX of 1837, which gave powers to the Governor-General-in-Council to order the use of any language and script other than Persian, and Section 337 of the Criminal Procedure Code which called for the use of Assamese in Kamrup, Darrang, Nagaon, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts in Law courts and in all matters concerning revenue. Moreover, the Resolution of the General Department (Education) dated 12 April 1873, set forth the Government's decision to use Assamese in place of Bengali in all primary schools, while the middle and high schools also were to have the same rule ( Neog 1983 : 0.65).

The Assamese came to gain from the relentless struggle of the American Baptist Missionaries to reestablish the Assamese language. But why were the Missionaries involved so extensively in the language agitation? It was not an objective

of their mission. Were they motivated by patriotic feelings? We cannot support this idea based on their other activities. Perhaps it was a coincidence that they got involved in the agitation which was backed by the feelings of justice that they carried in their heart from America. The Baptist Missionaries in general had a soft spot for the poor of the society in comparison to the elite. Perhaps in the name of God they worked so hard for the restoration of the legitimate status of the Assamese language - for them it was an act of piety to end an injustice.

## Chapter IV

### Notes & References

1. A statement of printing, executed at the American Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagar, from January 1, 1846 to September 30, 1851 is added as Appendix - D.

## Chapter V

### Miscellaneous Activities of the American Baptist Missionaries

#### Reflecting New Academic Approaches :

#### Assamese Journalism, Collection and Publication of Old Manuscripts, Textual Criticism, Numismatics, Ethnography, Folklore and Material Culture

As with culture in general, Assamese culture is a composite representation of various traditional beliefs and habits and a reflection of ways of life of the Assamese society. The American Baptist Missionaries, particularly Dr. Nathan Brown and Dr. Miles Bronson, studied the deep rooted Hindu religion and Assamese literature. To convince people about the Christian Gospel, the Missionaries often cited examples from the old Assamese religious *sastras*. While trying to understand Assamese society as a whole, the Missionaries observed many valuable elements such as socio-cultural, historical, anthropological including language and literature. Dr Brown valued the old Assamese *sastras*, both secular and religious, and collected the *sastras* as far as possible from every corners of Assam. Secular literature such as *Buranjis*, were published in the *Orunodoi*, the literary organ of the Baptist Missionaries. Other important subjects which the Missionaries valued include Numismatics, Ethnography, Folklore and Material Culture. They valued these matters as subjects of academic importance. From time to time the Missionaries published articles that introduced a concept of academic approach on these matters in the *Orunodoi*. The Missionaries tried to introduce the modern way not only in the choice of subjects, but also in the writing style. The Missionaries began to value the importance of Textual Criticism. Introduction of journalism was a milestone in the history of Assamese journalism. The American Baptist Missionaries were the pioneers in the field of Assamese journalism

In fact the beginning of the *Orunodoi* is recognized as the starting of Assamese journalism.

It is true that the role of the American Baptist Missionaries in some of the major components of Assamese culture, particularly language and literature have received detailed and in-depth treatment at the hands of scholars and been recognised by all sections of the Assamese. But there are other areas which have not been adequately focused. I have tried to highlight these 'darker' areas.

### **Assamese Journalism :**

The birth of Assamese journalism is associated with the American Baptist Missionaries. The Missionaries published the magazine the *Orunodoi* for the first time from the Sibsagor Mission Press in January, 1846. In the first issue of the *Orunodoi* , the objective of the magazine was stated as 'The *Orunodoi* , a monthly paper, devoted to Religion, Science, and General Intelligence, is printed and published at the Sibsagor Mission Press, by O. T. Cutter, for the American Baptist Mission in Assam' Although religion was one of the objectives, the Missionaries failed to maintain a religious neutrality. The *Orunodoi* was used as a platform for propagation of Christianity and derogatory remarks were explicitly made against the Hindu religion.

The *Orunodoi* was successful in creating a consciousness among the Assamese people, and it served as a literary platform for the public opinion. It was a vehicle by which all kinds of news reached the common people of Assam, and extended their mental horizon. The foreign news from the different parts of world, the news of scientific inventions and progress, the astronomical descriptions of stars and planets, and world geography were focused in the articles of the *Orunodoi*. The Missionaries also inaugurated the past heritage of Assamese in the pages of the *Orunodoi*. The Missionaries pulled various kind of past socio-cultural materials of Assam and published in the *Orunodoi*.

The journalism, that the Baptist Missionaries introduced in 1846 in Assam is not only history, but is a living present. At the present time, Assamese society is celebrating the occasion of one hundred and fifty years of journalism. The beginning is considered to be the publishing of the first *Orunodoi* in January, 1846. Books on Assamese journalism are published to commemorate the occasion. The effect on socio-cultural transformation on Assamese society is still continuing. On the whole, it is an abiding influence of the American Baptist Missionaries on the Assamese society

#### **Collection and Publication of Old Manuscripts :**

The American Baptist Missionaries paid a lot of attention to the traditional Assamese written literature. They also valued old Assamese literature and tried to use the old literature wherever they felt it was appropriate. For example, Mrs. E. W. and Rev. N. Brown started a book on arithmetic with a Sanskrit *sloka*. Nidhi Levi Farewell, who followed the syntax of Rev. N. Brown, also wrote poems based on the style of old Assamese literature in the *Orunodoi*.

Dr. Nathan Brown, the early missionary scholar, was the pioneer in collecting the old Assamese *Buranjis* (chronicles) which were mainly Assamese and Sanskrit *puthis*. They placed emphasis on the old traditional Assamese literature, and published a few secular *Buranjis* in the *Orunodoi*. Because of their religious motive, the American Baptist Missionaries did not publish the Hindu sastras in the *Orunodoi*, but they took the initiative to collect the manuscripts and took all possible care to preserve the valuable sastras. The Baptist Missionaries published the *Puroni Asom Buranji* in the August, 1850 to August, 1852 issues of the *Orunodoi* in 22 parts. Eight chapters of *Kamrupar Buranji* were also published in the *Orunodoi* in the January to October, 1853 issues. Another small *Buranji* of *Chutia Rajar Banshawali* was published in the December, 1850 issue of the *Orunodoi*. A brief account of collections of old *Buranjis*

by the American Baptist Missionaries are added below :

The total number of manuscripts collected by the American Baptist Missionaries is not accurately documented, but there is a record of some manuscripts which were with the American Baptist Missionaries at Guwahati centre. On his way to Sadiya, Rev. Brown received a copy of a *Shan* manuscript as early as 1835 from an English officer Captain R. Boileau Pemberton at Calcutta.

The other American Baptist Missionaries also collected the old manuscripts. A number of old *puthis* passed from Rev. A. K. Gurney of Sibsagar to Rev P. H. Moore of Nagaon and finally all the manuscripts were transferred to the Guwahati centre of the American Baptist Missionary. Dr. Nathan Brown left India finally in 1855. So we can ascertain that the old manuscripts were collected in Assam from 1835 to 1855.

A number of old manuscripts, mainly the *Buranjis* ( historical chronicles ) of kings families were published in the *Orunodoi*. Tamuli Phukan's *Asom Buranji* was published separately by the Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagar.

The old manuscripts collected by the American Baptist Missionaries were lying in a box in the school house store room of Guwahati centre. In May 1925 Dr. S. K. Bhuyan traced these valuable old manuscripts<sup>1</sup> and received permission to catalogue them and transcribe some for publication. Dr. Bhuyan was helped in this work by Jaygyeswar Sarma, Madhab Chandra Barua and Himoklal Barua.

According to Rev. George Gillespie ' Of the fourteen *puthis* found then, five (Nos. 2, 6, 8 and 10 of this present survey; 10 being then considered as two manuscripts) were turned over to the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies of the Government of Assam by 1931, and the other nine (Nos. 3, 4, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 23 of this survey) along with one more not mentioned in 1925 (No. 12) were turned over to the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in June, 1955 by Miss Burnham'<sup>2</sup> (Gillespie 1979:158).

The following is a list of manuscripts with brief descriptions prepared by Rev. George Gillespie. The manuscripts are listed by their languages : Assamese and other than Assamese.

**A. Assamese :**

1. *Rajar Maidam Khana*

An article about the digging up of the tombs of Ahom Kings appeared in the first issue of the *Orunodoi* (January, 1846, Vol. I, No. 1). Its title was *Rajar Maidam Khana*. However, this was not a reproduction of the manuscript but a contemporary report.

2. *Asom Buranji*

This *Asom Buranji* is a history of Assam from the rule of Svargadeo Jayadhvaja Singha to the Kachari wars under Rudra Singha, and therefore covers the period 1648-1707 A.D. The manuscript consists of 54 folios and is incomplete. It was one of the manuscripts found in 1925 at the Baptist Mission in Guwahati. It was turned over to the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in 1931

3. *Bhagavata, Eleventh Skandha*

Popularly known as *Ekadasa*, this section of the *Bhagavata Purana* was translated by Sankaradeva by order of King Naranarayana of Koch Behar. It is in Assamese verse. This manuscript was with the collection found in 1925 on the Mission compound in Guwahati. It has 62 folios and is incomplete. On its cover is the simple Assamese verse written by Sankaradeva as a child, that begins, “karatala kamala ----”

The manuscript was donated to the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in 1955.



#### 4. *Chanakya's Aphorisms*

Among the Guwahati Mission manuscripts found in 1925, and was one of only two folios. This is a very incomplete Assamese version of what is probably Chanakya's aphorisms. The two folios are numbered 14 and 17. The manuscript was given to Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in 1955.

#### 5. *Chutia Rajar Bangshawali*

An article appeared in the December, 1850 issue (Vol. V, No. 12) of the *Orunodoi* called in English, *Ancient Chronicle of the Chutias*. There it is explained that the Chutias also have described their royal family history (*Bangshawali*). The editors had obtained one of their old family histories for publishing. The name of William Robinson, Inspector of the Government Schools in Assam (and ex-British Baptist Missionary, cooperating with the American Baptist Mission in Guwahati), is associated with the original discovery and publishing of this manuscript. This chronicle was later published as part of the *Deodhai Asom Buranji* (edited by S. K. Bhuyan, D.H.A.S.<sup>3</sup> 1932).

#### 6. *Deodhai Asom Buranji*

This is a complete Assamese manuscript of thirty folios which tells the history of the Ahom kings, beginning with the ancestors of Sukapha (the first Ahom king of Assam, who ruled 1228-1268 A.D.) up to the reign of the Naria Raja (1648). It is a translation, from a chronicle written in Ahom language. There is an appendix showing Hindu *Saka* equivalents of Ahom *laklis* (years of the Ahom calendar), and a list of Ahom kings from the time of Khunlung and Khunlai (the ancestors of Sukapha) to the time of the kingdom's annexation by the East India company.

The Mission published this *Buranji* in the *Orunodoi* in 21 installments, without the appendix, under the name *Purani Asom Buranji*. It appeared in the following issues : August through November, 1850 (Vol. V); January through August, October

and November, 1851 (Vol. VI); and January through June, and August, 1852 (Vol. VII). The serial numbering is odd in the magazine, so that the first and second instalments are called 'No.1' and 'No.2', but the third instalment is called 'No.4'. An impression is therefore given of total of 22 instalments. This manuscript still shows directions in English on it for press preparation. This manuscript was discovered among the Guwahati Mission *puthis* in 1925, and turned over to the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in 1931.

#### 7. *Jaduram Deka Baruah's Bengali-Assamese Dictionary*

Jaduram Deka Baruah prepared a Bengali-Assamese dictionary which he gave to Col. Jenkins, Commissioner of Assam, in 1839. It gave Bengali words, with Assamese definitions. Col. Jenkins gave this manuscript to the Mission. Nathan Brown considered its orthography to best correspond with Assamese pronunciation. Its' spelling influenced the *Orunodoi* and Miles Bronson's *A dictionary in Assamese and English*. Unfortunately it was never published and its whereabouts are not known.

#### 8. *Kamrupar Buranji*

The *Kamrupar Buranji*, with 78 *sanchi* bark folios, complete and well-preserved, is in three parts. Folios 1-56 is a history of Assam (mostly western Assam) from the time of King Biswa Singha of Koch Behar (1603) to the battle of Itakhuli in 1682, with particular attention to the Mogul-Koch Behar wars and the Mogul-Assam wars. Folios 57-68 contain copies of 18 letters between Ahom kings and Mogul representatives. Folios 69-78 are four chapters about Jehangir, Shah Jahan and others, along with observations of the Mogul court, written by an Assamese living among the Moguls. The Missionaries published part (folios 1-56) in the *Orunodoi* in eight issues, January through July, and October, 1853 (Vol. VIII), calling it *Kamrupar Buranji*.

The manuscript, after being found by Bhuyan, was turned over to the D.H.A.S. in 1931.

9. *Kitabata Manjari*

The *Kitabata Manjari* is a work on arithmetic, land-surveying and book-keeping in Assamese poetry, translated by Bakula Kayastha in 1434 or 1508 A.D., from the Sanskrit original of Lilavati. Dimbeswar Neog, Birinchi Kumar Barua and others claim that Nathan Brown published the *Kitabata Manjari* in two parts in 1845.

10. *Lakshmi Singhar Buranji*

The *Lakshmi Singhar Buranji* is an incomplete manuscript of 140 folios, giving a daily record of events during the last part of the reign of Svargadeo Rajeswar Singha and the first of the reign of Svargadeo Lakshmi Singha (covering 1769-1775 A.D.). The author is not known. When these folios were found by Bhuyan in 1925, they were for some time considered to be two separate manuscripts of 117 and 23 folios each, but are generally accepted as one now. It is reported to have been published in the *Orumudoi*, probably in 1860. This manuscript (then considered as two manuscripts) was given to D.H.A.S. in 1931.

11. *Mani Chandra Ghosh*

*Mani Chandra Ghosh* is a popular Assamese verse translation of part of the *Vanaparva* of the *Mahabharata*. It was written by the Assamese poet Rama Sarasvati at the command of the King Naranarayana of Koch Behar in the sixteenth century. This manuscript is 57 folios of loose paper, written only on one side and is incomplete. This copy was written no earlier than 1825. It was found with the Mission manuscripts in 1925, and turned over to the D.H.A.S. in 1955.

12. *Sisupal Badh*

*Sisupal Badh* is an Assamese poem about the killing of Sisupal, the king of the Chedis, by Sri Krishna. This *tulapat* (paper made of cotton) manuscript is incomplete,

containing only folios no. 77-101. Dr. Bhuyan does not mention having found this with the Mission manuscripts in 1925. However, it was turned over to the D.H.A.S. by the Mission in 1955.

13. *Syamantaka-harana*

In 1975, 15 folios of an Assamese *puthi* of bark were sent to the Baptist Historical Library, Rochester, New York State, by someone in U.S.A. Fourteen of the folios (numbered 1-3, 5, 7-16) belong together and the other folio is written on only one side, with a different hand. Of the 14, one had written on the back, "Hindu Shaster, 1878, Stoddard, Assam." Rev. I. J. Stoddard was living in Nagaon, from 1848 to 1855 and in Goalpara 1867 to 1873.

14. *Tamuli Phukan Asom Buranji*

The Ahom king, Purandar Singh (reigned 1833-1838) ordered Kasinath Tamuli Phukan to compile an *Asom Buranji* in Assamese from old sources, particularly from old *Buranjis* written in the Ahom language. Radhanath Barbarua, who knew the Ahom language, probably collected and deciphered the Ahom texts, and thus also made an important contribution to the work. The resulting *Buranji* normally goes by Tamuli Phukan's name, but a number of writers attribute to the *Buranji* a dual authorship. This manuscript was eventually prepared for publication by Rev. Nathan Brown and the first edition was published by the American Baptist Mission Press in Sibsagar in 1844, with the title, *Asom Buranji Puthi*, along with the words, *Indrabangsi Asom Maharaja Sakalar Bibaran*.

**B. Other than Assamese**

**Sanskrit**

15. *Bhagavata, Fifth and Sixth Skandhas*

The Sanskrit text of the *Bhagavata*, along with the commentary of Sridhara Svami, is commonly read aloud in the *sattras* (monasteries) of Assam, by a reader

called the *bhagavati*, who follows the reading with an explanation in Assamese. On each folio of this well-preserved manuscript, the commentary accompanies the text. There are wooden covers, one having paintings. There are 55 folios of the Fifth *Skandha* and 35 of the Sixth. The manuscript was found with the others at the Baptist Mission in 1925, and was given to the D.H.A.S. in 1955.

16. *Jyotish-Samkshep*

*Jyotish-Samkshep* is a work on astrology by Harideva Sarma, mainly for the use of the Brahmins. This manuscript was written soon after 1825 and is complete, consisting of 33 folios. Found in 1925 by Bhuyan at the Baptist Mission, it was given to the D.H.A.S. in 1955.

17. *Jyotish-Tattva*

This astrological work is by Raghunanda, the founder of a school of rituals mainly practiced in Bengal. This manuscript of eleven folios is incomplete and was prepared soon after 1825. It was with the *puthis* found in 1825, and was turned over to the D.H.A.S. in 1955.

18. *Svarodaya*

This Sanskrit *puthi* is on astrology. There are 29 folios and the manuscript is incomplete. The author's name is not given. However, Bhuyan says, "From the eulogy paid to Prince Sukladhvaja of Koch Behar, and the brief description of Kamarupa, Kamakhya, Kamapitha and Ratnapitha, we conjecture this book to be eminently an Assamese product." It was found with the other *puthis* in 1925 and donated to the D.H.A.S. in 1955.

19. *Tulasi Duta Kavyam*

*Tulasi Duta Kavyam* was written in 1784 A.D. by the Assamese writer, Vaidyanath Dvija, of Kamakhya (Guwahati). This manuscript was copied in 1799 by Maniram. There are 13 folios and it is incomplete. The poem tells of the love

between Sri Krishna and the *gopis*. There is also an invocation to Kamakhya. This *puthi* was found in 1925 at the Mission and turned over to the D.H.A.S. in 1955.

### **Manipuri :**

#### *20. Manipuri Manuscripts*

Not long before 1928, some of the American Baptist Missionaries in Manipur found several old Manipuri manuscripts dealing with Assam-Manipur relations in ancient times. Mr. J. C. Higgins, the British Political Agent in Manipur, recommended that the D.H.A.S. of Assam finance their compilation and publishing. Rev. William Pettigrew of Manipur was eventually entrusted with the responsibility, but the work was interrupted when Pettigrew left India permanently in 1933. Mr. Wahengbam Yumjoa Singh, a Meithei scholar, was helping prepare the manuscripts. He was still working on them in 1941. In 1950, Yumjoa wrote to the D.H.A.S. that he was completing his *An Early History of Manipur*, and asked the D.H.A.S. to publish it. Yumjoa died in 1953. This book was eventually published in Manipur but does not deal much with Assam-Manipur relations.

### **Shan**

#### *21. Shan-Chronicle*

In 1835, Captain R. Boileau Pemberton, an English officer, found an ancient Shan chronicle, while living in Manipur. It belonged to an old Shan who did not want to part with it. Capt. Pemberton had it translated into Manipur, and from this translation got information which appears in his *Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*. The chronicle tells the ancient and more recent history of the Shan kingdom centered at Mogaung in northern Burma.

## **Khamti**

### *22. Khamti Sacred Book*

Miles Bronson toured among the Singphos in March, 1838. He heard, while at Iagando village, that a priest lived in a nearby village nearby who could speak and write Burman, Khamti, Singpho, and Assamese. He visited the priest, and upon presenting him with a gift of paper, the priest gave him in return "one of their largest Khamti sacred books." This is reported in the March, 1839, *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, p.53.

## **Blank**

### *23. Blank and Unused Folios*

Among the manuscripts uncovered in 1925 were 35 blank and unused *sachipat* folios in two sizes, the larger ones being reportedly very beautifully made. They were given to the D.H.A.S. in 1955 (Gillespie 1979: 158-169).

## **Textual Criticism :**

' The technique of restoring texts as nearly as possible to their original form is called textual criticism. Texts in this connection are defined as writings other than formal documents, inscribed or printed on paper, parchment, papyrus or similar materials. ----- Textual criticism, properly speaking, is an ancillary academic discipline designed to lay the foundations for the so-called higher criticism, which deals with questions of authenticity and attribution of interpretation and of literary and historical evaluation.' (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 20, 15th Ed. 1990, pg. 614)

Before the invention of the printing press, most ancient writings were copied by hand. In most cases successive copies were each made by different people, and the original autograph was distorted to a greater or lesser extent.

Textual criticism is a highly complex process, whose aim is to ascertain the closest original text of a manuscript. The textual critic collects all available manuscript evidence, compares the various readings of a specific passage, explains how the variation of passage originated, and by a process of elimination, selects the readings that appears to be close to the original text. Sources that the textual critic use, include manuscripts of the original text in the original language (in part or whole as the case may be) early translations of the original book and its commentaries, and available copies of same manuscript copied by others. Some of the variations in the text copied are accidental and in some cases intentional. Example of accidental variations are dropping of a line in between, writing a single word as two words, creating two meaningless words and writing an illegible letter incorrectly which leads to a new word without having any meaning to the original writer. Some other examples are - confusion of similar kinds of letters, adding part of other texts wrongly, displacement of sentences or letters and making copies of notes written by some one, etc. (Neog 1988 : 55).

The Baptist Missionaries understood that the manuscripts they collected from different sources were not all originals. The original content of the texts might have been altered knowingly or accidentally by the copy makers. The Missionaries published the manuscripts in the *Orunodoi*, as they were, without making any change. This was an example of paying attention to textual criticism (Neog 1983 : 0.97).

The Missionaries adopted the concept of textual criticism and their's was an early application of textual criticism to Assamese literature.

### **Numismatics :**

Numismatics is the study or collecting of coins. 'The science of numismatics treats of coins and medals. It acquaints us with the metals used in their composition, their various inscriptions and devices, their mechanical execution and artistic merit. It



tells us of the different denominations of coins, their relation to one another, and the laws by which they were regulated.' (The Encyclopaedia Britannica, Ninth Edition, Vol. XVII, pg. 628) Numismatics to some extent illustrates geography and literature of a particular area.

Coins illustrate and confirm history but rarely give us any precise information which would fill in any important details in the meager sketch of contemporary history. Coin engraving is also an art.

Sources for determining the currency system in early Assam are scanty. Coined money was probably not used extensively during the rule of the ancient kings of Kamarupa (ancient Assam). Economic deals were probably transacted by both means of barter and coins. Paddy and cowries were also popular media of exchange.

The early copper plate grants of Kamarupa gives us some indication that various kings made gifts of jewels, gold, silver, elephants, horses and slaves to learned Brahmanas or other kings. Evidence confirms that the king of Kamarupa, Bhaskaravarman, gave gifts to the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang which included money and valuable articles. Some evidence points in the direction of the presence of metallic currency in the medieval Kamarupa (Sing 1989 : 16-18). The presence of gold coins in Ancient Assam may be due to the trade and commerce with the neighbouring states.

Copper coins were not common in ancient Assam. However, a few copper coins were discovered in the Dhulapadung Tea Estate, in Darrang district of Assam. These coins bear one letter legend on one side of the coin. The other side of the coin is plain. Dr. J. P. Singh states that the letters found on the known coins of Dhulapadung are *Ha* and *Va*. The letter *Va* found on majority of coins differ from coin to coin. 'The palaeography of the letter relates them to 9th-12th century A. D. ---- At the present state of our knowledge these are the earliest coins of Assam' (Singh 1989 : 30).

In later periods, the prevalence of coinage in Assam has been documented by numismatic studies. The Koch king, Nara Narayan, struck coins in his name. At the death of king Raghu Deb, his successor, king Parikshit, issued new coins in 1603 (Gait 1992 : 53 and 60).

The earliest Ahom coins were struck by Suklenmung in 1543, the fourth year of his reign. Later, the Ahom kings only issued coins in the year of their accession (Gait 1992 : 231). Evidence of minting coins are also established by Kachari and Jaintia kings.

Numismatics was considered an important subject in the nineteenth century. The Baptist missionaries enlightened the readers of the *Orunodoi* by publishing information on coins struck by different kings - Koch, Kachari, Jayantia and Ahoms. These coins had been found at an archeological dig at a site near the Ahom palace at Rangpur. During the dig, some coins made by Muhammadan kings were also found. The Missionaries printed the impression of the coins, giving descriptions of obverse and reverse in detail, along with historical information. These publications contributed to the knowledge of numismatics of the common people, and preserved numismatic lore for future studies.

### **Ethnography :**

A comprehensive definition of anthropology is “the study of man and his works”. Herskovits explains anthropology as follows :

The science of anthropology is divided into two broad fields, *physical* and *cultural anthropology*. Physical anthropologists study such matters as the nature of racial differences; the inheritance of bodily traits; the growth, development, and decay of the human organism; the influences of the natural environment on man. Cultural anthropologists study the ways man has devised to cope with his natural setting and his social milieu; and how bodies of custom are learned, retained, and handed down

from one generation to the next. The field of cultural anthropology is very broad. Cultural anthropology is customarily divided into ethnology and ethnography. Ethnology is a comparative study of culture and the investigation of the theoretical problems that arise out of the analysis of human custom, and ethnography is the description of individual cultures (Herskovits 1955 : 3, 8). Ethnography deals with social structure, culture and customs of a specific group of people of common origin.

Ethnographic study needs considerable time and dedicated effort. Since an ethnographer is a foreigner to the group of people, the entry of his or her into the group is most important. An ethnographer has to be able to analyze the traditions of the people, to understand the values of the people, their cultural behaviour and to be proficient in the language of the group studied. At the same time he or she has to live closely as a part of the community and must be able to evaluate and judge, but must be aware not to attempt to reshape the original culture of the group.

The American Baptist Missionaries focused on ethnography as a matter of study by printing articles and sketches of different groups of people of North-East India and from various parts of the world. This created much interest among the readers of the *Orunodoi*. The significant aspect of these publications are not on the accuracy of the missionary's studies but it was an introduction to the Assamese people to a new field of study which were unnoticed earlier as a subject of study.

Ethnographic materials published by the Missionaries in the *Orunodoi*, may be classified in two groups as local and foreign. Some of the published materials are listed below.

Local ethnographic materials published in the *Orunodoi* :

*Bhotor Deshar Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 53)

*Sarak Pujar Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 59)

*Garor Deshar Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 138)

*Nogar Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 242)

*Khamtir Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 250)

*Mishimir Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 251)

*Singphor Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 255)

*Abor, Bar Abor, Miri Aru Daflar Bivaran* (Neog 1983 : 280)

Foreign ethnographic materials pulished in the *Orunodoi*:

*Sketch of Chinese Man* (Neog 1983 : 10)

*Celebration of Twelfth-Day by the Negroes of Havana* (Neog 1983 : 239)

*Geography of Southern Africa* (Neog 1983 : 480)

*Young Men and Women of Australia* (Neog 1983 : 503)

*Sketches of Afridi People at Khaibar* (Neog 1983 : 548)

*Sketches of Turkey and Arabi People* (Neog 1983 : 567)

*A Georgian Gentleman and Lady* (Neog 1983 : 569)

*Californian Indian* (Neog 1983 : 677)

**Folklore :**

“Folklore is the material that is handed on by tradition, either by word of mouth or by custom and practice” ( Taylor in Dundes 1965 : 34).

The history of folklore is as old as human society, but the adoption of the term ‘folklore’ is not as old. The concept of folklore was originated in Europe, mainly in Germany, by the end of eighteenth century and its discussion was started in the early part of nineteenth century.

The antiquaries in England and the German philologists started paying attention to the ways of life of the lower class of people. Two brothers, Mr. Jacob Grimm and Mr. Wilhelm Grimm, started publishing the oral folk narratives and interpretations of Germanic mythology. They used the word *volkskunde* for this subject. Subsequently, on August 22, 1846, Mr. William John Thoms, an English

antiquary, sent a letter to the *Athenaeum*, a magazine for intellectual people, and suggested that the new word 'folklore' be adopted henceforth in place of such a vague terms as 'popular antiquities' and 'popular literature'. Gradually, the term 'folklore' became popular worldwide and is now used in most countries in the world. However, in some countries, substitutes for the word folklore are used.

The field of folklore is so vast that it is not easy to make a concise definition of folklore. Alan Dundes is trying to define various forms of folklore materials for a better understanding :

Although it may not be entirely satisfactory, a definition consisting of an itemized list of the forms of folklore might be the best type for the beginner. Of course, for this definition to be complete, each form would have to be individually defined. Unfortunately, some of the major forms, such as myth and folktale, require almost book-length definitions, but the following list may be of some help. Folklore includes myths, legends, folktales, jokes, proverbs, riddles, chants, charms, blessings, curses, oaths, insults, retorts, taunts, teases, toasts, tongue-twisters, and greeting and leave-taking formulas (e.g. See you later, alligator). It also includes folk costume, folk dance, folk drama (and mime), folk art, folk belief (or superstition), folk medicine, folk instrumental music (e.g., fiddle tunes), folk songs (e.g., lullabies, ballads), folk speech (e.g., slang), folk smiles (e.g., as blind as a bat), folk metaphors (e.g., to paint the town red), and names (e.g. nicknames and place names). Folk poetry ranges from oral epics to autograph-book verse, epitaphs, latrinalia (writings on the walls of public bathrooms), limericks, ball-bouncing rhymes, jump-rope rhymes, finger and toe rhymes, dandling rhymes (to bounce children on the knee), counting-out rhymes (to determine who will be "it" in games), and nursery rhymes. The list of folklore forms also contains games; gestures; symbols; prayers (e.g., graces); practical jokes; folk etymologies; food recipes; quilt and embroidery designs; house, barn, and fence types; street vendor's cries; and even the traditional conventional sounds used to summon animals or to give them commands. There are such minor forms as mnemonic devices (e.g., the name Roy G. Biv to remember the colors of the spectrum in order), envelop sealers (e.g., SWAK- Sealed With A Kiss), and the traditional comments made after body emissions (e.g., after burps or sneezes). There are such major forms as festivals and special day (or holiday) customs (e.g., Christmas, Halloween, and birthday).

This list provides a sampling of the forms of folklore. It does not include all the forms. These materials and the study of them are both referred to as folklore. To avoid confusion it might be better to use the term *folklore*

for the materials and the term *folkloristics* for the study of the materials (Dundes 1965 : 3).

According to Richard M. Dorson, all folklore materials may be placed under four groupings as follows :

1. Oral literature (also called verbal art or expressive literature)
2. Material culture (also called physical folklife)
3. Social folk custom
4. Performing folk arts.

These four divisions are 'not all-inclusive or mutually exclusive' (Dorson 1972 : 2-5).

The Indian sub continent is full of folklore, and from the beginning of their studies, this subject was given due importance by the scholars of Europe. The picture of the study of folklore in India is somewhat different. At first, the matter was considered to be part of Indian antiquarian studies.. Under the leadership of Mr William Jones, the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal was established in 1784 and a few articles were published in their magazines. Gradually more articles were published in other contemporary magazines. Most of the early writers on the subject were foreigners in India, mainly British administrative personnel, British army officials, the Christian missionaries and to some extent the missionaries' wives. In Assam, some of the local people also contributed to the study of folklore. (Datta :1997)

The American Baptist Missionaries considered the folklore of Assam a valuable asset, and they published folklore materials in their monthly newspaper cum magazine the *Orunodoi*. This started in January, 1846. It is really a matter of surprise that in the same year, Mr. William Thoms, an English antiquary, proposed the word 'folklore' for the first time in a letter to the London based magazine the *Athenaeum*. The American Baptist Missionaries deserve the full appreciation of the Assamese people for their

endeavours to introduce local folklore materials as subjects of literary value to the educated Assamese readers.

The Missionaries published the myths of Christian religion along with appropriate morals, various tales carrying ethics, life-styles of various groups of people of Assam or of various parts of the world. The Missionaries also published riddles in the *Orunodoi* in November 1849, May 1851, August 1851, September 1851 and November 1852 issues. A few riddles with their meanings are added in the appendix.

The Baptist Missionaries published substantial numbers of tales, mostly fables, in the *Orunodoi*. Some of the tales along with morals published in the *Orunodoi* are listed below :

1. The Old man, his Son and the Ass (Neog 1983 : 58)
2. The Tiger and Lamb (Neog 1983 : 100)
3. The Doves and the Mouse (Neog 1983 : 247-248)
4. The Lion and the Jackals (Neog 1983 : 247-248)
5. The Lion and the Elephant (Neog 1983 : 247-248)
6. The Cat and the Birds (Neog 1983 : 247-248)
7. The Father and his Son (Neog 1983 : 254)
8. The Fox and the Grapes (Neog 1983 : 258)
9. The Fox and the Crow (Neog 1983 : 260)
10. The Blind and the Lame (Neog 1983 : 260)
11. The Crow and the Sheep (Neog 1983 : 268)
12. The two Friends (Neog 1983 : 333)
13. A tree summoned as a witness (Neog 1983 : 357)
14. The Dog and the Jackal (Neog 1983 : 362)
15. Two Chickens (Neog 1983 : 370)

16. The Farmer and his Goose (Neog 1983 : 490)

17. Fable of the Heron and the Flamingo (Neog 1983 : 862)

**Material Culture :**

Material culture is designated by folklorists as physical folklife. 'Material culture responds to techniques, skills, recipes, and formulas transmitted across the generations and subject to the same forces of conservative tradition and individual variation as verbal art' (Dorson 1972 : 2).

Jules David Prown describes material culture as follows :

Material culture is just what it says it is - namely, the manifestations of culture through material productions. And the study of material culture is the study of material to understand culture, to discover the beliefs - the values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions of a particular community or society at a given time. The underlying premise is that humanmade objects reflect, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of the individuals who commissioned, fabricated, purchased, or used them and, by extension, the beliefs of the larger society to which these individuals belonged. Material culture is thus an object-based branch of cultural anthropology or cultural history (Luber & Kingery 1993 : 1).

The importance of material culture as a subject of study was brought to light by the Baptist Missionaries in the *Orunodoi*. The Missionaries collected specimens of material culture and reported descriptions or illustration of some of them for the readers of the *Orunodoi*. A picture of a bronze lion which had been found at Rongpur, and was probably a part of the base of a throne, was published in the *Orunodoi* in the November 1850 issue (Neog 1983 : 490). In addition we find lot of material on material culture in the *Orunodoi* such as descriptions of buildings, furniture, a clock, a prism, a globe etc. The material was reported in the *Orunodoi* with the aim of introducing an educational and scientific approach. This was important in bringing the Assamese masses to a progressive outlook. The descriptions of objects of material culture covered items of both local origin and as well as foreign



Some of the materials are listed below :

Materials of local origin :

1. Image of Budha or Gautama (Neog 1983 : 250)
2. A Singpho hat (Neog 1983 : 257)
3. A 'da' of Khamti and Singpho (Neog 1983 : 257)
4. Image of Vishnu (Neog 1983 : 459)
5. Bronze Lion dug up at Rongpur (Neog 1983 : 490)
6. The great Mogul diamond, Koh-I-Nur (Neog 1983 : 688)
7. The Taj Mahal (Neog 1983 : 805)
8. Images of Krishna, Bolobhadra and Subhadra (Neog 1983 : 819)
9. Hindu Avatars (Neog 1983 : 820-821)
10. Sketch of Sibsagar Temple (Neog 1983 : 870)
11. Bronze Image dug up near the old palace at Rongpur (Neog 1983 : 1189)

Materials of foreign origin :

1. Ice houses in Calcutta (Neog 1983 : 31)
2. The Euphonia or speaking machine (Neog 1983 : 103)
3. Cast iron lighthouse for Ceylon (Neog 1983 : 119)
4. Fiji Oracle (Neog 1983 : 231)
5. Mexican Warrior with Cuirass and Buckler (Neog 1983 : 264)
6. Mexican Warrior with Net (Neog 1983 : 264)
7. Gold memorial found in a Chief's Grave in New Grenada (Neog 1983 : 320)
8. An old pot dug up at England (Neog 1983 : 493)
9. Sketch of house of New Zealanders (Neog 1983 : 546)
10. Images from island of South Sea (Neog 1983 : 629)
11. Bracelet of Bronze (Discovery of antiquities at Nimroud) (Neog 1983 : 726)
12. African Juju House (Neog 1983 : 755)

13. Costume of Burmese ladies (Neog 1983 : 787)
14. Aatemi Devi or Diana of Greece (Neog 1983 : 859)
15. Picture of a Burman Monastery (Neog 1983 : 883)
16. Picture of a Chinese Smoking House (Neog 1983 : 899)
17. Box to keep Opium (Neog 1983 : 901)
18. Chinese Goddess of Mercy (Neog 1983 : 921)
19. What O'clock is it? (Clock) (Neog 1983 : 934)
20. Chinese Temple (Neog 1983 : 980)
21. South Sea Island Images (Neog 1983 : 1086)
22. Account of the old Sexon Idols (Neog 1983 : 1239)
23. The Chinese "Queen of Heaven" (Neog 1983 : 1250)

## Chapter V

### Notes & References

1. This discovery is described in Dr. S. K. Bhuyan's typescript, 'A Report on the Collection of Old Assamese and Sanskrit puthis in possession of the American Baptist Mission, Gauhati, Assam,' July 3, 1925, to be found in the Gauhati library of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India.
2. 'Old Assamese manuscripts, in possession of the American Baptist Mission at Gauhati Assam' typescript, containing a receipt for the ten manuscripts, signed by the Director of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in Assam, dated 27-6-55, to be found in the Gauhati library of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India.
3. DHAS : Director of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Assam.

## Chapter V

**Illustration Section**

- (a) Reproductions of Ethnographic Materials.
- (b)-(d) Reproduction of articles of Material Culture.



A Naga man  
Source : Orunodoi, June 1848



A Garrow man in his War Dress  
Source : Orunodoi, May 1847

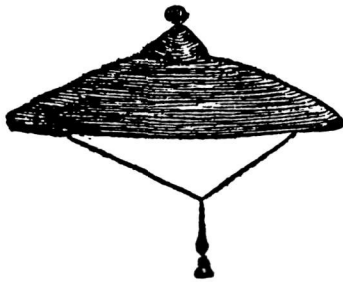


Ningrula - Singpho Chief  
Source : Orunodoi, August 1848



A picture of a Singpho Chief  
Source : Orunodoi, September 1849

Chapter V  
Illustration-(b)



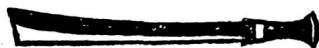
A Singpho Hat  
Source : Orunodoi, August 1848



Bronz Lion dug up at Rongpur  
Source : Orunodoi, November 1850



Dog-skin Cap of the Mishmis  
Source : Orunodoi, July 1848



A Picture of Khamti and Singpho 'Da'  
Source : Orunodoi, August 1848



An Old pot dug up at England  
Source : Orunodoi, December 1850

Chapter V  
Illustration-(c)

Materials of Culture of local origin

মান খাম্ভিঞ সেৱা কৰা বোধ দেৱতাৰ নক্চা

Image of Budh or Gaudama.



Image of Budha or Gautama  
Source : *Orunodoi*; July, 1848



হিন্দু দেৱতা বিষ্ণুৰ মূৰ্তি ।  
Image of Vishnu.

Source : *Orunodoi*; August, 1850



The great Mogul Diamond, Koh-i-Nur, or Mountain of Light.

Source : *Orunodoi* : December, 1851

Materials of Culture of foreign origin



খেহ লোকৰ সেৱা পূজা কৰা মন্দিৰ  
Chinese Temples.

Source : *Orunodoi*; July, 1853



খেহ লোকৰ ত্ৰিপা কৰোঁতা দেবি ।  
The Chinese Goddess of Mercy.

Source : *Orunodoi*; March, 1853



দখিন সাগৰৰ মাজুলিৰ দেও মূৰ্তি ।

Image of South Sea Island  
Source : *Orunodoi*; September, 1851



Mexican Warrior with Net.

Source : *Orunodoi*; September, 1848



কানি থোআ চন্দুক ।

Opium Box  
Source : *Orunodoi*; February, 1853



## Chapter VI

### The Entry of Assamese literature into the Modern Age :

#### The Catalytic Role of the Missionaries

The growth of Assamese literature is associated with the political history of Assam. The state of peace and tranquillity effects and governs the progress of a literature. Assamese literature progressed at its own pace from the ancient period, passing through odd and favourable stages of socio-cultural and political life of Assamese. Assamese language and literature achieved its greatest height during the Vaishnava period which is described as golden period of Assamese literature. But this continuity was disrupted with the emergence of an unfortunate political situation in Assam.

The darkest period in the history of Assamese literature was during the period of the Burmese invasion and the early period of the British rule. Before the Yandaboo treaty (February 24, 1826) between the British and the Burmese, Assam was practically ruled by the Burmese, although Ahom kings were on the throne. In effect, Assam was ruled by the Burmese from 1819 to 1824. During the Burmese invasions, the Burmese oppression towards the Assamese was inhuman. How to stay alive was the question in the minds of all Assamese. So, from the time of the invasion of the Burmese until an extended period after the British annexation of Assam, Assamese did not even live in an atmosphere conducive to thinking about Assamese language, literature or culture. The introduction of the Bengali language in the schools and

courts of Assam by the British also helped to destroy any possibility of enhancement of Assamese literature.

The advent of the Missionaries in Assam was a blessing for the cause of Assamese language and literature. The Missionaries ushered the Assamese people towards a modern Assamese language. Before the American Baptist Missionaries in Assam, Rev. William Carey of Serampore mission deputed James Ray to Guwahati for the propagation of Christianity and education upon the request of British Commissioner David Scott. Mr. Ray established a Church at Guwahati and distributed Christian scriptures which were written in Assamese. Due to financial and administrative inconvenience, the British missionaries handed over their mission activities to the American Baptist Missionaries. How the American Baptist Missionaries arrived in Assam has been discussed in an earlier chapter

The American Baptist Missionaries fully realized that the teachings of the Christian religion had to be made available to the Assamese in their native language for the mission to be a success. This is the reason why they worked so hard to re-establish the Assamese language in Assam. The Missionaries wrote books on Christianity, arithmetic, and grammar. They also wrote a dictionary in Assamese. The *Orunodoi*, a monthly magazine cum newsletter was a popular media to reach out the Assamese. The Missionaries were joined by the educated Assamese in the effort to re-establish the Assamese language. Educated Assamese also started writing on their own or in the *Orunodoi*, trying to elevate Assamese literature and education among the Assamese.

Assamese literature faced a crisis and suffered setbacks in its progress at the juncture of the British intrusion. Finally, the British reintroduced the Assamese language in the schools and courts of Assam in 1873. The literary works which had been created after the British annexation and continued to the time of re-establishment of Assamese language, became the foundation of the modern Assamese literature. The contribution to Assamese literature was a joint effort of the Baptist Missionaries and the educated intellectual people of Assam. There is no doubt that the Missionarie's act had a catalytic effect in bringing out Assamese language and literature to a modern age. Let us start with a historical short survey of Assamese literature till the beginning of the modern era of the Assamese literature.

To discuss the matter of modern trends in Assamese writing it will be helpful to trace the history of the different phases of the Assamese language and literature. Like many other languages, it is difficult to establish the early phase of the Assamese language and literature. The earliest Assamese (Kamrupi) literature was unwritten and it passed through generations in the oral form. The bulk of the material was made up of songs such as nursery rhymes, pastoral ballads sung by cowherds, songs of boatmen, songs describing the twelve months, songs of propitiation of the goddess of small-pox (Sitala), Bihu songs and wedding songs and so forth (Barua 1988: 212) In addition to these riddles, proverbs and *Mantras* (incantations, spells, formulas) were also a forms of oral Assamese literature which flowed from generation to generation, with perhaps some modifications with the progress of time. *Dakar Bachan* or phorisms of Dak, was also originally current orally. Later, around 800 AD, the *Dakar*

*Bachan* were reduced to a written form. For all these oral languages it is difficult to assign a particular time period.

The various phases of Assamese language and literature have been broadly categorized in terms of five eras as follows :

1. The Ancient Era
2. The Pre-Vaishnava Era
3. The Vaishnava Era
4. The Post-Vaishnava Era
5. The Modern Era

#### **The Ancient Era :**

##### Language :

The earliest inhabitants of Assam were the speakers of an Indo-Chinese language of the *Mon-Khmer* family, that is from Austric family of languages. In a later wave, these elements of language spread to the Tibeto-Burman family. The Bodos are the most important people of this family. 'Thus the earliest inhabitants of Assam were non-Aryans and their language belonged to extra-Aryan families of language' (Barpujari 1990 : 263). In the course of time, the Assamese language was formed into a distinct shape around 10th - 11th century due to gradual change (Sarma 1981 : 2). If it is so, one will perhaps wonder what was the language of Assam prior to 10th - 11th century ? To determine this, the materials which we can rely on with some degree of confidence are meager. We can get a glimpse on the various available Copper Plates or Stone Inscriptions prior to the 10th century. The account left by the Chinese

pilgrim Hiuen Tsang (628 - 645 AD) sheds some light on the early period of Assam. Hiuen Tsang visited Kamarupa (ancient Assam) during the reign of Kumar Bhaskaravarman. Some hints about the Assamese language are found in his travelogues, along with religion and socio-cultural aspects of Assam during the early period. Hiuen Tsang mentioned in his travelogues '----their language differs a little from that of mid India ----'(Barua 1956 : 18).

#### Charyapadas :

Although no specimen of literature in the earliest form of Assamese is to be found, at least one class of literature connected with a particular religious cult has been identified by scholars as being the oldest available specimen of Assamese literature. This class is made up of mystic and spiritually didactic songs composed of esoteric lyrics of Buddhism of the Vajrayana sect which is popularly called the Sahajia cult.

During the extended period from the eighth century to the fourteenth century, a considerable number of books were written on the subject of Tantrik Buddhism. These books were collected from Kamrup (ancient Assam), Nepal, Nalanda, Vikramseelah and other places in India. Most of the books were translated to the Tibetan language. Among this collection the research scholars on the *Charyapadas* found a book containing fifty *Charyas*, which were composed by *Siddha Acharyas*. Most research scholars agree that the name of the main *Charyapada* book was *Charyagitikosh*. *Charyapadas* are also known as *Baudha Dohas* or *Charyageetas*.

The literary value of the *Charyapadas* is related to the ancient Assamese

literature. Scholars are of the opinion that the *Charyapadas* are the oldest specimen of Assamese literature. The language of the *Charyapadas* are two fold - Symbolic and General. The devotion to Guru and deep thoughts create a philosophical beauty. On the other hand, descriptions of day to day life of the common people, their social matters, along with literary melody of verses, reflect the literary beauty of the *Charyapadas*. Dr. B. Kakati states :

Certain phonological and morphological peculiarities registered in the *Baudha Dohas* have come down in an unbroken continuity through early to modern Assamese. --- Modern Assamese in certain respects shows a closer approximation to the forms and idioms preserved in the *Dohas* (Kakati 1962 : 11).

Dimbeswar Neog discusses and clearly states the language of the *Dohas* is of Assamese origin with specific grammatical uses which are only available in the Assamese language (Neog 1982 : 58-60).

The scholars of Bengali literature and other eastern literatures - Maithili and Oriya also claim these *Charyapadas* as their ancient literature. Dr. H. K. Barpujari, the noted historian of Assam justifies for the commonness as follows :

It was not unlikely that for making these songs intelligible to the entire region the *Siddhas* chose the *Apabhramsa* dialect as the medium of expression. To this *Apabhramsa* also a number of words and expressions must have crept in form of the dialects confined to the respective native localities of the compositors as it happened in case of inscriptions.

Upon evaluation of the *Charyapadas*, scholars have found that Luipa, who contributed two *Charyas*, has also been known as Minanath, Matsyendranath or Macchandavibhu. In establishing the origin of *Siddha Acharyas*, K. L. Barua writes :

It is found from Tibetan records that some of the eminent Buddhist professors in Tibet, of the tenth or eleventh centuries, hailed from Kamarupa. ----- the

noted Buddhist Siddha Minanath, who was looked upon in Tibet as an *Avtar* of *Avalokiteswara*, was a fisherman from Kamrupa. ---- It is also found from the same Tibetan records that Rahula, another Buddhist teacher in Nepal, was a *Sudra* from Kamarupa. ---- Besides Minanatha and Rahula, two other Buddhist teachers mentioned in Tibetan records, viz. Mohidhar and Darik also very probably belonged to Kamrup.

The foundation of the *Brajavali* language was evolved during the same period of the *Charyapadas* and we see the use of *Brajavali* words in *Charyapadas*. In the period from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva composed *Bargeets*, and gained immense popularity. It is to be noted that the words of *Charyapadas* are used in *Bargeets*. This shows a connection of the *Bargeets* to the ancient *Charyapadas*

The Nath cult was prevalent in India, and could be considered a bridge between Saibaism and Hinduism. From the above discussion, undoubtedly it could be concluded that the *Charyapada* was a distinct phase of Assamese literature.

### **The Pre-Vaishnava Era**

If we consider the period of *Charyapadas* as the tenth to twelfth century, and follow the trends of Assamese literature, we see a gap until the fourteenth century. Probably Assamese literature followed a gradual change in pattern during this period. However we do not have any proof to justify the literary works of this period. In the fourteenth century we again see some notable literary work in narrative genre of poetry. Some of the notable poets of this period were : Hema Saraswati, Rudra Kandali, Harivara Vipra, Kaviratna Saraswati and Madhava Kandali. During this period Assamese literature attained the credibility of self identity and earned the capability of refined expression. All the poets of this period received patronage from

the kings of Assam. The frequent change of kings of the various kingdoms was cause for an unstable society and as a result, the progress of literary work was hampered.

The poets of this period were well versed and knowledgeable in the Sanskrit language and literature. The contribution of these poets was remarkable for creating a future field of Vaishnava literary work in the sixteenth century.

Hema Saraswati : The poet Hema Saraswati was in the Kamata Kingdom and king Durlavanarayan patronized his literary work. He composed two pieces of poetic literature - the *Prahlad Charitra* and the *Haragauri Samvad*. *Prahlad Charitra* is a descriptive poem and he was able to narrate the subject in a simple form for the common Assamese people. *Haragauri Samvad* is also of the narrative genre. His poetic qualities are best reflected in this book and he probably composed these verses when he was fully matured.

Rudra Kandali : Rudra Kandali was contemporary to Hema Saraswati, and he received support and inspiration from king Tamradhaja. Rudra Kandali translated some episodes from *Mahabharata's Drona Parva*. He described the war activities clearly and tried to follow idiomatic use in his poetry.

Harivara Vipra : The poet Harihar Vipra was in the court of king Durlavanarayana in Kamatapur kingdom. Harivar Vipra wrote two books in poetry form - the *Babrubahanar Yudha* and the *Lava-Kushar Yudha*. Both books narrate the fight between father and son, and how the father was defeated by the hands of son. Harihar Vipra translated both books and embroidered the values and culture of Assamese people of the fourteenth century with success in both books. He tried to give vivid



picture of the prevalent architectural styles of the temples and of the society in his translation, without deviating from the original subject.

Madhava Kandali : Among all the Assamese poets of the pre-Vaishnava era, Madhava Kandali was the outstanding poet of the fourteenth century. His major work was the translation of the *Ramayana* in free-flowing and idiomatic Assamese. He was a great Sanskrit scholar. His translation of *Ramayana* was done first, considering all other languages of northern India. Madhava Kandali did not deviate in content from the original *Ramayana*, which was written by Valmiki. He was bold in expression, and used his poetic imagination correctly and suitably (Sarma, S. N. 1981 : 56-74).

Madhava Kandali, the greatest pre-Vaishnava poet, was in the court of king Mahamanikya of Baraha kingdom. D. Neog writes : 'Madhaw Kandali's metres and descriptions, poetic diction and vocabulary, appear to be a splendid specimen to his successors. ----- the style of the poet is consistently forceful and beautiful, and one cannot miss the exquisite literary beauty of Madhaw Kandali's style for which we are tempted to call him an Assamese Chaucer, comparing the brilliant literary merit of this writer with that of his great contemporary in English literature' (Neog 1982 : 117).

Assamese literature was also enriched by other poets during the pre-Vaishnava phase of Assamese literature.

### **The Vaishnava Era :**

Assamese language and literature achieved great heights during the Vaishnava period, which was dominated by the towering figures of Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva (15th and 16th centuries). They spearheaded the neo-Vaishnava

movement in Assam, and were responsible for a vital socio-cultural resurgence. They greatly enriched Assamese literature with their brilliant compositions which included a vast body of poetry, lyrics and dramas - all soaked in the intense spirit of *Bhakti*.

Vaishanava literature mainly consists of translations from the *Puranas*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and other Sastras of this level. The purpose of Vaishnava literature was to give ample knowledge of *Bhakti* to the common people, and to spread the spirit of *Bhakti* and convince people to lead a peaceful life worshipping only one God - Vishnu. To propagate the theme of *Bhakti*, the writers of the Vaishanava era did not cross the boundaries of spiritual and religious motive. The great poets felt it their duty and put their sincere efforts to create Assamese literature, drama and music to uplift the mental horizon of the people.

In terms of form, the Vaishnava literature can be grouped as poetry, drama, lyrics, hagiographies (*charit puthis*) and various prose works etc.

Sankaradeva was the greatest leader of the Vaishnava era. We cannot put a boundary on his widespread contribution to religion, society, art and culture and the language of Assam.

Sankaradeva's literary contribution includes the following :

*Harichandra Upakhyan, Rukmini Harana Kavya, Kirtana Ghosha, Bhagavata - first, second, tenth (Aadi), eleventh and twelfth scondha, Ajamila Upakhyan, Uddhawa Sambad, Balichalan, Nimi Nava Siddha Sambad, Anadi Patan, Bhakti Pradip, Bhakti Ratnakar, Gunamala, Uttarakanda Ramayana, Amrit Mathan, Gojendra Mokhyan, Kurukhetra, Orhesa Varnan, Cihna Yatra - an opera of one act,*

*the Anka dramas - Patnuprasad, Kalidomon, Rasa Krida ( Keligopal ), Rama Vijoy and the Bargeets ( Neog 1982 161 - 183 and Sarma, S 1981 131 )*

Sankaradeva's poetic expressions gave a sublime beauty to the Assamese literature. The dialogue used in Sankaradeva's dramas is one of the oldest forms of Assamese prose.

Madhabadeva, (1849-1596) another great saint-poet of the Vaishnava era, was the dearest disciple of Sankaradeva. In contributions to Vaishnava literature, Madhavdeva is equally prominent to Sankaradeva. Madhabadeva helped Sankaradeva in translating the *Aadi* and *Uttarakanda* of the *Ramayana*. He composed a substantial amount of devotional *Bargeets*. The greatest contribution of Madhabadeva to Assamese literature is the *Nama Ghosa*. His scholastic, poetic and philosophical ideals are reflected to the highest extent in the *Nama Ghosa*. Other notable books of Madhabadeva are *Chor Dhora*, *Pimpora Guchuwa*, *Bhajan Vihar*, *Bhumi Latowa*, and *Dodhi Mathan*. According to *Charit puthi*, Madhabadeva wrote three dramas - *Nri Sinha Yatra*, *Gobodhawn Yatra* and *Rama Yatra*. In addition there are quite a few books with colophon stating that the books were written by him. From their style and content, it is doubtful that those books were written by him, but it is definitely proof of his popularity that others used his name (Sarma, S N 1981 149).

The poets Ananta Kandali and Rama Saraswati contributed to Assamese literature after the demise of Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva. The significant works of Ananta Kandali are *Ramayana*, *Kumar Haran*, *Bhagavat (Britasur Badh of 6th scandha)*, *Mahiravana Badh*, *Sitar Patal Probesh* etc. Rama Saraswati added to

Assamese literature through his poetic contributions. He also contributed a popular piece of literature - *Badha Kavya*. Sridhar Kandali also contributed to vaishnava literature. His important books are - *Kankhowa* and *Ghunusha Kirttan*.

The literary trends established in the Vaishnava era was the foundation of Assamese literature which expanded in later periods and changed to modern Assamese literature.

### **The Post-Vaishnava Era :**

The post-Vaishnava era is basically an extension of the Vaishnava era. The Ahom entered Assam in early thirteenth century and started the Ahom kingdom. They used their own *Tai* language. Gradually, in later period the Ahom kings became interested in the Hindu religion and they finally embraced the Hindu religion. Some of the Ahom kings even patronized the Hindu religion by constructing temples and giving grants to the *Satras* of the Hindu religion. As a result, the *Satras* were flourishing as a center for religion, culture, education and the Vaishnava scholars could devote their time to creative literature.

The most valuable literary achievement of this era was the writing of *Buranjis* (Chronicles) and *Charit Puthis* (Life sketches).

### The Buranjis :

The Ahom brought with them the habit of recording important events and they continued to write their important events in their own *Tai* language after they entered Assam. The Ahom gradually adopted the Assamese language as their own and wrote their chronicles of the successive kings in Assamese until the British occupied the

Ahom kingdom The first Ahom who performed the compilation of chronicles in Assamese language was the king's counselor Aaton Buragohain (Gogoi 1996 32) The art of writing chronicles gradually spread to the non-Ahom officers and nobles Following the example of Ahom, the Koch kings also adopted the writing of dynastic chronicles which they named *Rajavamsavalis*. They were also written in Assamese These chronicles are considered early prose literature of Assamese language The noted linguist Dr Grierson remarked on this literature of chronicles as follows

The Assamese are justly proud of their national literature In no department have they been more successful than in a branch of study in which, India, as a rule, is curiously deficient ----- the historical works or the *Brandies*, as they are styled in Assamese, are numerous and voluminous According to the custom of the country, a knowledge of the *Brandies* was an indispensable qualification to an Assamese gentleman (Sarma 1991 142)

The American Baptist Missionaries collected as many of the *Buranjis* as possible This valuable endeavour was initiated by Rev Nathan Brown

#### Charit Puthis and Vaishnavite Literature

The *Charit-Puthis* were written both in poetry and prose The *Charit Puthis* are hagiographics dealing with the lives and activities of Vaishnavite preachers Although we cannot call the *Charit Puthis* a complete life sketch of a person, these *Charit puthis* bear some literary values in their expressions The *Charit Puthis* emerged around the first quarter of seventeenth century Although we notice prose style dialogues in Sankaradeva's *Ankia Nat*, these cannot be considered a true form of Assamese prose since the sentences do not conform to grammatical rules For the first time we see a distinct prose style of literary expression in the writings of Vaikunthanatha Bhagavata-Bhattacharya, popularly known as Bhattadeva Scholars

of Assamese literature also agree that Bhattadeva was the pioneer of prose style writing in the Assamese language (Barua 1988 : 209).

Bhattadeva was the main disciple of Damodaradeva. He intimately helped Damodaradeva in propagating the Damodaria sub-sect of Assamese Vaishnavism. As requested by guru Damodaradeva, Bhattadeva composed in simple Assamese prose - *Geeta*, *Bhagavata* and *Rantawali*. In addition to these valuable works, Bhattadeva wrote *Caranmallika*, *Guruvamsavali* and *Prasangamala* in Assamese and *Bhaktisar* and *Bhaktivivek* in Sanskrit language. Instead of using the day to day colloquial Assamese words in his writing, Bhattadeva used appropriate literary words, making the sentences short with an application of correct grammar. In some situations he could not completely avoid the Sanskrit influence in his writing.

Gopal Ata was a disciple of Madhabadeva who founded the *Kal-Samhati* sect of the neo-Vaishnava religion. He also contributed to Assamese literature with three *Ankiya Nats* - *Udhavajana*, *Janmayatra* and *Nondotsava*, along with substantial number of devotional songs and *Ghosas*.

The other established writers of this era who contributed to Assamese literature were : Ramcharan Thakur, Gopal Misra, Bhagavata Acharya, Govinda Misra, Gopinath Pathak, Damodor Das, Damodor Dvija, Vidya Panchanan, Ramamisra, Srinath Dvija, Kavisekhar, Kalapchandra Dvija, Anirudha Kayastha, Anirudhadev, Vishnu Bharati, Gopalcharan Dvija, Keshav Kayastha, Chandrasur Aaditya, Ratnakar Misra and Ananta Kayastha (Sarma, S. N. 1981 : 185-200).

Notable writers of *Charit Puthis* are : Ramacharan Thakur, Bhushan Dvija,

Daityari Thakur, Krishna Bharati, Krishnacharya, Ramananda Dvija, Ramaray, Baikunthanath Dvija and Ramananda. Some of the writers composed devotional songs during the seventeenth century. Notable composers of devotional songs are : Ramcharan Thakur, Daityari Thakur, Gopal Ata, Sriram Ata, Ramananda Dvija, Barjadumani, Sanatondeva, Moyamoria Aniruddha, Chaturbhuj Thakur and Purushatam Thakur.

#### Secular Literature :

During the post-Vaishnava era we also see some secular literature written in Assamese, but there was only a small quantity of this type of literature. Bokul Kayastha wrote a book on Arithmetic, *Kitavat Manjari*, in the sixteenth century. A book on Astrology - *Jyotish Cudamani*, was published under the authorship of Cudamani, and was written in Assamese verse. Bokul Kayastha also translated the famous Sanskrit Arithmetic book - *Leelavati*, into Assamese. During the eighteenth century, we see some secular prose literature of a utilitarian nature. The style of writing used in this literature was somewhat similar to that used in the chronicles. The *Hasti-Vidyarnava* ( a treatise on elephants ), *Ghoranidan* ( a work on the treatment of horse diseases ), *Tirtha-Kaumudi* ( a book along the line of a tourists' guide which gave a description of the holy places of India ), and the Assamese rendering of *Niti-Latankura* are fine specimens of early Assamese prose. In addition we can speculate that books on other subjects like *Mantras* and *Bejali Puthis* were written in the post-Vaishnava era ( Sarma, S. N. 1981 : 200-208 ).

In the beginning of eighteenth century we notice a change in theme of

Assamese literature. The central theme of Bhakti of Vaishnava literature became diluted and the writers became more inclined to put some erotic essence in their writings. This was probably due to the aristocratic affluent influence of the king family who fully supported the writers

During the Vaishnava period, all literary works evolved considering *Bhagavata* as their nucleus. The Vaishnava Satras were the centers for learning and development of Assamese literature. Since the influence of the *Bhagavata* was at its fullest extent, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* were only considered partially important. Perhaps due to this situation significant literary works of the *Mahabharata* were not available in the eighteenth century. However, a few writers contributed their literary works based on the *Mahabharata* during the period of Ahom kings. The notable poets were : Lakhsminath Dvija, Subhanath Dvija, Vidyachandra Kavisekhar, Sista Bhattacharjee, Prithuram Dvija, Vishnuram Dvija and Sagarkhari Daivagya. In addition, under the patronage of Koch king Harendranarayan, a few poets translated some works from the *Mahabharata*. Raghunath Mahanta's contribution for *Ramayana* literature in Assamese is noteworthy. He wrote the *Katha-Ramayana*, the *Adbhuta-Ramayana* and *Shatrunjaya*.

### **The Modern Era :**

The ushering of the modern age :The role of missionaries and its cumulative effect.

The modern era of Assamese literature can be established from the beginning of British rule in Assam. In the beginning, the British were primarily interested in restoring law and order. Although the Assamese people felt secure under the British,



the British did not pay attention to the cause of Assamese language and literature. The combined effect of internal conflicts of Ahom kings, Burmese attacks, natural calamities and the British annexation brought the atmosphere of Assamese literature, education, art and culture to a complete halt. In March, 1836, the American Baptist Missionaries arrived Sadiya for their Christian mission with goal to enter south west China. The Missionaries conception of the prevailing language around Sadiya proved to be wrong. The Missionaries learned the Assamese language in their own interest to become successful in their mission. They wrote books in Assamese language. For the first time the Missionaries introduced the concept of indexing and contents in writing. The Missionaries took the leadership to re-establish the Assamese language in Assam in which educated Assamese also joined their hands. The Missionaries were successful in re-establishing the Assamese language but they could not reconnect to the past of Assamese literature. The Missionaries started the use of modern Assamese like a new language and a new era.

The modern era may be discussed considering the following time frame :

1. The Period of Missionary Literature 1836 - 1870
2. The Period of Hemchandra and Gunabhiram 1870 - 1890
3. Romantic Period or Jonaki Yug 1890 - 1940
4. The Present Period since 1940

The Period of Missionary Literature (1836 - 1870) : The Missionaries understood clearly that although the British tried to promote education in the Bengali language, Bengali was not the native language of the Assamese. The Missionaries, particularly

Dr. Brown and Dr. Bronson, tried their best to learn the Assamese language from the people. Since they started their activities in Upper Assam, the language that they learned conformed with the speaking language of Upper Assam, and in turn became the written language of Assam.

The Missionaries started opening schools at their mission centers and devoted their time to prepare text books for the schools. The first printed literary work in Assamese was the translation of the New Testament, published from Serampore Press in 1813. Rev. Carey published the book with the help of Atmaram Sarma, who was from Nagaon, Assam. The language of the book was mixed, with words not common to the Assamese language and as such people could not understand the book. However, Mr. Brown translated the same book in Assamese and published it in 1848.

The *Orunodoi*, the first Assamese journal, was published in January, 1846 from the Sibsagor Mission Press. This is considered a milestone in the history of Assamese literature. In the *Orunodoi*, literary expression was more of a straight forward nature. The mental horizon of the writers was limited. The imaginative and creative power of the writers was not blooming since the writers had never been exposed to a creative style of expression. Prior to the publication of the *Orunodoi*, only a few literary works were published by the Baptist Missionaries. The important works of this period are :

- (1) *Grammar of the Assamese Language* (1839) by William Robinson. This book was in English;
- (2) *Ahom Buranji* (1844) by Kashinath Tamuli Phukan;
- (3) *Asamiya Shabdavali Aru Khandavakya* (1840) by Mrs. O. T. Cutter;
- (4) *Belimarar Buranji* (1833-38) by Biseswar Vidyadhip;
- (5) *Assamese Dictionary* by Jaduram Deka Baruah

( this was the first dictionary written in Assamese but it was not published ). The dictionary was given to Colonel Jenkins and he gave it to the American Baptist Missionaries who used it during the early period of the *Orunodoi*. Dr. Bronson based his dictionary in Assamese and English which was published in 1867 on this writing;

(6) *Buranji Vivekaratna* (1838) by Maniram Barbhandar Barua.

Dr. Nathan Brown was the first editor of the *Orunodoi*. Some Assamese scholars are of the opinion that Mr. O. T. Cutter was the first editor of the *Orunodoi*, based on the statement in the first issue of the *Orunodoi* that the *Orunodoi* was 'printed and published at the Sibsagar Mission Press, by O. T. Cutter, for the American Baptist Mission in Assam.' George Gillespie has pointed out in his paper 'The *Orunodoi*' published in *Indian Church History Review*, Vol. XII, No. I, 1978 thus :

----- The fact that Cutter was the printer and publisher is no indication that he was the editor. He was, in fact, in charge of the press, and thus the printer and publisher of all the mission publications. The editor's name is not given on the periodical. In the biography of Nathan Brown, *The whole world kin*, the author (E. W. Brown) writes, 'In January, 1846, Mr. Brown prepared the first number of the *Orunodoi* ---- which he edited in the Assamese language during most of his remaining years at Sibsagar (Brown E. W. 1890 : 416).

From the beginning, the *Orunodoi* was published in two forms - magazine and newspaper. Until 1850, the only difference was in size, after which the magazine had twice the content of the newspaper. Both forms had one publication each month. Both forms were published for the first eight years. For the first five years (1846 - 1850), the contents of both forms were the same but the news paper had four large

pages and the magazine had eight smaller pages ( Gillespie 1978 : 20 ).

The *Orunodoi* played an important role as a step towards the modern era of Assamese literature. It created a renaissance in Assamese literature. The subject matters of the *Orunodoi* were varied and the style of the writing was of a more colloquial nature<sup>1</sup>. The *Orunodoi* covered local and foreign news, and described the ethnography of the area. It included science, geography, machines, animals of the world, the stars, mythology of Hindu and other religions, old Assamese manuscripts and Christian teaching. It also included both original poetry and translations. It published Christian hymns.

The period of the *Orunodoi* was like the dawning of a modern life. The Assamese people tried to assimilate into the modern world with the knowledge gathered from the *Orunodoi*. The Assamese language needed new words to express the new, modern ideas. As far as possible the American Baptist Missionaries created new words from the original literature. Where they could not, they used an English word giving proper explanations. For example they used the words *Iswarar Namghar* or *Prabhur Dharam Mandali* for 'Church', *Paduri* for Padre, *Lata Paniyal* for grapes, *Man Palota* for conversion, *Bhabishyat Bakta* for prophet etc. The term 'Iswarar Namghar' is not commonly used now a days, but the term 'Mandali' is presently used.

Another attractive section of the *Orunodoi* were the fables and parables. Essay, as a type of literature, was first introduced in the *Orunodoi* by the Missionaries. This is another one of the major contributions of the Missionaries to Assamese



The Baptist missionaries used the word *Namghar* and *Mandali* for Church, in Assamese

literature. They used new style and syntax, following English literature. Although the Assamese scholars acknowledge their creation of a new prose style, it was not a perfectly appealing form of literature. It took on its correct appealing form later when other educated Assamese writers started writing their free flowing thoughts with proper Assamese idiomatic use. The flow in poetic expression was not natural in all cases. In some poems, we see the influence of Vaishnava literature in style and form. The prose form of Assamese literature was also in the post-Vaishnava era. However, we see a new style in the prose writing by the Missionaries and other contemporary Assamese writers of their time.

The most prominent writers of the *Orunodoi* period are : Dr. Nathan Brown, Dr. Miles Bronson and Nidhi Levi Farwell.

Dr. Nathan Brown made a complete translation of the *New Testament* and published it in 1848. Another work by him - *Khrishtar Vivaran Aru Subhavarta* was published by the Sibsagor Mission Press in 1854. In his book - *The Whole Walford Kin*, he beautifully described his experience of preacher life and his sweet memories of Assam. Dr. Brown did a splendid job for Assamese literature by collecting about twenty old Assamese manuscripts. In addition to these, Dr. Brown translated about sixty Christian hymns into Assamese, and published substantial literature on Christian religion.

Dr. Miles Bronson will be remembered for his first Assamese dictionary, published in 1867 which contained about 14,000 pure Assamese words. It helped tremendously in restoring Assamese language in place of Bengali in Assam.

Dr Bronson wrote a book - *Spelling book and Vocabulary in English, Assamese, Singpho and Naga* which was published from Jaipur in 1839 Dr Bronson also translated a substantial number of Christian hymns into Assamese, along with other literary works of Christian religion

Nidhi Levi Farwell was the prominent writer of the *Orunodoi* ( 1846 - 1854)

Nidhi Levi was also a preacher, poet and translator Nidhi Levi wrote books - *Bharatiya Dandavidhi Ain, Padartha Vidyar Sar - Arthat Isware Sarja Vastur Kathar Sikshak-Chatrar Kathopakathan, Hints for Children on Good Manners, Female Education and Remarriage by widows* Nidhi Levi's contribution to the translation of the Bible into Assamese by Dr Nathan Brown is very significant He wrote both prose and poetry in the *Orunodoi* His children's essays with charming stories are remarkable Nidhi Levi followed the style and syntax of Dr Brown in his writing He is one of the early writers of Assamese prose Nidhi Levi was not only the first Assamese convert by Baptist Missionary, but was a pioneer writer in the Assamese language ( Neog, M 1985 )

Mrs Eliza Brown dedicated her support to the literary work of Dr Brown

Mrs Brown also contributed to Assamese literature She wrote *First Reading Book in Assamese* which was published from Jaipur in 1842 She was also co-author of the book *Gananar Kitap* with her husband Dr Nathan Brown, which was published from Sibsagar in 1845 Two pages of this book are added in Appendix The Sanskrit *sloka*, which is in the beginning of the book, is a definite proof that the American Baptist Missionaries emphasized the old traditional recorded values of any form of literature<sup>2</sup>

The first story books for juveniles in Assamese were written by Mrs Brown and was published in 1840 ( Neog, D 1982 344 )

Mr A K Gurney also contributed to Assamese literature He edited the *Orunodoi* for several years His important works in Assamese are - *Pracin Niyam* (Old Testament) *Ruth Aru Josephor Kahini* (1881), *Kani Beheruar Katha* (1878), *Alokeshi Besyar Katha* (1877) and *Kamini Kantar Charitra* (1877) His wife, Mrs Gurney, also translated a book in Assamese - *Phulmoni Aru Karuna*<sup>3</sup> (Sarma S 1981 280)

William Ward was a poet and he translated a considerable number of Christian hymns *Anglo-Assamese Vocabulary* (1864) by Mrs S R Ward and *Anglo Assamese Phrases* (1877) by H B L Cutter were useful books in the development of Assamese literature

There were other non-Christian Assamese writers who promoted Assamese literature by contributing to the *Orunodoi* Anandaram Dhekial Phukan was the most prominent writer of the *Orunodoi* period The contribution made by Phukan in his short life span is unique in Assamese literature His essay on *Englandor Vivaran* was published in the *Orunodoi* in 1847 His book - *Asomia Lorar Mitra* was published in two parts in 1849 His most valuable work was *A Few Remarks on Assamese Language, and on Vernacular Education in Assam* His consistent fight to reintroduce the Assamese language in Assam is described earlier Although in the *Orunodoi*, we see the beginning of Assamese prose form initiated by the Baptist Missionaries, it flourished fully in the hands of Anandaram Dhekial Phukan Phukan's



name is engraved as the pioneer of modern prose writer in Assamese literature (Talukdar 1992 : 2).

In addition to Dhekial Phukan, Boloram Phukan, Jagyaram Daodhai Barua, Purnananda Dekabarua, and Kinaram Satria, contributed to the *Orunodoi*. Some of the writers of the *Orunodoi* period contributed to Assamese literature without being influenced by the modern style of writing in the *Orunodoi*. They followed the traditional style. Dutiram Hazarika (1806-1901), Dinanath Bezbarua (1813-1895), Harakanta Barua Sadar Amin (1813-1900), Gopinath Chakravarty, Raghudeva Goswami and Lalitchandra Goswami belong to this group of writers

#### Assamese Literature at the Hands of Local Luminaries :

##### The Period of Hemchandra and Gunabhiram : 1870 - 1890

There is no doubt that the Baptist Missionaries opened the door to let Assamese literature into its modern form. The topics included in the *Orunodoi* were of a somewhat materialistic type. It was not a true creative literature. The topics did not reflect a true picture of the socio-cultural, religious or economic side of the Assamese people. The Missionaries maintained interest in Christianity through the *Orunodoi*. They did not try to become leaders or to encourage the Assamese people to unite or to create feelings for Assamese independence. It was quite natural for the Missionaries not to destroy the harmony with the British. Even the educated Assamese supported the British for their personal gain in those days. But a feeling of patriotism pushed them to write about the social evils of the Assamese people. Anandaram Dhekial Phukan and Hemchandra Barua considered it their duty to uplift

Assamese society in the field of education and social reform.

Hemchandra Barua and Gunabhiram Barua were pioneers in writing creative literature whose themes were social problems of the Assamese people. In reality, they started a new era in Assamese literature by ending the *Orunodoi* period. During their time we see the beginning of Assamese literature with drama, travel literature etc. The creation of wit, humour and satire first entered into Assamese language in the writings of Hemchandra and Gunabhiram Barua ( Sarma S. 1981 : 292 ).

Hemchandra Barua started his literary life in the *Orunodoi*. He contradicted the view of Dr. Nathan Brown who used colloquial Assamese words without paying attention to the roots of the original words. Eventually Barua was successful, and he shaped Assamese words using Sanskrit as the origin, which he thought was the scientific base for the Assamese words. His Assamese dictionary, *Hemkosh*, was published in 1900 after his death. It was the second Assamese dictionary and the greatest achievement of his literary life. Hemchandra Barua also wrote *Asomia Vyakaran* (1859), *Aadipath* (1873), *Asomiya Lorar Vyakaran* (1886) and *Porhashalia Abhidhan* (1892). He also wrote two books - *Kaniya Kirttan* (1861) and *Bahire Rong Chong Bhitore Kowabhatari* in which he used a satiric style to describe the downgraded Assamese society. He was also the editor of the *Asam News*. In addition to his Assamese books he wrote a book in English, *The Assamese Marriage System*.

Gunabhiram Barua, like Hemchandra Barua, also started his literary life in the *Orunodoi*. He wrote his first book, *Ram Navami*, in 1857. He contributed to Assamese literature with his valuable books - *Anandaram Dhekial Phukanar Jivan*

*Charit* (1880) and *Asom Buranji* (1884). He edited the monthly magazine the *Asam Bandhu* in 1885. The life span of this magazine was only a year and a half. He attracted a group of writers, viz. Hemchandra Goswami, Lakshminath Bezbaroa, Ratneswar Mahanta, Satyanath Bora, Lambodar Bora and Bholanath Das, who flourished in the next *Jonaki* era. During this period, quite a few writers attended college at Calcutta and they came in contact with English and Bengali literature. We see some influence of these languages in their writings.

A. K. Gurney's *Kaminikantar Charitra* was published within this period, and is considered the first novel in the Assamese language. Padmawati Devi Phukanani, wife of Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, also wrote a book, *Sudharmar Upakhyān*, during this period.

Earlier, the Baptist Missionaries published the old *Buranjis*, which were of a secular nature. During this period, Assamese religious literature came into light. Haribilas Agarwalla took the initiative in this project. Duttadeva Goswami of Auniati Satra, Majuli also published a few books on Vaishnava literature.

The other noted writers of this period are : Ramakanta Chowdhury, Bholanath Das, Lambodar Bora and Kamalakanta Bhattacharyya, who extensively wrote articles in the Assamese magazines in addition to their books. Among the women writers Padmawati Devi Phukanani, wife of Dhekial Phukan; Bishnupria Devi, wife of Gunabhiram and Swarnalata, daughter of Gunabhiram are prominent figures of this period.

The Romantic Period 1890 - 1940 :

On the foundation of Assamese literature laid by Hemchandra Barua and Gunabhiram Barua, came a group of educated young people who changed the trend of Assamese literature to an another modern form. These young people pursued their studies at Calcutta during the later part of nineteenth century. They were well conversant in English and in Bengali, in addition to their own Assamese language. In 1889, with their initiative and strong determination, they started to publish a monthly magazine, the *Jonaki*, from Calcutta for the advancement of the Assamese literature. This is the beginning of the *Jonaki Yug* in Assamese literature.

Contributing to the *Jonaki* or through their own books, they brought a new wave of romanticism - a new form in the Assamese literature. The Bengal renaissance had already taken place in Bengal before the start of the *Jonaki* era. The romanticism of Assamese literature actually came through the renaissance of the Bengali language.

The magazine *Jonaki* continued only for a period of nine years. Another parallel Assamese magazine, the *Bijuli*, was published from Calcutta in 1890 and continued only for few years. But the value of these magazines to Assamese literature are immense.

The *Jonaki*'s contributions are more significant and gave birth to a new form of poetry, short stories, novels, prose literature and dramas. The flow of Assamese literature continued in later years in the Assamese magazines - *Bahi* (1910-29, 1934-36, 1938-40), *Usha* (1907-12), *Alochani* (1910-17) and *Awahan* (1929). During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, Assamese literature was governed by the wave

of fight for independence

During this period, the subject matters of Assamese literature are vivid Literature, in the form of poetry, prose, drama, short stories, specific articles, life history and research-criticism were contributed by many established poets and writers They developed their own different styles and therefore each contributed to the various essence of modern Assamese literature

If we look for Christian Assamese literature during the *Jonaki* era, we find some evidence that the Christian Assamese literature still existed in a low profile After the *Orunodoi*, the Baptist Missionaries published a monthly magazine, the *Dipti* beginning in July, 1905, and the magazine was continued up to 1945 The *Dipti* was published with an aim to propagate Christianity, and the editor tried to include different topics as was done in the *Orunodoi* But the *Dipti* did not receive appreciation from the Assamese readers as the *Orunodoi* had

The first editor of the *Dipti* was Rev A K Gurney The other editors were Rev S A D Boggs, Keneith Goldsmith, Dr Victor Hugo Sword and Miss Anandi Konwar The *Dipti* was published by the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, the Assam Printing Works, Jorhat, the Jayanti Art Press, Guwahati and the Surjya Press, Nagaon The prominent writers of the *Dipti* were Tanuram Saikia Christian, Henry Goldsmith, Miss J R Scott and Navinchandra Barua Minaram Gogoi, Golok Chandra Singha and R T May contributed religious poems Although the *Dipti* was in circulation for about forty years, it did not gain popularity among the non Christian Assamese (Phukan, 1996: 198-202)

*Haridasee*<sup>4</sup> is another book written in Assamese by Dr. and Mrs. William E. Witter with Hindu and Christian Assamese helpers. It was published by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society in 1922 from Guwahati. *Haridasee* is a novel which described how a happy family ended up in a pathetic situation because of the husband's addiction to alcohol. This is a beautiful book, which was translated from Bengali.

Two other books which were published by the Missionaries during this period are *Balya Bandhu* (1932), and *Balya Sahasar* (1940). Both books are written for children literature, and also depict the stories in pictures. *Balya Bandhu* was written by M. J. Tait from Golaghat and *Balya Sahasar* was published from the Mission Girls' High School, Golaghat, Assam. This gives us evidence that the Missionaries continued to publish books in Assamese even in the latter part of the *Jonaki* era.

#### The Present Period : 1940 to Present :

During the early part of the present period, Assamese literature was in a dormant stage. One of the main characteristics of Assamese literature of this era was the opposition to the romanticism of earlier period. The other characteristics were seeing the old believes in a progressive way, expressing the life and the world with anew philosophy and including some other materials which were not considered as literary materials in earlier Assamese literature (Borgohain 1993 : 0 19)

The old style of the poetry literature practically ended during the middle of the 20th century and a modern trend in poetry is progressing in a new direction. The theme of poetry moved towards the day-to-day activities of present life compared to

the old theme governed by a belief in God.

The modern style of literature originally emerged in the magazine *Jayanti*, which was first published in 1936. Raghunath Chowdhury was the editor. The *Jayanti* was published until 1938. The *Jayanti* was again published during the years 1943 to 1949.

#### The Present Period since 1940 :

Since the modern period of Assamese literature falls in present century, I am restricting myself and not going into details considering the boundaries of my research topic. However, I would like to mention that the Assamese Christian literature still continues from the nineteenth century in a consistent form. In reference to the literature of a religious and cultural nature, Lakhiram Baruah of Jorhat wrote a number of books. His *Muktinam*, a collection of Assamese hymns in different styles was published first time in 1951. The other books he wrote on poetry were *Uddipana* (1954), *Sristilila* (1954) and *Sanjiwani* (1955). Lakhiram Barua also wrote dramas *Avatar* (1953) and *Apavyayee Putra* (1954). Joseph Silly also wrote books on religious songs *Natun Prasangsa Gan* (1957), *Chiyen-Sangeet* (1966) and *Geetawali*. (1971)

A groove of Christian literature is still continuing in the present era keeping a tie with nineteenth century Christian missionaries.

## Chapter VI

Notes and References

- 1 The missionaries favoured the use of simple and colloquial words in translating hymns to Assamese. The following is an extract from a letter written by Rev N Ward on March 26 1873 from Sibsagar to Rev M Bronson (Source Bronson Family Papers)

“I get one of these hymns in mind and it goes on grinding when I lie awake or when I wake in the morning, or at odd intervals of other work ---- I think you might send me some of your notes on some of the hymns ---- I do not like ‘khyomma’ for Khema at all, but I shall leave spelling to others and do as they bid ! I shall speak and pronounce the simple way

The Assamese Pundits also helped the missionaries in composition of the hymns. In a letter to Rev Bronson, Rev Ward on March 15, 1873 wrote - “In the Jubilee hymn - Mr Pundit wants ‘Mukti hoba, he papı nor’ instead of “Mukolı hoba papı nor”

- 2 I tried to find the root of the *sloka* by contacting a few persons who are proficient in Sanskrit Language, but could not succeed. Further investigation is felt needed on this matter
- 3 The history of *Phulmoni and Koruna*, translated from Bengali by Nidhi Levi Farwell was published in 1854 and was printed at the American Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagar, Assam. Copy of the cover page of the book is included in the Appendix. Dr Satyandranath Sarma refers to a book titled *Phulmoni Aru Korunar Kahini* (1877) by Mrs Gurney. The books may be two independent books
- 4 While searching for materials for my research topic I found a book Haridasee, in the Archive Section of the American Baptist Historical Society Library at Rochester, New York. I have not seen any reference made to this book in any other Assamese literature

The summary of the book is as follows

Haridasee was married to her husband when both were children. The father-in-law took care of the young son-in-law, and gave him proper education and the son-in-law eventually became a lawyer. The doctor advised the son-in-law to take a little brandy to recover from an illness. It formed a habit for the son-in-law and the famous lawyer turned into a drunkard and started living with a prostitute. Haridasee was devoted to her husband until she passed away, leaving her three small children behind.

It is to be noted that in the entire book, the writer did not mention about Christianity. The book focuses only on the dark side of alcohol abuse.



## Chapter VII

### From Manuscripts to Printed Books : Introduction of New Book Production Techniques and Formats

Prior to the arrival of the American Baptist Missionaries in Assam, most writings were made in the form of manuscripts, prepared from the bark of trees or pressed cotton (*Sachipat* and *Tulapat* ) The use of paper was unknown until the modern era of Assamese literature The history of Assamese manuscripts is glorious and it gives us both literary and past artistic information The introduction of printing technology and production of books were a great gift from the American Baptist Missionaries to Assamese literature

The tradition of writing manuscripts on *Sachipat* in Assam was prevalent perhaps from the sixth or seventh century Edward Gait states in his *A History of Assam* that king Bhaskara Varman of Assam sent some valuable gifts to king Harsha Vardhana (606 - 648 A D) who ruled the whole of the Ganges valley Among other gifts, one gift item was 'finely-written books with leaves of bark' (Gait 1992 : 26)

Colourful pictures were added to some of the manuscripts in Assam in the period between the later part of seventeenth century to the nineteenth century (Kalita 1996 : 8) The manuscripts were written on folios made of the bark of *Sachi* or *Agar* tree (*Aquilaria Agallocha Roxb*) which were prepared with a laborious process Ink or writing was also prepared from the indigenous materials The writing pen was made

from stem of fern or plume of the *Bhimraj* (Racket-tailed Drongo) bird.

In the past, the process required to make *Sachipat*, *Tulapat* and ink were time consuming and laborious, which are described below.

Process for making of Sachipat : *Sachipat* was made from the bark of a tree commonly known in Assam as *Sachi* or *Agar* tree. The botanical name of this tree is *Aquilaria Agallocha Roxb* and the class is *Thy-meliaceae*. In English the tree is called *Aloe wood* and *Eagle wood*. It is an evergreen type of plant. Sir Edward Gait in his *A History of Assam* describes the process of preparation of *Sachipat* as follows

A tree is selected of about 15 or 16 years' growth and 30 to 35 inches in girth, measured about 4 feet from the ground. From this the bark is removed in strips, from 6 to 18 feet long, and from 3 to 27 inches in breadth. These strips are rolled up separately with the inner or green part inside, and are dried in the sun for several days. They are then rubbed by hand on a board, or some other hard substance, so as to facilitate the removal of the outer or scaly portion of the bark. After this, they are exposed to the dew for one night. Next morning the outer layer of the bark (*nikari*) is carefully removed, and the bark proper is cut into pieces of a convenient size, 9 to 27 inches long, and 3 to 18 inches broad. These are put into cold water for about an hour, and the alkali is extracted, after which the surface is scraped smooth with a knife. They are then dried in the sun for half an hour and when, perfectly dry, are rubbed with a piece of burnt brick. A paste prepared from *matimah* (*Phascolus radiants*) is next rubbed in the bark is dyed yellow by means of yellow arsenic. This is followed again by sun-drying, after which the strips are rubbed as smooth as marble. The process is now complete, and the strips are ready for use (Gait 1992 : 357 ).

Process for making of Tulapat : To make *Tulapat*, cow-dung and cotton or old pieces of cloths are decomposed to pulp. A glue, extracted from *Bar Gach* is added to the pulp and mixed for fine consistency. The fine pulp is then spread thinly on a smooth wooden plate. Another smooth wooden plate is placed on the top of the pulp with a

moderate hand pressure *Tulapat* takes its form under natural drying. When *Tulapat* is dried completely it is ready for writing ( Kalita 1996 : 9 )

Process for making ink The following materials were used for making ink: the shells of *Amlakhi* and *Jamu*, *Keheraj*, *Silikha* (*Terminalia Citina*) bull's urine, earthworm or *Kusia* and rusted iron pieces. The utensils are - an earthen bowl (container), a tub of bronze, an earthen pot, a stand and a hollow bamboo pole with two nodes at both ends. The shells of *Amlakhi* and *Jamu* are to be ground and kept in an earthen bowl to soak in water for a week. The *keheraj* are to be blended and the bull urine to be collected in the bronze tub. The *Silikhas* are to be shredded and to be soaked in water at least for a week. Then all the materials to be kept exposed under dew for one night. The stand to be made in such a way that the upper earthen container can rest at a higher level and the bronze tub to be kept directly underneath. All the paste materials to be kept in the top earthen container and a few pieces of rusted iron are added. A little blood from earthworm or *Kusia* are added for better reflection of the writing in night time. The stand with all the materials described above, is kept in a moderately cold place and the bull's urine is to be poured in the upper earthen container. Due to condensation, small droplets will accumulate in the bronze tub below. This liquid was used as ink which are called in local terms *Kali* or *Mohi*. The inks were kept in bamboo poles as mentioned above with tight plug for future use. The stem of a fern is cut into a hand made pen for writing using this ink. Often, the plume of *Bhimraj* bird was also used as a pen for writing on *Sachipat* or *Tulapat* ( Bora 1994 : 24 )

**From the traditional to the modern type of book :**

By the time the Baptist Missionaries first arrived at Sadiya, in March 1836, printing technology in the west was in an advanced stage. Printing technology progressed to a sophisticated level through gradual modifications.

The invention of printing in China was an invaluable gift to the world. Block printing was invented in 8th century. Later in 11th century, movable type was introduced. In 868 A.D., the first book printed in China by using blocks was *The Diamond Sutra*, a Chinese translation of a Buddhist religious book.

The production of paper was known to Chinese from early days. Paper was invented in China by Ts'ai Lun as early as 105 A.D. (Mazinder : 1998). In ancient times, the Chinese marketed paper to the Arab world. In 751 the Arabs got the secret of paper making from the Chinese. Paper mills proliferated from the end of 8th century to the 13th century in the Arab world, and later to Spain, which was then under Arab domination. In the 12th century, paper first penetrated Europe through the Italian ports and by an overland route from Spain to France. The papermaking techniques were rediscovered by the Europeans by examining the imported paper. Papermaking industries grew in Italy after 1275 and in France and Germany by the 14th century.

Printing was traditionally defined as a technique for applying under pressure a certain quality of colouring agent onto a specified surface to form a body of text or an illustration. Printing technology is changing with modernization. Printing is no longer limited to merely books and newspapers but is also used for textiles, plates, wall

papers, packaging, billboards, etc. So in the present world, the definition of printing will probably be any of several techniques for reproducing texts and illustrations, in black and in colour, with durable type faces and in a desired number of identical copies.

The invention of durable type faces in large numbers and with each letter strictly identical as well as the concept of printing press itself were independent of Chinese discovery. Johannes Gutenberg of Mainz, Germany is generally credited for the discovery in 1450 though there is some uncertainty about it (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1974: 1053).

Mechanical printing was introduced in India during the middle of the sixteenth century. The very first printing press was set up by Portuguese Jesuits at Goa in 1556. In 1557, the Portuguese printed a book in the Roman alphabet from Goa which was the first published printed book in India (Neog 1983: 72). Kalidasa's *The Season (Ritusamhara)* was the first book printed in Sanskrit in 1792 (The British Library 1979). Dr. William Carey published the *New Testament (Dharma Pustak Antabhag)* in Assamese from Serampore Mission Press in 1813. This was the first printed Assamese book (Neog 1983: 72).

By the end of the eighteenth century, Mr. Halhed wrote a book, *A Grammar of the Bengal Language*, to explain the grammar of Bengali language for the British people in India. To cite examples he used Bengali text in the book. In order to print the Bengali text, the creation and use of the Bengali font became unavoidable. William

Bolts tried to make Bengali fonts in England, but he was unsuccessful. Later, Mr Charles Wilkins, who was a civilian officer in India and who had acquired the talent of making Bengali fonts, made the fonts used in printing the book with the help of a gem engraver, Joseph Shepherd and a Bengali blacksmith, Pancanan Karmakar (The British Library, 1979). Definitely the fonts took on a modified form of the original Bengali letters. In later years, under the direction of Dr William Carey, Pancanan created modified Bengali fonts which were smaller in size and more attractive. While publishing the Assamese New Testament, Dr William Carey probably felt the necessity of having some fonts for Assamese combined letters. We may assume that Atmaram Sarma from Nagaon, who was at Serampore, probably helped in this matter. In most cases the Bengali fonts were used in printing of Assamese texts (Neog 1983: 74-75).

The writing of manuscripts in Assamese itself was an art. Dr S. N. Sarma expresses his opinion that the first form of characters written in Assamese manuscripts bear a close resemblance to the characters of stone inscriptions of *Kanai Barasi Bowa* of the thirteenth century. The old Kamrupi script gradually changed to a modified Assamese script. The old Assamese script is also divided into three groups - *Garganya*, *Bamunia* and *Kaitheli* or *Lahkari*. There were no distinct characteristics to differentiate the scripts excepting some change in configuration of the letters in terms of bend and shape (Sarma 1981: 15).

The art of writing - which more or less approached calligraphy - was of a distinct style. As the mechanical printing developed, this art disappeared and the letter fonts took a new shape.

Dr. Nathan Brown arrived Sadiya with Mr. O. T. Cutter who was a printer. They brought a printing machine with them. They brought Bengali and English fonts with them from Calcutta. When the Baptist Missionaries moved from Sadiya to Jaipur, the printing machine was also moved to Jaipur. Finally the printing machine was brought to Sibsagar where Dr. Brown and Mr. Cutter installed the press under the name 'Sibsagor Baptist Mission Press'. This was the first printing press in the history of Assam.

Mr. Jenkins, the Commissioner of Assam, donated a Bengali font in the beginning to Dr. Brown and Mr. Cutter. Later, the fonts were brought from Calcutta to Sibsagar as needed. Several Assamese alphabets which were not available in Bengali, were prepared locally at the Sibsagor Baptist Mission Press. From the 'Description of the Printing Office' by Dayaram Chetia in the *Orunodoi* we get information on making Assamese fonts locally (Neog 1983 : 902). From the inception of the printing press at Sibsagar, the Baptist Missionaries published a significant number of books, both secular and non secular, in Assamese and in English. The publication of the Assamese monthly magazine the *Orunodoi* by the Baptist Mission Press was the most important contribution of the Missionaries and ushered the Assamese language towards a modern style of writing.

### **Modern Writing Formats :**

In old Assamese literature, the format of manuscripts was of rectangular in shape from the horizontal to the vertical and the writings were extended horizontally. The folios were not bound together on the sides but a bunch of threads were maintained at the center of the folios<sup>1</sup>.

The new technology of mechanical printing brought to Assam by the Baptist Missionaries changed the look of book format. Instead of the old horizontal format, printed books became vertical. Calligraphic letters were modified to standard fonts for printing.

A new system of punctuation was also introduced by the American Baptist Missionaries in Assamese writing. In old writings also a system of punctuation was followed. But the number of punctuation marks was limited. In the verse form - in which the bulk of the old books were written - only two marks were used - the single period ( I ) and the double period ( II ) In prose writing, over and above the periods the colon-like mark was very frequently used to indicate pauses.

We have incorporated in the illustration section, a few specimens of old Assamese writing printed in the modern Assamese script to illustrate the system of punctuation followed in them.

Old Assamese books, which were written on *Sachipat* or *Tulapat*, did not normally have any clear labeling of contents or indexing. But in many cases they used “markers” to indicate subject-matter, chapter-heading, canto (*skandha*, *adhyay*,



*parba*) and metre (*chabi, pad, dulari*). The Missionaries started a new style of Assamese writing introducing the labeling of contents. This was definitely an influence of modern Western manner of writing current in the West.

One of the earliest and best known Assamese literary persons in the modern era was Anandaram Dhekial Phukan. His most valuable discourse on Assamese literature - *A Few Remarks on the Assamese Language and on Vernacular Education in Assam*, was published by the American Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagor, in 1855. We observe in this book that 'contents' has been specifically reported with definite page numbers. Though the writer's discourse was in English, he has given many examples in Assamese, Bengali and Hindi to explain his view points.

The punctuation used in the *Orunodoi* clearly shows the use of the following marks : , (comma); ; (semi-colon); I (period, *dari*); : (colon); - (dash); ? (note of interrogation); ! (note of exclamation); “ (quote) and ” (unquote). Naturally, long sentences called for the use of a greater number of quotation marks than short ones. Anandaram followed this method of punctuation in his Assamese writing, which changed the style of writing of Assamese prose.

In the illustration section of this chapter a few specimen of old Assamese writings with punctuations to illustrate the system of punctuation followed in them are incorporated. Also added a few specimen of writings from the *Orunodoi* to illustrate the punctuations followed by the American Baptist Missionaries.

## Chapter VII

### Notes & References

- 1 An Assamese manuscript was found in 1995, in the attic of a building undergoing renovation work by Mr and Mrs Reichler of Connecticut, USA Mrs Reichler contacted me to know the language of the old manuscript On my request Mrs Reichler displayed the manuscript at the annual meeting of the *Assam Sahitya Sabha*, North America Branch on July 2, 1995 in Boston, Massachusetts The manuscript is clearly an Assamese *puṭhi* This photograph reflects a middle page with cover page The name of the manuscript could not be ascertained Contents of this page describes lord Krishna's early life The manuscript is in very good condition and was copied by Ciring Phukan

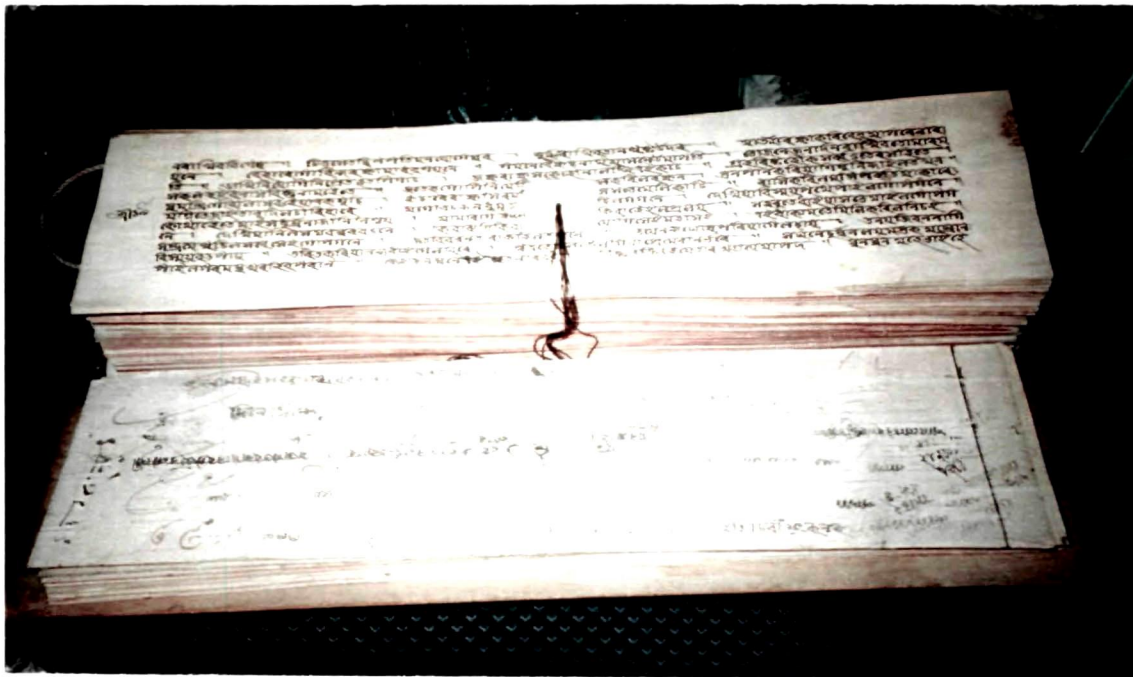
I tried to have a second look on the manuscript Since Mr and Mrs Reichler left America for Italy on military assignment I could not get a chance to go through the manuscript Perhaps this Assamese manuscript was brought to America by some early American Baptist Missionaries

## Chapter VII

**Illustration Section**

- (a) An old Assamese Manuscript, found at Connecticut, USA.
- (b) A specimen from the *Nama Ghosa*.
- (c) A specimen from the *Guru-Charita-Katha*.
- (d) A few passages from the *Orunodoi*.
- (e) A specimen from the *A Few Remarks on The Assamese Language, And on Vernacular Education in Assam*.
- (f) A few specimen from the *Charup Asrai* (1840) and the *Summary of the Faith and Practice of the Baptist Church of Christ in Assam* (1845).

Chapter VII  
Illustration-(a)



An old Assamese Manuscript, found at Connecticut, U S A in 1995



Chapter VII  
Illustration-(c)

গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা

[আৰু এদিন ছুওজনী গুৰু নৌকাৰে গতি কৰিছে : মাঘনোয়া-ঘাটে কপাহ একমাৰ বিকিছে : গুৰু বোলে বঢ়াপো ই কি : বোলে বাপ কপাহ বেহা কৰিছে : বোলে আমাৰো নবতনু নৌকাত মন বুদ্ধি কহালিকৈ পৰমাশ্ৰী সদাগৰচৰণত বেসা কৰা : তেহে গুৰুবাৰ্য্যে চোট আতা গীত কৰিছে ভাঠিৰালি ॥ বেরসা কৰিয়ো আলো মনাই হৰিৰ চৰণে ধন সাৰ ॥] \* ॥ ২৫৭ ॥

আৰু একদিনা কৃষ্ণকথা স্মৃনি সবে গল : চোট আতাও গল : গুৰুজন উঠা নাই : তেনেতে বৃষ্টি আনিলে বোলে দহো শ্ৰীৰাম জোৰা নাই : বোলে বাপ আপুনি উঠা নাই দেখিহে বৈচো কটখানি তুলিবলৈ : বোলে আনখনো তুমিএ তোলানে : বোলে হই বাপ : বোলে চৰ্ন মেঘ : বৰাপো গল : গধূলা বেলা : জাবই নালাগে অতে ধাকা ॥ তেহে ভোজনকৈ গুৰুজনৰ ফাটৰ কাখে সলে ॥ পাচে মহাপুৰুষ গুৰু চিৰাম আতাক মাতিছে প্ৰথমৰ পৰত : . . . ॥ : বোলে বাপ : আৰু হই পৰত বোলে শ্ৰীৰাম : বোলে বাপ : বোলে মই নামহে লৈচো : পাচে তিনি পৰত মাতি [৪৬ক]লে বোলে শ্ৰীৰাম : আতা বোলে মহাপুৰুষ : বোলে চিৰাম মই নামহে লৈচো : বোলে বাপ আমিও শ্ৰবণহে কৰিচো ॥ তেহে শেষ পৰত মাতিছে : বোলে বাপ : পাচে গুৰুজনে খেদকৈ স্মৃচিছে : বোলে শ্ৰীৰাম দহো মই চাৰিও পৰত মাতিচো মাতা : নিজানো নাহেনে তোমাৰ : এ বোলে বাপ পূৰ্বে সিদ্ধিমূৰি কাৰ হুহাতে মৰা গল : পুজ ভেদি সোমাল । আপুনাৰ নিজ দেহবতে বাককৈ জীৱক প্ৰকৃতি মায়াৰ হাতে দিয়া গল : আৰু সত্য যুগেও আগম কৰাই ঢকালি : [ব্ৰেতাতো জজ্ঞ দান তৃৰ্থ ব্ৰত তহু মন্ত্ৰ :] দ্বাপৰতো শ্ৰীৰাম আদি আনো অৱতাৰ হৈ : জজ্ঞ হোম পূজা আপুনি কৰি ধৰালা : এতিয়া হইহে [কলিয়ুগত] বশু চাইটি প্ৰকাশকৈ চাৰিহাতে আৰুৰিচা ওভোতা সিদ্ধিমূৰি প্ৰকৃতি মায়াৰ মধুৰি পাই : নোহ্লাই নধৰে নৰে : হুথ [নৰ্ক নিকাৰ আয়াজাত] দেখি নিজ্ঞা নাহে বাপ ॥ তেহে মহাপুৰুষ গুৰু চিৰাম আতাৰ খেদ ভক্তি দেখি : খেদকৈ বোলে হৰি হৰি প্ৰহ্লাদদেউ জীৱন্তমুকুত তাৰাহে দেখিলে সংসাৰৰ দুখক ॥ নৃসিংহৰ আগত বোলে : ভয়ংকৰ ৰূপ দেখিয়া তোমাৰ প্ৰভু মোৰ ডৰ নাই । সংসাৰচক্ৰৰ নৰে . . . ॥ সদাএ

Chapter VII  
Illustration-(d)

A few passages are reproduced below from *Orunodoi* and from the early Assamese printed books published by American Baptist Missionary Press to illustrate the modern use of punctuation.

From *Orunodoi*, Vol. I, No. 1, January 1886:

বজাৰ মৈদাম খনা ।

Tombs of the Anom-Kings.

পূৰ্বৰে পৰা কোনো আহম বজা স্বৰ্গি হলে সেই বজাই জি জি বাচনত খাই, আৰু জি জি দুবা বস্তু লই, আৰু লিগিবা লিগিৰি, জহৰা জহৰি, আৰু কেতিয়াবা হাতি খোৱা, এই সকলো তাৰ পৰ বজাই মৈদাম বান্ধি তাৰ ভিতৰত সুমাই দিএ। এই ক্ৰমে বস্তু থই; বজা খোআ খোটা-লিহ ওপৰে সাত খলপিয়া সোনাৰ বটৈ দিয়া চন্দৰ তাপ; মাটিত সোনাৰ দাপোন মৰা চাল পিৰা; পিৰাৰ চাৰিও চুকে সোনেৰে বন্ধোআ চাৰি খুঁটি, তাতে আঁঠুআ দিএ; পিৰাৰ ওপৰত ৰূপৰ পাটি; সোন বাখৰ বন কৰা গাৰু, তাতে ৰাজ অলঙ্কাৰে সৈতে বজা সুমাই থই। পিৰাৰ কোসতে সোনত হিৰা বাখৰ পতা এনে ফাঁকেৰে হেৰুদাঙ্গ; কঁকালৰ ওপৰ মাটিতে চাৰি পাঁচ

খান সৰাই, তাৰে এখান ৰূপৰ সৰাইত সোনাৰ বটা, তাৰ ভিতৰে সোনত হিৰা বাখৰ পতা চুন খোআ টেমি আৰু সোনাৰ ধঁপাত খোআ টেমি, সোনাৰ ডাবেৰে কটাৰি আৰু ৰূপৰ তামোল; এখান সৰাইত সোনাৰ ভোগ জৰা, এখানত অলঙ্কাৰ, এই দৰে সোনাৰ মাইহাজ আদি কৰি ৰূপৰ ভোগ জৰা পৰ্জন্তে থই, আৰু সোন ৰূপৰ পেৰাও থই। ভৰি পথানৰ ফালে সোনেৰে বন্ধা ধুঁআ খোআ, তাৰ ওপৰত ৰূপৰ সাকৰ মৰা চিলিম, সোন ৰূপৰ বন কৰা নলি থই, আৰু লিগিবা এটাই সোনাৰ মুঠি বন্ধা চৌম্বৰেৰে বিচে। এই দৰে অন্য অন্য ঠাইতো বস্তু মানুহ ইত্যাদি থই। কিন্তু বজা ডকতিয়া হবৰে পৰা জিয়া জন্তু নি দিয়া হল। তথাপি কদু সিংহ বজাৰ মৈদামত মূৰ চাইটা, প্ৰমত সিংহৰ মৈদামত দহোটা বাবেটা ওলাইচে বুলি মানুহে কই।...

(Neog 1983 : 5)

From *Orunodoi* Vol. I, No. 6, June 1846 :

.. হে প্ৰিয় দেশি বিদেশি লোক সকল, তোমোলাকে আমাৰ অসম দেশ নিচইকৈ নষ্ট নিয়াৰ খুঁচা নে? এই দেশৰ লোকে কানি খাই খাই নিচই নিবলি নিবুধি আৰু নিখনি হৈ দুখিয়া হল, আৰু সেই কানিৰ দোমতে থাকি অধৰম ৰূপে অলপ আয়ুস হৈ, মানুহবোৰ অতি ৰোগে ধৰি মৰি মৰি গৈ আছে, কিন্তু এইবোৰ বিপত্তিএ তোমোলাকক সোৱা নাই নে? তাত বাহিৰে এতিয়া আৰুও কটিকা খাই আমাৰ দেশক ভল নিয়াৰ খুঁচা নে? নাইবা সেই মিৰি মিচিমিইন্তৰ নিচিনা অগিয়ানি হবৰ মন কৰিচাইক, আপোনাৰ

দেশলৈ একেৰিও মৰম নাই নে? সেই কটিকা খাই তোমোলাকৰ কিবা লাভ হৈচে নে? আমি দেখাত একো লাভ নাই, আৰু সকলো ভাল মন্দ মানুহৰ আগত অতিমই লাভহে পাই; কিয়নো কেতবোৰক দেখিচোঁ, কটিকা খাই নিচই বলিয়া হৈ মৰিলত ভত নাই কিয়নো হাতে বাটে আলি খাওঁত মুখে বুৰবুৰনি কাৰ্হি পৰি থাকে। এই ৰূপে ভাল মন্দ সকলো মানুহে জদি খাই, সেই একে গতি, একে লাভ, তাক ধালে একেৰিও মৰুনা নাই, আৰু অমৰুতালি হৈ, সকলোৰে আগত নিন্দিতহে হই।...

(Neog 1983 : 45)

Chapter VII  
Illustration-(e)

From *Orunodoi* Vol. I, No. 6, June 1846 :

.. অকনোদইত চাপিবলৈ গুআহাটি নগৰৰ পৰা এক পত্ৰ পালোঁ, সেই পত্ৰত লিখিছে, “ ৬ সুন ভা-  
বিখে সেই নগৰৰ দক্ষিন ফালে মালিবাৰি নামে-  
ৰে এখন গাৱত, বাঁৰি তিবোতা এজনী ১২  
আৰু ১৩ বছৰিয়া দুটা পুতেকে সৈতে আপোন  
ঘৰতে গধূলি ভাত পানি খাই, তিনিও মাক  
পুতেক একে লগে পাটিত উঠি সুই আছিল।  
পাচে নিলা বাবে বজাৰ সমইত, বৰ নাহৰ ফুটুকি

ব্ৰাহ্ম এটাই বেৰ ভাদ্ৰি, সেই ভাদ্ৰ লুৰাটৰ ডি-  
ক্ষিত কামোৰ মাৰি, বাজলৈ নিওতে, আইওঁ!  
খালে! এই বুলি এটাহ মাৰিলত মাকে টোপনিৰ  
পৰা সাৰ পাই, লৱাটো খেপিয়াই নে পালত,  
হিয়া ডুকুআই, বৰ বৈক কান্দিবলৈ মৰিলত, ওচৰ  
চুবুৰিয়া মানুহে হাতে পতি জোৰ লৈ, বিচাৰি  
পথাৰত হাৰ মাথোন পালে।” . . .

(Neog 1983 : 48)

From *A Few Remarks On The Assamese Language, And On Vernacular Education In Assam* By a Native, published from American Baptist Missionary Press in 1855 :

পদাৰ্থ বিদ্যা নাইবা পৰিখা চাই উলিউৱা  
জ্ঞানৰ কথা !

পদাৰ্থ বিদ্যাক বাহুইল্ অৰ্থেৰে বুজিলে দুইব্বিলাকৰ্ কেনে-  
কুৱা নীতি অৰ্থাৎ তাৰ গুণ কি, আৰু কেনেকৈ লব্ চৰ্ কৰে,  
তাকে বিচাৰ কৰাই তাৰ বাৰ। সেই বিদ্যাক বৰ দুঠালকৈ  
ভাগ কৰিব পাৰি, ঘাই আৰু আতি লাগতিয়াল ঠালে দুইব্ব-  
বিলাকৰ যিবোৰ দেখা গতি আছে, তাৰে বিচাৰ কৰে; এতকৈ-  
হে তাক কেতিয়াবা ২ বেলেগকৈ পদাৰ্থ বিদ্যা বোলে। কিন্তু  
চৰুপত্ তাক দুইব্বিলাকৰ গতি বিচাৰোঁতা বিদ্যাহে বুলিব  
পাৰি। দুতিয়টো ঠালে বস্তুবোৰ কিহেৰে হৈচে আৰু তাৰ  
কি গুণ, তাৰে বিচাৰ কৰে; আৰু যি বস্তুৰ তেনে বিচাৰ কৰে,  
তাৰ বিধ ২ লৈ ২ বিদ্যাৰো বেলেগ্ ২ নাও হয়। যেতিয়া সি  
কোনো দুইব্ব্ তপতাই, নাইবা আন দুইবে সৈতে মিহলাই, নাই-  
বা তাৰ গধূৰ, পাতল আৰু সোৱাদ বুজি নাইবা দেখিবলৈ কে-  
নেকুৱা তাকে চাই, সেই দুইব্ব্ কি গুণ তাকে শিকাই, তেতিয়া  
তাক কিমিয়া বিদ্যা বোলে। . . .

(Native 1855 : 34)



Chapter VII  
Illustration-(f)

From *Carup Asrai* ( The True Refuge in Assamese ), published by American Baptist Mission Press, Jaipur 1840 :

.. ডেকাই। বাকু আতা, এই বেলি এটা কথা বোলোঁ, ইয়াৰ সিদ্ধান্ত দিয়া সুন্দোঁ। জাৰ নরম অৱতাৰ গৈচে, অৰ্থাত মতন্যাতাৰ আদি কৰি জি ন বেলি অৱতাৰ ধৰি-চিল, তেঁওকে চিন্তি নিশ্চয়িম।

বুৰাই। হই বুপাই, হিন্দু মানুহে এই কথা কই, কিন্তু তোমাত এটা কথা সুন্দোঁচোন, এই কথাৰ সিদ্ধান্ত দিয়া সুন্দোঁ, এই আটাই অৱতাৰত জি জি কৰম কৰিলে তাৰ মাজত পাপৰ পৰা জান হই, এনে বিমেস কৰম কি কি কৰিলে? এনে কোনো কৰম কৰা নাই, তেন্তে তাৰ পৰা জান কেনেকৈ হব?

ডেকাই। আতা, জদি তাৰ পৰাও ন হ'ল, তেবে কোনে দেৱতাক ভজিলে তৰনি নে পাব নে?

বুৰাই। হেব, সিও অকল সুন্দা মুম জানিবা। পুৰান কৰা জনাই আপুনি কৈচে,

যোমা° সৰ্কেষুভূতেষুসন্তুমান্মানমীশ্বৰ°।

হিন্দুৱা° ভজতেমৌঢ়াত্ভন্যন্যেবজুহোতিসঃ ॥ . . .

(American Baptist Mission Press, 1840 : 5)

From *Summary of the Faith and Practice of the Baptist Church of Christ in Assam* and printed at the American Baptist Mission Press, Sibsagor, 1845 :

.. ৯। সিন্য সকলে আচৰিবৰ নিমিত্তে আমাৰ প্ৰভু ৱিহু খ্ৰিষ্টে দুই বিধি নিৰূপন কৰিলে। প্ৰথম বিধি বুৰ দিওআ; তাতে জি মানুহে বিশ্বাস কৰে, সি পাপৰ সমস্ত-টল মৰা হৈ পবিত্ৰ জিৱন আচৰন ধৰাৰ অৰ্থে, আৰু পে-বেঙ্গনিত মৰি মৰনৰ পৰা উঠা জান কৰোঁতা প্ৰভুত-তাৰ বিশ্বাস দেখাবৰ নিমিত্তেও, সেই মানুহক প্ৰভুৰ মৰনৰ কুলোৰে পানিত সুআই বুৰ দিওআ হই। দুতিয় বিধি প্ৰভুৰ ভোজন; বিশ্বাস কৰি বুৰ পোআ মণ্ডলি লোকে সেই ভোজন কৰাত পেবেঙ্গনিত ভগন হোআ খ্ৰিষ্টৰ জি মৰিল তাৰ উপমাৰে পিঠা, আৰু তেঁওৰ ভেজৰ উপমাৰে লতা পনিয়ালৰ বস খাই, তেঁও আহিবৰ দিনলৈকে তেঁওৰ মদন প্ৰকাশ কৰে। . . .

(American Baptist Mission Press 1845 : 12)

**Chapter VIII**  
**New Trends in Performing and Visual Arts**  
**as well as Objects of Material Culture**

Art is a part of life. “Any creative activity performed with some measure of excellence which serves as an emotional outlet for its author and as source of pleasure or satisfaction for the observer is art” (Holmes 1965 : 256). The activities that may be covered by this definition are varied. Category-wise we may divide the field of art into two broad divisions - visual arts and performing arts.

Visual arts may be subdivided into graphic and plastic arts. Painting, drawing, design and other forms expressed on flat surfaces such as printing are included in graphic arts. The plastic arts include sculpture, modelling and architecture

The performing arts normally include theatre, dance and music

The American Baptist Missionaries adopted, adjusted and modified some of the traditional art forms in the field of performing and visual arts in the nineteenth century Assam. The Missionaries also introduced completely new trends in certain fields of artistic expression.

Under visual arts, the Missionaries made considerable contributions to the graphic and plastic arts. In sculpture, the Missionaries had a very limited contribution

**Performing Arts**

We notice significant contributions of the Baptist Missionaries in the field of music, particularly in regard to the Christian religious songs. It will be appropriate to give a short background of the history of Assamese music before the advent of the American Baptist Missionaries in the nineteenth century.

## Music

Prior to the coming of the Missionaries music in Assam was made up of *raga*-based religious hymns known as *Bargeets*, *Oja-pali* and other devotional songs as well as folk music. *Bargeets* conformed to the traditional Indian melodic pattern. Another form of free flowing music was the folk songs of Assam. Assamese cultural life was filled with music and dance. Music and dance were an integral part of all kinds of festivals.

*Bargeets* *Bargeets* were created by Sankaradeva and Madhabadeva in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Scholars have now established the fact that even before these *Bargeets*, Assam was rich in music, since the *Bargeets* bear some form of similarity to *charyapadas* in content and style. *Charyapadas* are made up of esoteric lyrics. The *Charyapadas* were the prevailing form of music in the entire eastern part of India in the early period. The composers of some of these *Charyapadas* are from ancient Assam (Kamarupa). From this fact, we can conclude that *Charyapadas* were associated with the people of Assam although it may have existed in Nepal, Orissa and Bengal (Datta 1977: 7).

Even before these *Charyapadas*, a distinctive style of music was prevalent in Assam and the adjoining areas. The *Natya-Sastra*, written by Bharata in second century A.D., explained the nature and style of the music of the eastern region including Assam for the first time (Datta 1977: 3).

The pre-Vaisnava poet Madhava Kandali wrote in his *Raymayana* about the *ragas* and the names of musical instruments used in music and dance performances of that era. Parallel to the classical forms, folk forms were also current in Assam from ancient times.

During the period of the Ahom regime, the kings patronized the prevailing classical and folk music of Assam, and took the initiative to enhance its progress.

Jayadhaws Singha, Siva Singha and Rudra Singha even composed songs Rudra Singha deputed artists to go to other parts of India to learn music (Datta 1977 10-12) Towards the end of the Ahom period, Assam was in a state of unrest The environment was not conducive for the development of music and literature The continuity of classical *Bargeets* and other classical traditional dances was disrupted due to the non availability of appropriate dedicated people This is probably one of the causes of the variations on the *ragas* of the ancient *Bargeets*

*Oja-pali* Another distinct form of music which still prevails mainly in lower Assam is *Oja-pali*, which is another classical type of devotional songs that are based on *ragas* *Oja-pali* is of two types - *Suknanni* and *Biyah* *Suknanni* songs are primarily related to *Manasa puja* and of as such of *Sakta* theme *Biyah* songs are mainly related to Vaishnava theme However, in both cases the music is basically of the same form (Datta 1977 38) Scholars are of the opinion that *Oja-pali* was in Assam before the Vaisnava period, and is an older type of music than *Bargeets*

#### Folk and popular music and ancient musical instruments

Assam was always rich in folk songs of both tribal and non tribal origin The musical instruments used in old Assam can be best understood from the old manuscripts (*puthis*) and sculptures The following are some of the indigenous Assamese instruments which were in use *Dotara, Bena, Sarinda, Ektara, Pepa, Singa, Kali, Sanai, Bahi, Khol, Khanjari, Dhak, Bhor Tal, Tal, Kah* etc *Siphung, Kham*, etc are some of the tribal instruments that are still in use Among the different types of folk music, *Bihu* songs were the most popular in Assam

#### The new trend in music

The British occupied Assam in 1826, and brought in different elements of western culture in different doses The influence of western music and drama did not

directly influence Assam through the British, but entered Assam through Bengal (Ali 1993) The British people were in Calcutta for a long period before the annexation of Assam The Bengal renaissance adopted western music and culture and blended it with their Bengali traditions to form a modern form of music

Western music was unknown to Assamese before the advent of the British administration and the Missionaries to Assam For the first time, the Missionaries introduced the western polyphonic system linked with Christian religious music This new trend influenced the Christianized sections, particularly the hill tribal groups Western musical instruments such as the piano, the organ, and the accordion were introduced for the first time Nidhi Levi Farwell, the first convert in Assam, was a writer, preacher, poet and translator and also knew how to play the accordion He carried his accordion in his missionary trips and used it to attract people (Neog 1983 147)

Western music became a part of Christian education F S Downs writes in his *Mighty Works of God* that “there were 50 students studying Old Testament, New Testament and music” in the Assam Valley Bible School at Nagaon Downs also writes - “The music training students received at the Kohima school helped enrich the life of churches in which music often seems to be given higher priority than any other aspect of Christian worship and testimony” (Downs 1971 143)

Traditional western band music and ball-room dancing came along with the British people to India, and was exclusively within the culture of the British people Some elite natives also took part in the ball-room dancing At the present time, some people express the opinion that the influence of western music came to India as well as to Assam in past few decades, which is not true A special form of western music actually came to Assam with the British and the American Missionary people This

was a combined contribution of the Missionaries and the British people. Christianity could not influence the Assamese people due to their deep rooted faith in Hinduism. Similarly the western music also could not influence the Assamese people due to the rich indigenous culture and music. However, the Christian tribal community embraced the western music.

The American Baptist Missionaries translated the Christian hymns to Assamese so that the Assamese speaking people could understand the contents. Both the American Baptist Missionaries and some converted native Christians translated the English Christian hymns to Assamese. Among the Missionaries Nathan Brown, Miles Bronson, William Ward, P.H. Moore, G.R. Kamphor performed this task. The Assamese Christians include - Nidhi Levi Farewell, Anandi Konwar, Edward Singha, Golok Chandra Christian, Henry Goldsmith, Batiram Das, Kandura Robin Smith, Comfort Goldsmith and others.

A few English hymns are reproduced with their Assamese versions - an effort by the Missionaries to popularize the holy songs of God. The original songs are in English and are translated into Assamese, using the tunes with staff notations of the English versions. Mr. Brenner G. Momin, who is affiliated with Guwahati Baptist Church, Assam played the Assamese translated songs at my request. To my surprise, the tune of Assamese songs were the same as the English songs, which shows the use of western Christian tunes with Assamese lyrics.

#### Assamese Christian songs in traditional Assamese tunes :

There are interesting evidences to show that the American Missionaries had tried to popularize the Christian religious songs in traditional Assamese tunes. Mr and Mrs. William Ward took active interest in this respect. We see quite a few Assamese Christian songs in the *Christian Hymnal in Assamese*. Among all the

composers, the name of Lakhiram Barua is most prominent. These songs specifies the traditional Assamese tunes such as *Ghosa*, *Kirtan*, *Boragi Sur* and *Namati Sur*. Dr. Neog has mentioned that at one time the Christian songs were composed by following Indian classical *ragas* or in the tune of *ghosa*. In this respect the contribution of the noted famous musician of Assam, *Sangitacharya* Lakhiram Barua (1865-1914) is noteworthy (Neog 1983 : 0.136). It is difficult to determine when these songs were composed by Barua. The famous musician, Lakhiram Barua, was born in 1865. Mr. Barua was a lyricist who was not only proficient in Indian classical or folk music of Assam, but was also fully conversant with western music. Mr. Barua even studied western music in addition to Indian classical music (Barua 1986 : 14). Barua was in the prime of life at the end of the nineteenth century. He was associated with people like Gunabhiram Barua, the distinguished writer and reformist of Assam in the nineteenth century. *Sangitacharya* Lakhiram Barua was the pathfinder for Assamese music who laid the foundation for modern Assamese music. Barua wrote two valuable books on music - *Sangit Kosh* (1909 A.D.) and *Sangit Sadhana* (1910 A.D). The first one contains various types of Assamese lyrics and the second is a grammar of music with some specific *Ragas* and *Talas*. The Baptist Missionaries probably knew of his talent and might have requested Barua to compose some Assamese songs in local traditional Assamese tunes.

We come across of another book, *Mukti Nam*, which was also authored by Lakhiram Baruah who was born in 1895. Baruah was also a poet and artist and had his knowledge in music. At this present time, Assamese Christians claim that those Assamese Christian songs included in *Christian Hymnal in Assamese* and in *Mukti Nam* were composed by Baruah. But Baruah said in an interview with Mr. Renthly Keitzer, that he actually collected these songs. Baruah states in his own words - “ ----

I used to sing Assamese songs of my own composition. People appreciated my Assamese songs, Christian songs in indigenous tunes. I collected a number of these songs and published it with the title, "Mukti Nam" (Song of Salvation). These songs became very popular in the Assamese churches, and many of these are even included in the Assamese Hymn book" (Keitzar · 1973).

So, we have grounds to believe that Sangitacharya Barua was responsible for the Assamese Christian songs which were composed in the local traditional tunes of Assamese music. Perhaps the other Lakhiram Barua also used his talents to popularize the Assamese Christian music. In a later version of *Mukti Nam*, we see some Christian songs written in tribal languages of Assam, such as - *Munda* songs, *Dafala* songs, *Bodo* songs, *Apatani* songs, *Miri* songs and *Nepali* songs (Barua : 1961) This shows the intense desire of the American Baptist Missionaries to popularize the Christian songs among all the tribal people of Assam. In this respect they were successful in the tea garden communities where the Missionaries received ample support from the British people who managed the tea cultivation in Assam. A few songs written in these tribal languages are included in the appendix.

It possible that the aim of the American Baptist Missionaries was to reach the all sections of the Assamese through the Assamese songs of Christian affiliations. However, since the Assamese already had a very rich tradition of religious songs, backed by strong religious sentiments, the aim of the Missionaries did not see its fulfilments. The Missionaries were successful only partially; these songs became popular only with those limited sections of the Assamese who have embraced Christianity. It must of course be admitted the legacy of the Missionaries is still continuing in their Church services.

I tried to do some research in this direction. I recorded eight Assamese



Christian songs, which were written by the late Lakhiram Barua, and sung by Satya Prasad Barua of Nagaon, Assam, in local prevailing Assamese melodies. By evaluating the various melodies, a conclusion could be made that the American Baptist Missionaries were successful in adopting the local popular tunes, which helped the Missionaries in popularizing the Christian beliefs in popular song form. The Assamese version of the songs and the staff notations are included in the illustration at the end of this chapter.

Even at the present time, endeavours are made to popularize the Assamese Christian songs. Quite a few recorded cassettes have been produced and marketed, and are gaining popularity. A few songs have been newly composed by established composer Dr. Nirmal Proya Bordoloi and sung by the popular artists of Assam, like Rameswar Pathak under the direction of Music Directors like the late Mukul Barua. This has no direct bearing on the contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries, but is an independent endeavour of present day Assamese Christians to continue the legacy of the American Baptist Missionaries.

While searching for Christian songs with Assamese tunes, I came across a collection of songs made by Rev. George Gillespie which were in the Archives section of the library of the American Baptist Historical Society in Rochester, New York. Included were also some other tunes of the hill peoples of Assam. These songs, along with their staff notations, are included in the appendix. The inclusion of the hill people tunes shows the sincere effort of the Baptist Missionaries to adopt the local tunes of the land of Assam.

### **Theatre & Dance:**

As far as available evidences indicate, the Baptist Missionaries were not involved in theatre and dance. However, we may consider the Passion Play as a form of theatrical performance.

Prior to the coming of the Baptist Missionaries *Bhaona* was the major prevailing theatrical art form in Assam. The *Bhaonas* were colourful stage performances based on vaishnava religious themes, mostly revolving round the life and legends of Lord Krishna (or Rama). *Bhaonas* in Assam were created by Sankaradeva around the same era that the operas were started in the west, around the late sixteenth century.

The Missionaries introduced the concept of performers coming on the stage dressed as normal human beings. This trend later gave rise to the modern theatrical genres. Exposure to modern forms of the western performance style by the college going Assamese youths at Calcutta later helped in the process of modernization of Assamese theatre.

In the pages of the *Orunodoi*, the Missionaries made very derogatory remarks towards the religious temple dancers of Hayagriva Madhava temple located at Hajo, Kamrup. It is not clear whether they held similar views about the satriya forms of dance and drama.

## **Visual Arts**

### **The Graphic Arts**

Graphics is an art of explicit expression of thoughts. Writing becomes more attractive and easier to understand by using graphics. We see the use of this technique in the Old Assamese manuscripts by their use of beautiful colours. A few folios of old manuscripts from *Hastividyanava*, *Bhaktiratnavali*, *Dharmapurana*, *Gita Govinda* and *Lavakusar Yuddha* are included here for illustrations

The American Baptist Missionaries are undoubtedly the pioneers in the modern graphic arts of Assam. In March 1836, Mr. Brown and Mr. Cutter came to Sadiya and brought a printing machine with them. Mr. Cutter was an expert in the field of printing technology. Mr. Brown was also a man of a creative nature and was

an expert wood engraver. Mr. Brown helped Mr. Cutter in the printing of the *Orunodoi* from its first publication in January 1846, carrying the responsibility of being the first editor. The American Baptist Missionaries used the technique of graphics in the publication of the *Orunodoi*. They used the technique of wood block relief printing (Rajkumar 1994).

The American Baptist Missionaries not only used the technique of graphics in the *Orunodoi*, but published articles in the *Orunodoi* explaining how printing machinery worked. An article was published in the *Orunodoi* in the March issue of 1846 which was written by Nidhi Levi Farwell. Two more articles on printing were published in the July 1849 and April 1853 issues of the *Orunodoi*. Even in the February 1853 issue, Dayaram Chetia described the printing machine as a poem.

The wood engravers for the *Orunodoi* were not all from the Baptist Missionary group. Since the names of the engravers were not published with all the pictures in the *Orunodoi*, it is difficult to ascertain who was the actual engraver for each of the pictures with the exception of a few. In the index of combined volume of the *Orunodoi* 1846-53, the following names are listed as engraver: Nathan Brown, Seping Saheb, Young, Geroge Boxy, Kanuram, Tanuram, Tuleswar and Mohiram. Young, who contributed significantly, was a Khamti youth. Kanuram, Tanuram, Tuleswar and Mohiram were local Assamese (Neog 1983: 0.150). All these Assamese were from the rural areas of Assam, and were educated in the Orphan Institution of Nowgong (Rajkumar: 1994). The local wood engravers also used local material for wood engraving such as seeds of *Barajmani*.

Some of the illustration print published in the *Orunodoi* were copies from Illustrated London News which followed an European style of wood engraving. It is certain that the Assamese wood engravers were influenced by the European style and that they acquired some knowledge from those illustration prints. We see the distinct

application of a combined indigenous and European style in some of the illustrations made by the local engravers. In some prints, where the content was of Indian origin, the local engravers followed the traditional style of Indian paintings. It is evident that even though the local engravers had limited knowledge, they gave their best effort for their graphic illustrations. The American Baptist Missionaries were surely the pathfinders in educating the Assamese people in the field of graphic art (Rajkumar 1994).

A few prints collected from the different issues of the *Orunodoi* are included to demonstrate the graphic arts. Additional prints of graphic arts are included in appendix.

## **Plastic Art**

### Architecture

Indian architecture from ancient times is distinctive in its form and style. Temples in Assam e.g., Kamakhya temple in Guwahati, Hayagriva-Madhava temple in Hajo and Siva-Temple in Sibsagar all represent regional styles of Indian architecture. At the same time, a distinctive indigenous feature has been prevailing in the architectural style and form of the satriya *Namghars* as well as common structures in the rural areas of Assam.

When the British came to Assam and opened the high schools, they constructed the school buildings with a new architectural style. They constructed their residential buildings with a large compound and extensive room sizes, with distinctive features of modern western architecture. The beautiful brick work and English bond with an arched brick lintel in the entrance to the Nagaon Town Baptist Church, is a symbol of the western architecture that the Baptist Missionaries introduced in Assam.

The *Namghars*, which were originally constructed in Assam was a long hall type structure with inclined roofs. There were no upright towers on the roof of the

*Namghars*. When the American Baptist Missionaries came to Assam they constructed their Churches in the form of local traditional buildings with local materials. Gradually they constructed the Churches with a modified western architectural look, considering the availability of local building construction materials. In later period, some of the features are intermingled and we see some results of similarities in the case of *Namghars* and Churches. In a *Namghar*, located in Pub Saragaon, Nagaon district, we note the use of coloured glasses in windows which is perhaps an application of western architectural materials to Assamese traditional *Namghar* building. The influence of the British and Christian Missionaries is prominent even in some of the Hindu temples constructed in the nineteenth century. The evidence of sharp pointed tower structures definitely implies imitation of western architecture (Choudhury 1984:26).

On the other hand, the Baptist Missionaries also tried to blend the local architectural feature to some of the buildings. The Jorhat Baptist Church Bible School building represents one of the few experiments to conjugate indigenous architecture attempted by the American Baptist Missionaries in north-east India. F.S. Downs states: "Its form was inspired by the royal residences of nearby Rangpur. Under Ahom rule, only Lords of the kingdom were permitted to build houses with rounded ends. The bible school building was accordingly designed with a rounded end in the Ahom manner, thus bearing testimony to the Christian conviction that Christ is Lord not only of Europe or America but also Assam" (Downs 1971: 108).

There are evidences to show that the local Assamese Christians retained the indigenous form of architecture. The tomb of Nidhi Levi Farwell, the first convert in Assam is located in the Christian cemetery, Sibsagar, Assam. The shape of the tomb is similar to that of 'Rang-ghar' the royal pavilion of the Ahoms. The size of the tomb is

four feet six inches in length, two feet six inches in width, and approximately two feet six inches in height (Neog 1983:14).

A photograph of the tomb is attached as an illustration. The epitaph on the tomb is written as:

**NIDHI LEVI FARWELL  
THE FIRST CONVERT IN ASSAM  
DIED JAN. 28TH 1873, AGED 50,  
FROM BOYHOOD HIS LIFE WAS  
SPENT IN MISSION SERVICE.  
AS WRITER, PREACHER, POET AND  
TRANSLATOR HE SHEWED UN-  
COMMON ABILITY AND GREAT FIDELITY  
LET THE LORD BE MAGNIFIED.**

A few photographs are added for support and illustration of the common features found in some *Namghars* and churches in Assam in the Illustration section.

**Objects of Material Culture:**

The influence of the American Baptist Missionaries on the objects of material culture in Assam has to be examined under the socio-economic atmosphere of the nineteenth century. The salient facts before the arrival of the Missionaries were that Assam was completely devastated by the Burmese invasion, in which two thirds of the population was wiped out, villages were abandoned and pillaged, the economy completely shattered and general life completely disrupted. The other fact is that after the British takeover of the Assam region, the marketing of goods and services become

more extensive. The influence on material culture at this juncture was a combined influence of the British rule, the tea industry and the Baptist Missionaries.

In the beginning of the British administration, the socio-cultural scenario of Assamese people who were in close contact with British administration, was a compromise between the indigenous culture and the western culture. The group of people who worked for the British administration led a traditional life style at home and followed another type of life to meet the desired working standard of the British administration. At this socio-cultural juncture we see some transformation of objects of material culture. It was the joint impact of the British administration, the tea industry and the Missionaries that caused this transformation in nineteenth century Assam.

The Assamese people only wore indigenous dress before the British rule in Assam. But those who worked for the British administration started to use western dress during their office hours. Similarly the middle class people who worked for the British administration or the tea industry used their indigenous utensils for their meals. However, they used to keep some modern utensils separately for their guests who were used to western style of life. Gradually some objects of western material culture became a part of the Assamese culture. The introduction of modern utensils, such as dinner ware, crockery, cutlery etc became a part of day-to-day life of the Assamese people. These changes were definitely due to the influence of western culture which had been brought into Assam by the British people and the Missionaries.

Another form of social habit change that came into the Assamese society were probably types of food and eating times. However, this eating time was only locally introduced by tea garden managers.

Assam was rich in indigenous cutting tools. No change in indigenous form of tools took place, and they are still in use in present time. The influence of western

agricultural equipment and hand tools, such as shovels for plowing land, are prominent with the hills people. This was definitely an influence of the west.

The new look in aesthetics or interior decoration could be well imagined to be a contribution of joint western influence. The arts of knitting, stitching, embroidery, lace-work etc., were brought into the material culture of Assamese people. In fact, the American Baptist Missionaries used this art of needlework as a means of access to many of the higher castes Assamese families (Keeler 1887 : 186-187).

Previously unknown things, such as maps, globes, prisms etc., became familiar to the Assamese people and their minds were opened to a modern scientific world. Hurricane lamps, flash light and candles became useful. Gradually Assamese people became aware of the concept of time and use of time clocks.

During this introduction and assimilation of material culture, Assamese people gained some names of western material culture which are now merged into Assamese words and used in day-to-day life such as - chair, table, desk, pen, nib, trunk, looking glass, bottle etc.

Since coming in contact with British people and the Missionaries, Assamese people not only learned to use the modern objects of material culture but developed a refined taste in life. They realized what the look of a well dressed man or woman should be. They learned how a pair of shoes and socks adds refinement to a proper dress. They became aware of the matter of interior decoration, including curtains in doors and windows.

The new mode of transportation had not existed in Assam before the period of British administration or the Missionaries. It was the Missionaries and British people who introduced the horse cart in Assam. We see a few personal letters of Rev. Miles Bronson where he discussed about his horse carts.



The change in objects of material culture in Assam was a combined effect of the British administration, the British tea garden managers and the Missionaries. In the beginning this change was limited to the middle class families of nineteenth century Assam. But gradually the change expanded and reached all sections of Assamese society, irrespective of their economic status.

In the Illustration section that follows we have incorporated various relevant materials in respect of (a) music, (b) graphic arts, (c) plastic arts · architecture and (d) material culture.

## Chapter VIII

Illustration Section**Music**(a) Items related to music

( Illustration have been made in following order Staff notations and song texts of both English and Assamese )

- (i) Notation and song - 'There is a Green Hill Far Away'
- (ii) Assamese translation of the above song
- (iii) Above Notation and song - 'Awake, My Soul and with the Sun'  
Below Assamese translation of the above song
- (iv) Above Notation and song - 'Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow'  
Below Assamese translation of the above song
- (v) Notation and song - 'How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds'
- (vi) Assamese translation of the above song
- (vii) Assamese texts of three songs in Assamese tune  
( *Papak Joy Korila, Jeesu Buli Ebar Mata, Xunore Jokhola* )
- (viii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Papak Joy Korila*
- (ix) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Jeesu Buli Ebar Mata*
- (x) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Xunore Jokhola*
- (xi) Assamese texts of three songs in Assamese tune  
( *Sansar Sagarat Jeesu, Jeesu Naam Amiya, Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim* )
- (xii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Sansar Sagarat Jeesu*
- (xiii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Jeesu Naam Amiya*
- (xiv) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim*
- (xv) Assamese texts of two songs in Assamese tune  
( *Baikunthare Pora, Jessue Matise* )
- (xvi) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Boikunthare Pora*
- (xvii) Staff notation of Assamese song - *Jeesue Matise*

(b) **Graphic arts**Items related to graphic arts

- (i) A folio from painted manuscript from *Hastividyanava*
- (ii) A folio from painted manuscript from *Bhaktiratnavali*
- (iii) A folio from painted manuscript from *Dharmapurana*
- (iv) A folio from painted manuscript from *Gita Govinda*
- (v) A folio from painted manuscript from *Lavakusar Yuddha*
- (vi) A few specimen of wood block relief printing from *Orunodoi*

**(c) Plastic arts :**Items related to Architecture :

- (i) A specimen of brickwork in English bond, with an arched lintel
- (ii) Above : Photograph of a Namghar with upright tower  
Bottom : Photograph of a Church with upright tower
- (iii) Above : Photograph of a Namghar showing rows of window  
Bottom : Photograph of a Church showing rows of window
- (iv) Above : Photograph of a ventilator in a Namghar  
Bottom : Photograph of a ventilator in a Church
- (v) Specimen of Architectural details of windows in a Church
- (vi) Specimen of Architectural styles of doors and windows in a Church
- (vii) Above : Photograph of a front door in a Namghar  
Bottom : Photograph of a front door in a Church

**(d) Material Culture**Items related to material culture :

- (i) A few specimen of material culture from the *Orunodoi*
- (e) Tomb and Epitaph of Nidhi Levi Farwell

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(i)

There Is a Green Hill Far Away 71

PASSION (ATONEMENT)

GREEN HILL

Cecil F. Alexander, 1818-1895

George C. Stebbins, 1846-1945



1. There is a green hill far a-way, With-out a cit - y wall,
2. We may not know, we can - not tell What pains He had to bear;
3. He died that we might be for-given, He died to make us good,
4. There was no oth - er good e-nough To pay the price of sin;



Where the dear Lord was cru - ci - fied, Who died to save us all.  
But we be - lieve it was for us He hung - and suf - fered there.  
That we might go at last to heaven, Saved by His pre - cious blood.  
He on - ly could un - lock the gate Of heaven and let us in.



REFRAIN



Oh, dear - ly, dear - ly has He loved, And we must love Him, too;



And trust in His re - deem - ing blood, And try His works to do.



Alternate tunes without Refrain: MARTYRDOM, No. 64; MEDITATION, No. 370

Note : Translation of this song 'There is a green hill far away' in Assamese by Rev. Miles Bronson is printed on the next page.

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(ii)

There is a Green Hill Far Away.  
C. F. Alexander (E Flat-m) Geo. C. Stebbins S. S. 1134.

১। সুদূৰ নগৰৰ বাহিৰত  
পাহাৰৰ পৰ্বত  
প্ৰিয় প্ৰভু মৰিল ক্ৰুচত,  
উদ্ধাৰিলে আমাক ।

দোহাৰ—অহ ! তেওঁৰ সেই মৰম আচৰিত,  
তেওঁক প্ৰেম কৰা উচিত ।  
বিশ্বাস কৰি তেওঁৰে তেজত,  
প্ৰাণ দিওঁহঁক তেওঁৰ কাৰ্য্যত ।

২। তেওঁ তাত কি কষ্ট ভুঞ্জিলে,  
জানিব নোৱাৰোঁ ;  
আমাৰ অৰ্থে তেওঁ ভুঞ্জিলে,  
আমি বিশ্বাস কৰোঁ ।

৩। মৰিল যেন আমি ক্ষমা পাওঁ,  
আমাৰ মুক্তিৰ কাৰণ ;  
শেৰত স্বৰ্গে যেন আমি যাওঁ,  
তেওঁৰ তেজৰে কাৰণ ।

৪। পাপৰ প্ৰায়শ্চিত্ত কৰিবলৈ  
নাই আন কোনো ভেনে ;  
ভেৰেঁ কেৱল সকলোলৈ  
দৰ্গৰ ছুৱাৰ মেলৈ ।

মাইলচ, ব্ৰনচন

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(iii)

Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun

Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

MORNING HYMN

François H. Barthélemon, 1741-1808

1. A - wake, my soul, and with the sun Thy dai - ly stage of du - ty run;  
2. Wake, and lift up thy - self, my heart, And with the an - gels bear thy part,  
3. All praise to Thee, who safe hast kept, And hast re - freshed me while I slept:  
4. Di - rect, con - trol, sug - gest, this day, All I de - sign, or do, or say;

Shake off dull sloth, and joy - ful rise To pay thy morn - ing sac - ri - fice  
Who all night long un - wear - ied sing High praise to the E - ter - nal King.  
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake, I may of end - less life par - take.  
That all my powers, with all their might, In Thy sole glo - ry may u - nite A - MEN

Awake My Soul and with the Sun  
Thomas Ken (C-doh) Dulcimer. S. S 251

- ১। উঠা সূর্যে সৈতে, নকবি এলাহ,  
হে মন, কবা চিন্তন প্রভুক !  
নৈবেদ্যকপ স্তুতি দি কবা উল্লাস  
ঈশ্বৰলৈ প্ৰেমো ছলোক ।
- ২। ঈশ্বৰৰ প্ৰশংসা স্বৰ্গলোকে গায়,  
নিৰন্তৰে বাতি দিনে ;  
সেই সকলে সৈতে মানব স্বৰ মিলাই  
কবা স্তুতি উচ্ছস্বৰে ।
- ৩। হে প্ৰভু, মোৰ প্ৰাণ বাখি তুমি নিদ্রাত,  
পুৱা দিলা নতুন জীৱন ;  
এই দৰে মোক তুলি সিকালৰ পুৱাত  
কৰিবা নিজ সুখত গ্ৰহণ ।
- ৪। সজ পথত মোক চলাই গন বাখা শীতল  
তোমাৰ আত্মা দি মোৰ সহিত ;  
এই দিন কাষে বাক্যে মোৰ কৰম সকল  
যেন গ্ৰহণ হয় তোমাৰ দৃষ্টিত ।

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(iv)

**Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow**

Thomas Ken, 1637-1711      DOXOLOGY      Louis Bourgeois, c. 1510-c. 1561

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise Him all crea-tures here be-low;

Praise Him a - bove, ye heav-en-ly host; Praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost! A-MEN.

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow.  
Thomas Ken. (G-doh) Old Hundred.

নিৰাকার পিতৃ, পুত্র, নব,  
পবিত্র আত্মা এক ঈশ্বর ;  
স্বৰ-স্তুতি হওক তেওঁৰ ধন্য নাম,  
অনন্ত যুগে সৰ্ব্বধাম ।

নেথন ব্ৰাউন

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(v)

PRAISE AND TESTIMONY

How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds 244

John Newton, 1725-1807

ST. PETER

Alexander R. Reinagle, 1799-1877

1. How sweet the name of Je - sus sounds In a be - liev - er's ear!  
2. Dear name! the Rock on which I build, My Shield and Hid - ing - place,  
3. Je - sus, my Shep - herd, Broth - er, Friend, My Proph - et, Priest, and King,  
4. Weak is the ef - fort of my heart, And cold my warm - est thought;  
5. Till then I would Thy love pro - claim With ev - ery fleet - ing breath;

It soothes his sor - rows, heals his wounds, And drives a - way his fear.  
My nev - er - fail - ing Treasury, filled With bound - less stores of grace;  
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End, Ac - cept the praise I bring.  
But when I see Thee as Thou art, I'll praise Thee as I ought.  
And may the mu - sic of Thy name Re - fresh my soul in death. A - MEN.

Alternate tune: ORTONVILLE. No. 6

Note : Translation of this song 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds' in Assamese by Nidhi Levi Farwell is printed on the next page.



-Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(vi)

How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds  
John Newton, 1779( F-doh) Arlington

- ১। “বীচু” এই নাম কি মধুৰ স্বৰ  
বিশ্বাসীৰ কানত হয় !  
গুচাই ভয়, বেদনা পাপৰ,  
বোগো স্তম্ভ কৰয়। (২)
- ২। তেওঁৰ এই নামেই দুখিত মনৰ  
ভয়-সংশয় কৰে দূৰ,  
শান্তি দি সুখাতুৰ প্ৰাণৰ  
হাবিয়াহ কৰে জুব। (২)
- ৩। ভয় চিন্তক স্তম্ভ কৰে,  
পাপীকো দিয়ে ত্ৰাণ ;  
ভাগকৰাক দিয়ে বিশ্ৰাম,  
মৃতকক জীৱন-দান। (২)
- ৪। তেওঁৰ দ্বাৰাইহে মই ঈশ্বৰৰ,  
পুত্ৰাধিকাৰ বাব পাম ;  
মৰণৰ পাছত সৰ্বকাল  
তেওঁৰ এই নামৰ গুণ গাম। (২)
- ৫। মৰণৰ বেলা তেওঁৰ এই নাম,  
মোৰ হব অমৃত পান ;  
পাপৰ বুল্ল, ভয় গুচাই, দিব  
মোক পূৰ্ণ পৰিত্ৰাণ। (২)

নিমি লেখি কৰে

## Chapter VIII Illustration-(a)(vii)

### অসমীয়া সুবৰ গীত

#### The Love of Jesus

ঘোষা

পাপক জয় কৰিলা,                      মৃত্যুক জয় কৰিলা,  
জগত জয় কৰিলা প্ৰভুহে প্ৰেমেৰে।  
ক্ৰুচত হত হ'লা,                      মৈদামত থাকিলা,  
পুনৰ জী উঠিলা প্ৰভুহে প্ৰেমেৰে।  
ভকতি শিকিলা,                      অমৃত নৈ বোৰালা,  
স্বৰ্গৰ মাত শূনালা প্ৰভুহে প্ৰেমেৰে।  
সত্যৰ ভজনা,                      আত্মাৰ ভজনা,  
কৰিবলৈ ঈশ্বৰক শিকিলা প্ৰেমেৰে।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

#### Salvation of Sinners

ঘোষা

যীচু বুলি এবাৰ মাতা, পাপীৰ মৰণ নাই,  
ক্ৰুচত নিজে বলি হৈ তোমাক ৰাখিল, ভাই।  
পাপী, তাপী, দুখী, শোকী, যীচুত শান্তি পায়,  
যীচুৰ লগত পুনৰ উঠি স্বৰ্গলৈ যায়।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

#### The way to heaven

বৰাগী সুব

ঘোষণা ১০ : ১৭, ১৮

- ১। সোণৰে জখলা (সাজিলা যীচু ঐ) (২)  
বান্ধিলা স্বৰ্গলৈ বাট।  
ধাৰ্মিকহঁত যাবলৈ (দেহাৰে সাকোঁ দি) (২)  
সাজিলা সিপুৰীৰ ঘাট।
- ২। পাপীষ্ট জগতক (ন কৈ জীয়ালা) (২)  
প্ৰেমেৰে পাতিলা হাট।  
ভকতি শিকিলা (সত্যক চিনালা) (২)  
শূনালা প্ৰেমেৰে মাত।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(viii)

Papok Joy Korila

1 2 3  
Papok Joi Korila Mrityuk Joi

4 5 6  
Korila Jogot Joi Korila

7 8  
Probhu-he Premere

9 10  
Jogot Joi Korila

11 12  
Probhu-he Premere

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(ix)

Jeesu Buli Ebar Mata



Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(x)

Xunore Jokhola



Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xi)

অসমীয়া সুৰৰ গীত

Jesus, My Captain

বকগী সুৰ

দো :—সংসাৰ সাগৰত যীচু নাৱৰীয়া মোৰ ।(২)

- ১। কান্ধা নগৰত পানীক অমৃত কৰি বিয়া ঘৰ কৰিলে জয় ।
- ২। সাগৰত ঢৌ আৰু পছোৱা-ধুমুহাই মানিলে যীচুকে মোৰ ।
- ৩। পাঁচোটা পিঠাৰে পাঁচ হাজাৰ ভকতক খুৱালে যীচুৰে মোৰ ।
- ৪। সাগৰৰ ওপৰে খোজ কাঢ়ি আহিলে, জগতৰ প্ৰভুৰে মোৰ ।
- ৫। চাৰি দিনৰ মৰা লাজাৰক জীয়ালে, যীচুব কি মহিমা ঘোৰ ।
- ৬। কাঁইটৰ কিৰীটি পিন্ধি প্ৰভুৰে বহিল ক্ৰুচ সিংহাসনত ।
- ৭। জগতৰ বজা, অন্তৰৰ বজা, মানিলে বুলি স্বৰূপ ।
- ৮। তিন দিন মৈদামত শূই উঠিলে, দৰ্শন দিলে ভকতক ।
- ৯। পবিত্ৰ আত্মা সহায় দি গুচি গ'ল ম'ডলী পাতি শেষত ।
- ১০। যীচুত বিশ্বাস ৰাখি আহাঁ, ভাই, খোজ লওঁ আমি কবমৰ পথত ।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

Jesus' Name is Sweet

নামতী সুৰ

দোহাৰ যীচু নাম অমিয়া, আমাক পিতাই দিয়া,  
ললে কি জুৰণি পায় ।(২)

- ১। বৈকুণ্ঠৰে পৰা প্ৰভু নামি আহি  
জগতক পুনৰ জীয়ায় ।
- ২। দুডালি কাঠতে দেহা আৰি থ'লে,  
শতক মিতক নাই ।
- ৩। পৰম ব্ৰহ্মৰূপী, সত্য নাৰায়ণ  
যীচুৰূপ জানিবা ভাই ।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

Brothers, We will Unite

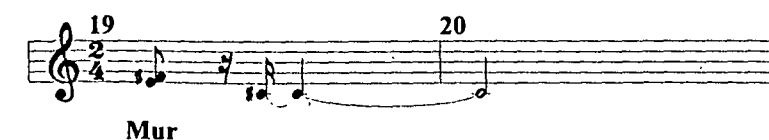
দোহাৰ—ভাই, ভাই, আমি মিলিম, ভাই, ভাই আমি মিলিম ॥

- ১। আত্মাতে দৰিদ্ৰ হৈ স্বৰ্গতে থাকিম;  
শোক কৰি ধন্য হৈ শান্ত্বনা লভিম ॥
- ২। নম্নলোক ৰূপে দেশ অধিকাৰ কৰিম,  
ধাৰ্মিকতালৈ ভোক, পিয়াহ ৰাখিম ॥
- ৩। দয়ালু হৈ আনৰ পৰা দয়াকে লভিম;  
নিৰ্মল চিত্তৰ লোক হৈ ঈশ্বৰক দেখিম ॥
- ৪। মিলনকাৰীৰূপে মই ধৰ্মতে থাকিম,  
ধৰ্মৰ কামত তাড়না পাই আনন্দ কৰিম ।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

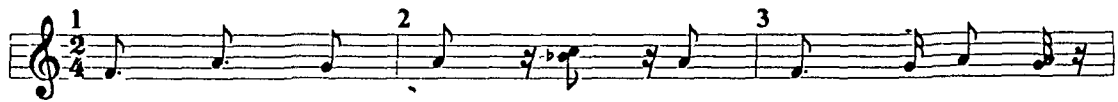
Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xii)

Sansar Sagarat Jeesu



Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xiii)

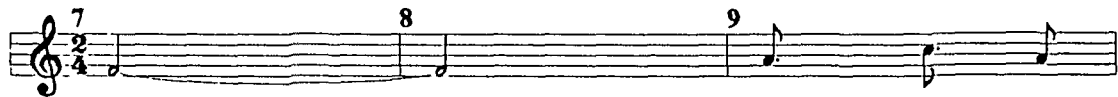
Jeesu Naam Amiya



Jesu Naam Amiya Aamak Pe-



tai Diya Lole Ki Juroni Pai



hmm.. Boikuntha-



re Pora Probhu Na- mi Ahi



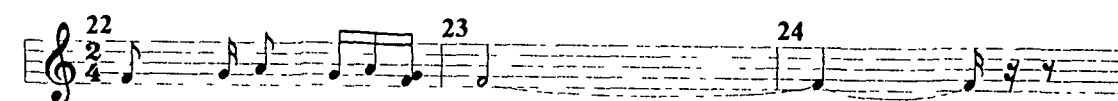
Jogotak Punor Jeyai



Jeesu Naam Amiya



Aamak Pe- tai Diya Lole Ki




Juroni Pai




Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xiv)

Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim


1  2  
Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim

3  4  
Bhai-Bhai Aami Milim

5  6  
AatmatDwaridra Hoi Swargote Thakim

7  8  
SukKori Dhanya-Hoi

8  10  
SantwanaLobhim Bhai-Bhai

9  12  
Aami Milim Bhaibhai AamiMilim BhaiBhai

11  12  
Aami Milim

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xv)

অসমীয়া সুবৰ গীত

The angel heralded from the heaven above

ঘোষা

- বৈকুণ্ঠৰে পৰা দূতে কহে বাণী,  
শূন্যহে কলিৰে লোক,  
পাপৰ মুক্তি-হেতু ঈশ পুত্ৰ আহিল,  
পৃথিবীত আনন্দ হক ।
- ১। দায়ুদৰ বংশত সেই বৈংলেহেমত,  
গোহালিৰ দানা পাত্ৰত,  
পাপৰ মুক্তি দাতা, প্ৰভু যীচু ত্ৰাতা,  
জন্মিল এক কন্যাৰ পৰা ।
- ২। তেওঁ শক্তিমন্ত, সত্যত মহাবীৰ,  
দয়াত সাগৰ-সম,  
ৰা সম ক্ষমা, অতি নম্ৰশীল,  
ইন্দ্ৰিয় দমনে যম ।
- ৩। মনুষ্যৰ পাপ প্ৰায়শ্চিত্ত কৰি,  
স্বৰ্গে কৰাব বাস,  
নিজ পৰাত্ৰমে পাপ-চয়্তানৰ  
বাজ্যক কৰিব নাশ ।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

পাপীলোকলৈ নিমন্ত্ৰণ

Jesus Is Calling You Sinner Today.

(আৰাধনা সংগীত)

- ১। যীচুৱে মাতিছে আহা পাপী আজি,  
যীচুৱে মাতিছে আহা ।  
দুখত কান্দি-কাটি, শোকত কান্দি-কাটি  
নেলাগে থাকিব আহা পাপী আজি  
নেলাগে থাকিব আহা ।  
ক্ৰুচতে হত হল  
মৈদামত থোৱা হল  
পুনৰ্থান হল  
তোমাৰ কাৰণে আজি  
তোমাৰ কাৰণে আজি চোৱা ।

লক্ষ্মীৰাম বৰুৱা

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xvi)

Boikuntha-re Pora



Boikuntha

RePora

Dute KoheBaani



Sunahe Kolire

Lok hmm...



Papar Mukti Hetu

Eeswa Putra Aahila



Prehibit Aananda

Hok ...

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(a)(xvii)

Jeesue Matise



Jeesue Maatise

Aaha Papi Aji



Jeesue Maatise

Aaha



Jeesue Matise

Aaha Papi Aji



Jeesue Matise

Aaha



Dukhot Kandi

Kati

Sukot Kandi



Kati

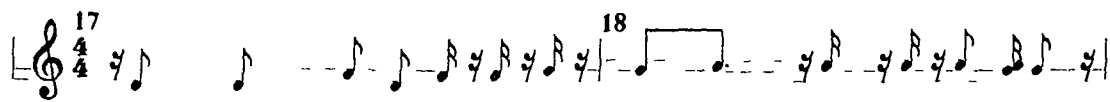
NelageThakiba

AahaPapi Aji



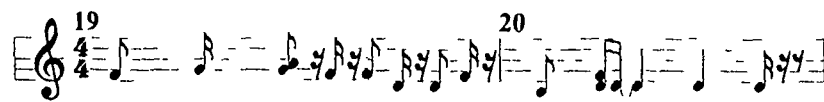
Nelage Thakiba

Aaha



Jeesue Matise

Aaha Papi Aji



Jeesue Matise

Aaha



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 ୧୦୬

ବା ପ୍ରକାଶପତନେନାପିଲୋପାକରଣ  
 ଗଳ୍ପକରତତପିଆଆରତସ୍ତାମତ  
 ଶାଳହାତମବିସାଧ୍ୟମକାଠିକପାଳ  
 ଅଶାବତପୁନସାଧ୍ୟାପାରକାଳାବ  
 ଉତ୍ତରତୁସୁବତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ନିକରକମିତ୍ୟାବତ୍ତାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା

ଓପାପିତୋପବମାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶତତଧବିସାତକ୍ରପ୍ରତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଦିନିଅନକାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 କ୍ରାପ୍ରତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଏତକମତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଓଗବିତ୍ତମତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ

ଜିନତନମତାମାକ୍ରମମାବୋକାକିତ  
 ମାମବମବକନାନାମହାତାଗାପିତ  
 ପାପିତାକକ୍ରପାବୋନୋଦୋଧାକ୍ରପିତ  
 ଓପାକୋଧାନତାହାହିନିକାବତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଏପିତାନେନକ୍ରମବତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ସାନପିନୀମିତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ

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ଶାବୋଅବନବକାଣୀମାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ବୋନବ୍ରହ୍ମକ୍ରମହାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶକାନେତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ମହାଦୋଧେତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ପ୍ରକାଧବତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଏଅବନାଦପମାବତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ



ପ୍ରକାଶ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପ୍ରକାଶ

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ଅକ୍ରାଧିତାକାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାକାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଏତକମବାତାତାତାତାତାତାତା  
 ଅଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଏତାକୋଗମିତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ

ଓଗବିତ୍ତମତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଓପାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଏପିତାନେନକ୍ରମବତ୍ତ  
 ମତ୍ତବିତ୍ତମତ୍ତତ୍ତତ୍ତ

କ୍ରୁଧିପିପିତକାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 କ୍ରୁଧିପିପିତକାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଓକ୍ରୁଧିପିପିତକାଧ୍ୟା  
 କ୍ରୁଧିପିପିତକାଧ୍ୟା

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ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
 ଶାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟାଧ୍ୟା  
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ପ୍ରକାଶ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପ୍ରକାଶ

गङ्गातीरे कपुष्पाकाविद्याकाशीरुन । विमानकठाननायववउवन ॥१००४॥  
चनरागमननोरथचापिआठय ॥ अवनुमक्रितवदिवाजायककुणय ॥ निविम  
यस्यकठयआठयभेयाठ । अशाक्यामादितादिवाजायककुणय ॥१००५॥  
यावराक्यउकममवकमनुमय । अवनुमक्रितवदिवाजायककुणय ॥ कठय  
कामादिनिवावदवववमनि । शाठउउवनकादिवाजायककुणय ॥१००६॥  
वहनकथानिठअनिमयाकिनि । कमननयनिपिनकनिमिमिडिनि ॥ मयुव  
वठनिनयनामविरामिनि । कमनियकमनिठकनिप्रकासिनि ॥१००७॥  
पुथयनडियारननिदवमञ्जान । वकामियाआठकागिनथिउवकते ॥  
किरुनपावमविनीनानाठपनउ । मिकुनवावयुशुआरामविद्यामाकठ ॥१००८॥  
इवपडिराडनिममाठकनय । अनीमववापकनिआठवायामाठ ॥ अलोकि  
किरुनपावमविनीनानाठपनउ । मिकुनवावयुशुआरामविद्यामाकठ ॥१००९॥  
इवपडिराडनिममाठकनय । अनीमववापकनिआठवायामाठ ॥ अलोकि



रत्नपुत्रजनकवयडनन । अथकहाडिकुविआठकिवाङ्गन ॥१००९॥ समाङ्गवनिताडिवाकाविनेकराम ॥  
पडिलपिडके । आवापडिआठजायोआचानवडिके ॥१०१०॥ निज्जाभरुगडिनकेअयोववुडक । आनीमववापकनिआठवायामाठ ॥ अलोकि

गङ्गातीरे कपुष्पाकाविद्याकाशीरुन । विमानकठाननायववउवन ॥१००४॥  
चनरागमननोरथचापिआठय ॥ अवनुमक्रितवदिवाजायककुणय ॥ निविम  
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कामादिनिवावदवववमनि । शाठउउवनकादिवाजायककुणय ॥१००६॥  
वहनकथानिठअनिमयाकिनि । कमननयनिपिनकनिमिमिडिनि ॥ मयुव  
वठनिनयनामविरामिनि । कमनियकमनिठकनिप्रकासिनि ॥१००७॥  
पुथयनडियारननिदवमञ्जान । वकामियाआठकागिनथिउवकते ॥  
किरुनपावमविनीनानाठपनउ । मिकुनवावयुशुआरामविद्यामाकठ ॥१००८॥  
इवपडिराडनिममाठकनय । अनीमववापकनिआठवायामाठ ॥ अलोकि  
किरुनपावमविनीनानाठपनउ । मिकुनवावयुशुआरामविद्यामाकठ ॥१००९॥  
इवपडिराडनिममाठकनय । अनीमववापकनिआठवायामाठ ॥ अलोकि



गङ्गातीरे कपुष्पाकाविद्याकाशीरुन । विमानकठाननायववउवन ॥१००४॥  
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कामादिनिवावदवववमनि । शाठउउवनकादिवाजायककुणय ॥१००६॥  
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किरुनपावमविनीनानाठपनउ । मिकुनवावयुशुआरामविद्यामाकठ ॥१००९॥  
इवपडिराडनिममाठकनय । अनीमववापकनिआठवायामाठ ॥ अलोकि



उद्यमिच्छ । गविविजिआमावठिनिच्छय ॥ पाठमसिबिभिरावषायिविक्रक । माठोदउदनमावठिनि  
 वलाकक ॥ १२ ॥ उदीमिप्रमात्रमावषायमवायठ । कामवठिउतावाविवमप्रगत ॥ मामाननाविषयाविक्रक  
 विरवाकया । लवमनिवामाउत्रवावम ॥ १३ ॥ तामावषयकजिठोठिउदुममम । सुनवरकठाविक्रक



इतिप्रमात्रमावषायमवायठ

वर्षाविक्रक । वमालववनिवउव । जिनिसामिशादरुगनकममवे ॥ कठकमविववपवाकाष्टिथेसा । तामकनमि  
 नाकूताइनिकविगया ॥ १७ ॥ पाठोपत्रक इडुक्रयानिनाम्रा । एनठकमवषयवाचयउतावार ॥ मनाप्रयमि  
 माताकामिठाववगत । एमववकावठिनापवपमाइन ॥ १८ ॥ मिलयमकगारिठामावमगत । मकूवठिविविना  
 तनानामठ ॥ विषवदहनमादिदकविकमकउ । म



विषवदहन

मनाप्रयमि

मकूवठिविविना

एनठकमवषयवाचयउतावार

जिनिसामिशादरुगनकममवे

वर्षाविक्रक



बभ्रुविह ॥ उभयनामावः प्रथमनामावः अथाननामावः ॥ २१० ॥ ३० ॥ ७८ ॥ मितावद्विनियमननिवासवदन  
 काकिसुभृदुनिनवकठनया ॥ ३१० ॥ ३१ ॥ काकिसुभृदुनिनवकठनया ॥ ३१० ॥ ३१ ॥ काकिसुभृदुनिनवकठनया ॥ ३१० ॥ ३१ ॥



श्रीमद्भक्तचरितम् ॥ ३१० ॥ ३१ ॥ काकिसुभृदुनिनवकठनया ॥ ३१० ॥ ३१ ॥

३१

किप्यलानादि केक ॥ इत्येवा  
 शत्रुवृथाजिवाकामन्  
 काक ॥ २१८ ॥ पाकना  
 द्वादिपयाश्राद्धि वैदिदि  
 आवबपावकादिपारवना  
 २१८ ॥ पाकना  
 वाशिमादितादि १ वा  
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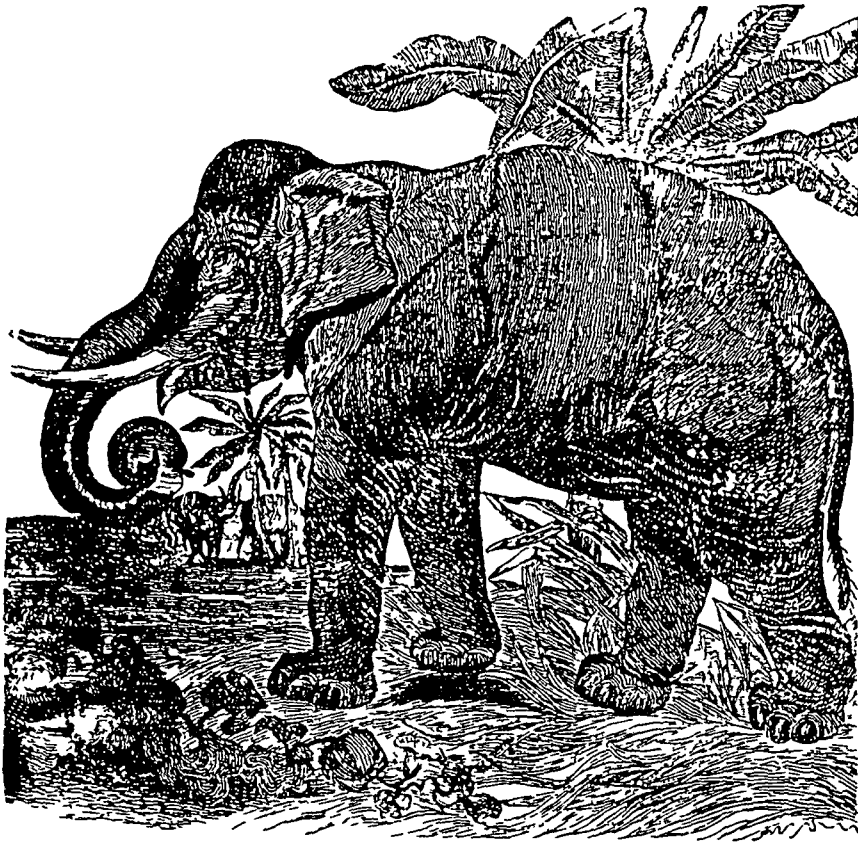
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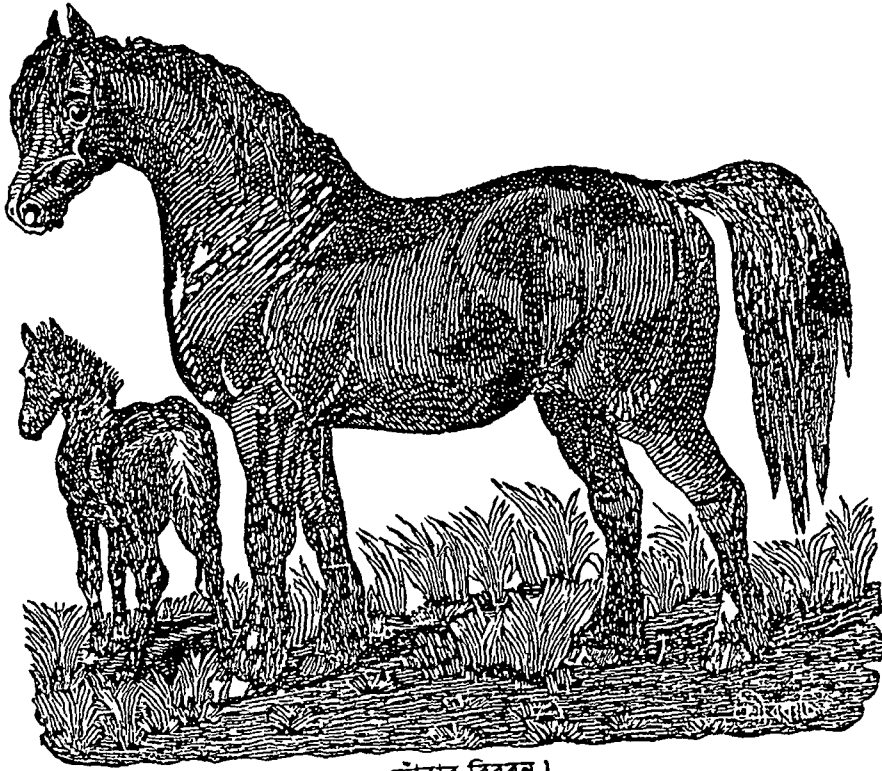
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হাতিৰ বিবৰন ।  
'The Elephant'

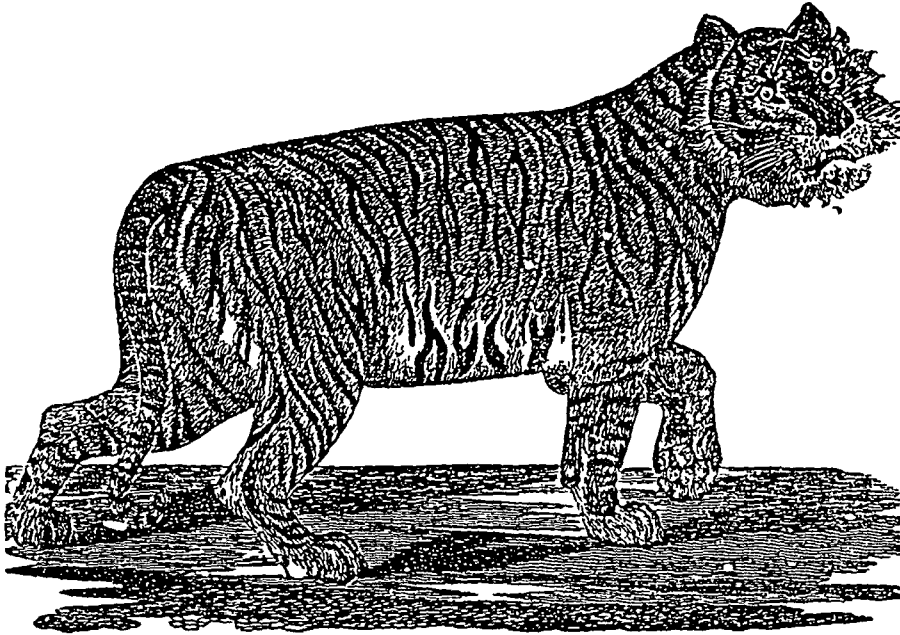


'The Zebra'  
Source *Orunodoi*



ঘোঁৰাৰ বিবৰন ।

'The Horse'



বাঘৰ বিবৰন ।

'The Tiger'

Source *Orunodoi*

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(c)(i)



Brickwork in English bond with an arched lintel  
at the entrance to the Nagaon Town Baptist Church, Nagaon, Assam

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(c)(ii)



*Namghar* at Pub-Saragaon, Roha-Mouza, Nowgong, Assam



Guwahati Baptist Church, Panbazar, Guwahati, Assam

Note : The upright tower in the *Namghar* on roof and the upright tower in the Church offer distinct resemblance

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(c)(iii)



*Srimanta Sankardeva Kristi Kendra Namghar*  
Radhagovinda Barua Path, Guwahati, Assam  
(An inner view of the hall of the *Namghar* with a series of same type of architectural windows)



Guwahati Baptist Church, Panbazar, Guwahati, Assam  
(An outside view of the Church hall with same type of architectural windows in series)

Note : Distinct architectural similarity is clearly visible in series of windows

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(c)(iv)



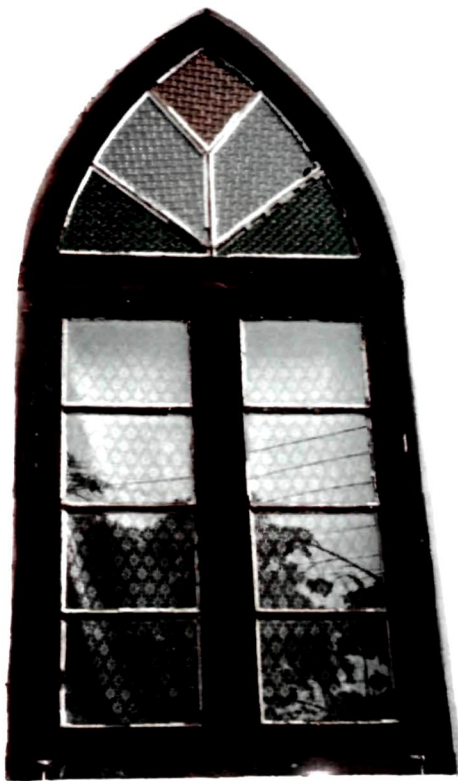
*Namghar (Manikut)* at Phuloguri, Jagial Mouza, Nowgong, Assam  
(View of a ventilator)



Nagaon Town Baptist Church, Nagaon, Assam  
(View of a window with ventilator)

Note : Distinct architectural similarity is clearly visible in both the ventilators

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(c)(v)



View of two windows with attached ventilators

Note : Use of coloured glasses are visible



Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(c)(vi)



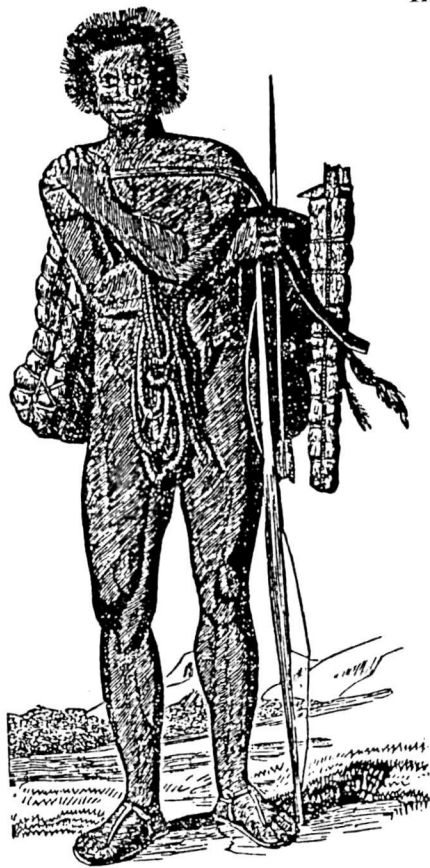
A view of doors and windows at Barbheta Baptist Church, Jorhat, Assam



A view of windows at Nagaon Town Baptist Church, Nagaon, Assam

Note : Distinctive architectural styles are visible

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(d)(i)



Californian Indian.



আমেৰিকা দেশৰ আদি বাসি লোক ।

North American Indians.



আমেৰিকাৰ আদিবাসিৰ সেৱা কৰা মূৰ্তি ।

Three-headed clay Image found in Kentucky.



North American Indian.

Source : Orunodoi

Chapter VIII  
Illustration-(e)



Tomb and Epitaph of Nidhi Levi Farwell the first Assamese convert  
Died January 28, 1873 Aged 50  
Christian Cemetery, Sibsagar, Assam

## **Chapter IX**

### **The Assamese Cultural Resurgence :**

#### **The Seeds Sown by the Missionaries**

Every educated Assamese knows about the role played by the American Baptist Missionaries in Assamese literature. The involvement of the Baptist Missionaries in the restoration of the Assamese language in Assam is an important event in the history of Assamese literature. The American Baptist Missionaries were not the only missionaries who came to Assam to spread Christianity among the people of Assam. The three most important Christian missions were - the American Baptist Mission, the Welsh Presbyterian Mission and the Salesian Order of the Roman Catholic Church. Why are not the Assamese concerned with the others, but only with the American Baptist Missionaries ? The only reason for this is due to the emotional attachment formed with the Baptist Missionaries during their fight against the British administration to re-establish the Assamese language in its own place

The objective of the Baptist Missionaries was to propagate Christianity among the people of Assam. The philanthropic works that they did were not their foremost objective. The Missionaries realized that the Assamese had a language of their own, and understood clearly that in order for their Christian mission to succeed, the medium of their Christian teachings could only be in the language that the people spoke.

The Missionaries played a critical role in their dealings with the British administration. The Baptist Missionaries from America were invited to Assam by the British administration. It was an unwritten understanding of the British administration

that the Missionaries would work in their field and educate people. This would help the British administration to carry out their administration. The Missionaries also got protection and support as expected from the British administration. Actually, both the British administration and the Missionaries worked hand in hand even though their objectives were different.

Most Assamese people have the feeling that the Baptist Missionaries were great and open hearted people, especially because of their leadership in the re-establishment of Assamese language. Yes, it is so, but only on the issue of language. The Missionaries could have lead the Assamese in a right direction by creating a feeling of citizenship in their minds. However, they did not initiate any plan to develop a nationalistic feeling in the Assamese. On the other hand, they supported the British administration for their own interest. All activities undertaken by the Missionaries were connected with their interest in propagating Christianity.

The Baptist Missionaries criticized the Hindu religion and the rituals of local people. They looked down the beliefs of Hinduism. The Missionaries openly made derogatory comments against Hinduism. At the same time the Missionaries, tried to show their neutrality with respect to all other religions.

The Missionaries also had discussions against the social and traditional customs of Assamese people. They even criticized the performing arts of the Assamese people which has already been discussed in a previous chapter.

With consideration to the above discussions, the Missionaries knowingly or indirectly did perform some good works for the Assamese people. Let us go back to

the socio-cultural milieu and the Missionary activities in the nineteenth century Assam, to make a neutral judgement and assesment.

In comparison to the other states of India, the trend of modernization in Assam was late and slow. This was due to the stagnant atmosphere where the Assamese lived, without any morals or aspirations for a progressive life after the disaster of the Burmese war. When the Assamese came in contact with the British and the American Baptist Missionaries, they gradually saw the modern technological advancement of the world. Modernization attracted the Assamese. Both the British and the Missionaries had their own separate objectives for Assam. But they sowed seeds of modernization in Assam in their own interest which helped the Assamese people to get acquainted with other parts of India as well as the world. Western renaissance gave birth to a new life style and culture for the Missionaries and the British. The new ideas from western renaissance were carried by the British and the Missionaries to India, and they introduced the new ideas in Assam upon their arrival.

Entering Assam, the Missionaries found that the Assamese language was not given proper recognition by the British administration, the society was completely broken down and the cultural life of the Assamese people was at the lowest level. The painstaking job undertaken by the American Baptist Missionaries was to establish the Assamese language as the *lingua franca* of the state. The Missionaries were joined in their efforts by Assamese intellectuals of the age, particularly Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, who not only fought for the cause of the Assamese language as an independent language but worked relentlessly to instill the urge for modernization and

progress among the Assamese people.

During the emergence of the *Jonaki* era, Assamese intellectuals furthered the cause of the Assamese language. A resurgence took place on the cultural side - in music, in theatre, and in other spheres of fine art. Assamese students studying in Calcutta received stimuli from the Bengal renaissance. The educated youth adopted western dress, manners and ways of dealings. The students came back to Assam with widened mental horizons and a modern outlook. The educated youths followed the model of western literature. They wanted to awaken the consciousness of Assamese society to religious hypocrisy, evil practices and superstitions through the medium of literature. These developments laid the foundation for the emergence of the modern Assamese society.

Although during the Ahom rule, a nationalistic feeling arose, it did not bond with the minds of the Assamese people, and the patriotic feeling dissipated. The political, economical and cultural atmosphere was shattered in the middle of the eighteenth century in Assam. The activities of foreign nationals indirectly helped the Assamese people to construct a new nest of their own with a feeling of patriotism and self identity.

After coming in contact with the British and the Baptist Missionaries, the Assamese people achieved specific identification as a distinct race, and the wave of distinct Assamese language and cultural characteristics spread to the outer boundary of Assam. Like the people of any other state in India, Assamese people also became self conscious about their own identity and language. It is really the American Baptist

Missionaries who enhanced the attraction of the Assamese language among the Assamese. The most useful seed sown by the Baptist Missionaries in Assam, was the *Orunodoi*, the first Assamese magazine cum news paper, which was started by the Missionaries in January 1846. The *Orunodoi* can be considered as a frame work for preserving seeds for future cultivation. Now we can see that those seeds germinated, were cultivated, nourished all spheres of Assamese life with its fruits. It should be remembered that the *Orunodoi* came into light as a result of the self consciousness of both the Assamese and the Baptist Missionaries.

The Assamese were used to live in their own social atmosphere. After invading Assam, the British introduced new methods of administration. They introduced an administration with documentary papers in courts, new objectives for work, a new concept of value, new styles of dresses, new innovations using modern technologies, etc. Whether the Assamese liked these changes or not, there were no educated, competent persons among the Assamese able to deal with the foreigners. The lack of education and financial incompetence were hindrances to the Assamese people, and consequently there was no close association with the foreigners. At this juncture, the past kings, nobles, and religious leaders from the Satras were so frustrated that they did not join with the foreigners in doing any meaningful constructive work. However, a few Assamese inspired by the Missionaries and the British, joined in the new wave of modernization of Assam. Perhaps only due to the contact and leadership of the Missionaries and British, the Assamese people stepped forward to lead a modern life. The influence of Christianity as a whole helped



Assamese to adapt to the British rule and to compete with the Bengalees

The contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries in the socio-cultural resurgence are manifold. They brought the horizon of western education to the people of Assam. The British administrators also deserve credit for exposing Assam to English education by opening English medium schools. However, there was a fundamental difference in the British approach in comparison to the American Missionaries. The British did not do anything to uplift the Assamese language. They did not learn Assamese properly and most of them could not speak it fluently. They even tried their best to impose the Bengali language in place of Assamese. The language used in the British schools were English and Bengali. On the other hand, the Missionaries took time to learn the Assamese language thoroughly, and studied the old Assamese Sastras for their knowledge. The Missionaries inspired the Assamese to learn their own language and literature well. The Missionaries even encouraged the Assamese, after mastering the Assamese language, to learn English as well as other languages so that they could know the modern world and acquire broader knowledge. The Missionaries introduced Assamese as medium of instruction in their schools. For the invaluable contributions of the first dictionary in Assamese, the first grammar and the magazine the *Orunodoi* made by the Baptist Missionaries, they will be always remembered in the history of Assamese literature.

The establishment of the the Baptist Missionary Printing Press at Sibsagar, was a milestone in the history of printing books in Assam. The Missionaries published a lot of secular and non secular books from this press, including text books on simple

Arithmetics, Geography and books for beginners for schools. The press also helped enormously in the publicity of Assamese literature. The *Orunodoi* provided ample opportunity to the new Assamese writers, and as the writers gained self confidence and boldness, they became eager to express their views against the social evils that prevailed at that time in Assamese society. The *Orunodoi* served as a platform to voice the opinions of the readers. It also stimulated the nationalistic feeling of young Assamese reformers like Anandaram Dhekial Phukan to fight for the Assamese against the injustice of the British administrators.

The *Orunodoi* focused on the science and technology of the modern world. The Assamese people got acquainted with modern inventions and a modern way of life through the *Orunodoi*. The Baptist Missionaries published ethnological and cultural information on all kinds of hills tribes of North East India, and thereby helped the readers to understand each other in terms of social and traditional cultures.

One of the greatest efforts made by the Baptist Missionaries was the fight to eradicate the opium eating habit of the Assamese people. The evil effects of opium eating was often discussed in the *Orunodoi*. They even advised the readers how the habit could be overcome by the use of natural herbs that were readily available in Assam. This shows their concern for the people of Assam (Barua 1965 : 125-126). The extensive primary education plan also had an impact on the opium eating habit. The report from Additional School Inspector of Nagaon was published in 'The Assam Gazette', 1878 p.41, and stated, "Primary education in that district is bringing about the gradual discontinuance of opium eating" (Bhuyan 1986 : 13). In this context the

distinguished American Baptist Missionary, Rev. Miles Bronson, wrote a letter as a community member to Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, Magistrate of Nowgong Court on April 18, 1857. Rev. Bronson urged Phukan to exercise his power to aid in the eradication of the opium eating habit of Assamese people (Bhuyan 1990 : 26-27).

Assam was mainly an agricultural state. After the British took over Assam, the precarious condition of peasants were improved a little. But, due to abolition of the *paik* system, the elite members of Ahom kingdom were placed in the position of not having any honourable occupation. As an alternative, this group of people looked for employment under the British administration, and turned out to be the middle class people in Assam. This was the beginning of middle class society of Assam. The Baptist Missionaries published substantial articles in the *Orunodoi*, depicting moral values for the formation of a new educated middle class society in Assam.

The Baptist Missionaries who came to Assam from America were Protestant. Ideologically, the Protestants were less orthodox than the Catholics and thus the Baptist Missionaries carried open hearted morality in their minds. But implementing this open hearted morality was not so simple. Upon arrival in Assam, the Missionaries realized that they had to create an atmosphere of Puritanism to lead the changes in Assamese social life. They understood that in order to transform the Assamese people to a modern sphere, they had to institute a modern group of middle class people who had to be properly educated, disciplined, self-controlled and competent. They also understood that an educational occupation based on a modern scientific approach would have to be their life-style. The Puritanism which was practiced by the Baptist

Missionaries had enormous value and will be recognized in the history of Assam. In most issues of the *Orunodoi*, the Missionaries published articles that had beneficial advice which aimed to create a good, disciplined, and temperate Assamese society. In the *Orunodoi*, the Missionaries firmly criticized lies and other unholy and unfair devices. With their puritanical view, the Missionaries got some responses and a few energetic and reformative minded Assamese youths supported the Missionaries views. The youths appealed to their fellow Assamese, and they were successful to some extent. In this context, we can mention the name of Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, the great reformer and educator of Assam.

From their arrival in Assam, the Baptist Missionaries tried to implement female education in Assam. In the earlier days of Assam, women were not given due importance in day-to-day life. It was considered a waste for girls to attend school. Education of women was considered dangerous, and most men would not marry a girl if she could read and write (Barpujari 1980 : 307). The Baptist Missionaries made great efforts to enroll girls in their schools and started co-education in schools. In the *Orunodoi*, the Missionaries criticized the ill treatment of females. Moreover, the Missionaries published articles against adultery and fornication (Neog 1983 . 224-228).

The American Baptist Missionaries introduced the concept of self support, whether for an individual or an organization. To give the Assamese a means of self support, the Missionaries introduced occupational training in Nowgong Orphan Institute. At the same time, the Missionaries educated the Assamese on the dignity of

labour in their institutions.

Discovery of the past was an objective of the Baptist Missionaries. Dr. Nathan Brown collected the old manuscripts which turned out to be a source of knowledge on old Assamese literature. The Missionaries discovered old obsolete Assamese words and reused them in Assamese literature. At the same time they created and used some sweet colloquial words in their writings. In some instances, they introduced some English words into Assamese. Mr. D. Neog states in this respect thus :

In regard to the merits of Christian-Assamese is their enriching the Assamese vocabulary by brightening and bringing into use a large number of Assamese words fast becoming obsolete and lost, and by coining others into elegant Assamese while in the early period of Assamese we find a large number of indigenous words and forms in use even in the Buddhist songs, Caryas and Dohas, there seems to have been an attempt at more Sanskritising the language in the Vaishnavite period. ---- But the Baptist missionaries made a sincere attempt at making the spoken and written speech perfectly agree. Hence they often used the more colloquial forms of speech and always preferred the use of indigenous words, generally so simple and sweet (Neog 1982 : 359).

Although it was the goal of the Christian Missionaries to spread Christianity in Assam, they tried to show religious neutrality in their magazine the *Orunodoi*. The Missionaries published controversial news regarding Hinduism and Muhammedanism. The Missionaries tried to provide a forum for intellectual people to have rationalistic discussion. However, the Missionary's inert feeling could be understood from the observation of Rev. A. K. Gurney.

Assamese are apparently unimpressible; preaching and talking to them seem to have no effect on them ----- In fact they have an accommodating theory that all religions are true 'for the European's they say Christianity is good; for the Hindoo, Hindooism; for the Mussalman, Muhammedanism' (Barpujari 1980 : 305).

During the days of the Ahom rule in Assam, there were restrictions in the use of dresses and ornaments. Common people were not allowed to put on silk or costly ornaments. No one was allowed to choose his or her own profession. They could not use all types of conveyance. 'Only the princes and nobles were privileged to enjoy things of luxury. The gable-roofed house was the monopoly of the royal families' (Sarma 1991 : 231). 'The common people were not permitted to build houses of masonry, or with a rounded end, and no one but the king himself was allowed to have both ends of his house rounded' (Gait 1992 : 231). However, the British abolished these restrictions and the common people were allowed to enjoy privileges according to their desires. The Baptist Missionaries also constructed round ended buildings in their mission campus at Jorhat, perhaps to prove that all peoples should be allowed to do so.

The pictures engraved in the *Orunodoi* were very attractive and these helped readers to easily visualize the subject matter. The concept of statistical data was introduced by the Missionaries in the *Orunodoi*.

The Missionary's *Orunodoi* was an important literary vehicle in nineteenth century Assam. There were other magazines such as the *Assam Bilasini* (1871), the *Assam Darpan* (1874), the *Assam Dipak* (1876), the *Assam News* (1882), the *Assam Bandhu* (1884), the *Mou* (1886) and the *Jonaki* (1889), etc which were published towards the end of nineteenth century and gave a modern outlook to the people of Assam. Perhaps these other magazines came to light because of the *Orunodoi*, which will be recognized as a pioneer work of the American Baptist Missionaries.

The British and the American Missionaries came to Assam to fulfill their own interests. But it may be true that without the efforts of the British and the Missionaries, the Assamese people would have waited for a longer period of time in a stagnant atmosphere before they saw the new light of modern life.

## Chapter X

### Summary and Conclusion

In the foregoing pages a study has been made to make an assessment of the contribution of the American Baptist Missionaries in the nineteenth century social transformation of Assam in the specific fields of culture and art.

Assam was annexed to the British regime following the treaty of Yandaboo between the British East India Company and the kingdom of Burma on February 24, 1826. The condition of Assam at that time was precarious in all spheres of life - political, economical, social and cultural. The society had been crushed to the earth after the Burmese war. Assamese people had fled to hilly areas such as Jayantia for security. Even after annexation, the Khamtis in upper Assam did not accept their fate and disturbances occurred from time to time. It was Mr. Francis Jenkins, the British Commissioner in Assam, who invited the the American Baptist Missionaries to Assam, with the hope of spreading education and Christianity for the facility of the British administration. In response to his direct invitation to the American Baptist Missionary Board in America, Rev. Nathan Brown and Rev. Oliver T. Cutter arrived Sadiya with their families on March 23, 1836. As a reinforcement to this original mission, Rev. Miles Bronson and Rev. Jacob Thomas and their wives started for Sadiya. Rev. Thomas lost his life in an accident while traveling in a country boat on the Brahmaputra river. Finally Mr. and Mrs. Bronson and Mrs. Thomas arrived Sadiya on July 17, 1837.



In the same year that the American Baptist Missionaries entered Assam, the Assamese language was replaced by Bengali in the schools and courts of Assam by the British administration. The noted linguists, Dr. Nathan Brown and Dr. Miles Bronson, fought for the cause of re-instatement of the Assamese language and were finally successful. The British Government reintroduced the Assamese language in the courts and schools of Assam. The challenging role of championing the cause of the Assamese language at a most critical period of its history, and in ushering in the modern era in Assamese literature is known to all educated Assamese.

I am aware that my research topic is based on socio-cultural contributions of the Baptist Missionaries in Assam, in the nineteenth century, with a look into the cultural and artistic dimensions in particular. I tried to collect pertinent research materials from all available sources in Assam and America.

The entire research work has been categorized into ten chapters.

The first chapter is an introduction. The first part contains objective and scope of work. In the second part, I give a back drop of Assam and its socio-cultural milieu in the nineteenth century, till the advent of the American Baptist Missionaries.

In the second chapter, I discuss the advent of the American Baptist Missionaries into Assam.

In the third chapter, the effect of Christian proselytization in Assam and the effect of the philanthropic activities on the contemporary socio-cultural milieu are discussed. The dangerous opium eating habit of Assamese and hills people, and the fight by the American Baptist Missionary for the eradication of this habit are

discussed. The effect of adoption of a new life with new code of conduct, the beliefs and dilemma of traditional cultures are focused. The opening of schools for general education, endeavour of the Missionaries for female education along with other philanthropic works of the Missionaries are discussed.

In the fourth chapter, the focus is on the rehabilitation of the Assamese language in Assam. Rev. Miles Bronson took a leading role on the subject, and worked as a team with Anandaram Dhekial Phukan and other Assamese. This was a direct confrontation of the American Baptist Missionaries with the British people for the justice of the Assamese people.

The fifth chapter has been devoted to the miscellaneous activities of the American Baptist Missionaries. The focus is made how the Missionaries made new approaches on the subjects - Assamese journalism, collection and publication of old manuscripts, textual criticism, numismatics, ethnography, folk lore, and material culture as subject of studies.

In the sixth chapter, I discuss how Assamese literature entered into the modern era and the contribution of the Missionaries. The various phases of Assamese language and literature have been broadly categorized in terms of five eras - the ancient era, the pre-Vaishnava era, the Vaishnava era, the post-Vaishnava era and the modern era. Each era has been discussed briefly. Under the modern era, the time frame between 1836 to 1870 has been described as period of the Missionary literature. The contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries in literary field are mentioned. The

historical role played by the *Orunodoi* in the development of the modern Assamese has been identified.

In chapter seven, new book production techniques and the use of new formats are discussed. The development of printing technology and fonts used in the Baptist Missionary Press at Sibsagar for Assamese literature are discussed. The Baptist Missionaries introduction of the concept of contents and use of an indexing system in Assamese writing are discussed.

In chapter eight, the new trends in performing and visual arts as well as objects of material culture are discussed. Contributions of the Baptist Missionaries in music, graphic arts, architecture and theatre are discussed. Under music, a few original Christian English songs have been documented with their original western notations. The corresponding translation of these songs into Assamese which were made by Rev. Nathan Brown, Rev. Miles Bronson, and Nidhi Levi Farwell are reproduced. A few Christian songs in local traditional tunes were collected from Assam and those are reproduced in this chapter with their western notations. A few Christian songs composed as *Munda* songs, *Sadana* songs, *Bodo* songs, *Saora* songs, *Mikir* songs, *Dafala* songs, *Apatani* songs, *Miri* songs, and *Nepali* songs are added, which shows the interest of the Missionaries in the other local languages and tunes in addition to Assamese for enhancing popularity of Christian hymns. The graphic arts published in the *Orunodoi* using the technique of wood block relief printing are documented. The concept of western architecture which had been carried by the Missionaries from the west, was applied in construction of Church buildings in Assam.

In chapter nine, the seeds sown by the missionaries for the growth of Assamese cultural resurgence are discussed.

While searching for materials for my research work I could not find any published materials which fit directly to my research area. To my knowledge, not many people or other researchers have published any literature on this research subject. *I believe, this dissertation will throw some light in the contribution of the Baptist Missionaries in the areas of cultural and artistic dimensions of Assam.*

While performing this research work which focused on the geographical boundary of present day Assam, I realized that the scope is available to perform research of a similar nature using the hills areas of North East India as boundary.

Another possible research subject could be an exhaustive study of the usage of contents, indexing, punctuations and syntax in the Assamese writings of the American Baptist Missionaries. A compilation of available Christian devotional songs in all the languages of North East India along with their notations of local tunes could also be a subject of investigation.

There is no doubt that the Baptist Missionaries performed a lot of commendable services for the Assamese. But in some instances we observe that they may have followed the instruction of the British, or that the Missionaries did not execute any plan which the British would not support, with only a few exceptions. We do not see any direct role of the Missionaries in the cause of freedom for the people of Assam. The Missionaries did not even focus on the death of the martyr Maniram Dewan, who was hung by the British administration for his revolt against the British.

In words of F. S. Downs - 'The missionaries did not see their primary purpose as being agents of the colonial powers; their primary purpose was the propagation of the Gospel. What can be said is that while each Christian missions and Government were there for their own purposes, each found the other useful' (Downs 1983 : 50-51).

It is true that the British maintained a divide and rule policy between the hills people and the plains people. The British tried to isolate and alienate the hills men from their plains neighbour. The Missionaries were successful in the hills areas, converting more people into Christianity than in the plains areas. No doubt, they made thousands of hills people literate, but in the process, they disturbed the traditional cultures of the hill people and reinforced the traditional animosity between the hills people and plains people.

A few present writers focus on the hidden intentions of the American Baptist Missionaries and their close relations with the British. Some writers praised the British people in the *Orunodoi* excessively. From the following reports that the Missionaries sent to the Home Board in America, we can better understand their hidden intentions and why the Missionaries continued to publish the *Orunodoi*, although it incurred a continuous loss.

Report : 'Mission to Assam', Thirty-first Report, July 1845, Asiatic Missions :

----A part of the last summer was spent in the preparation of a course of lectures against Hinduism, to be delivered the ensuing cold season in the larger villages. ----

Report : 'Mission to Assam', May 1847 :

----The labor at this station has rested heavily on Mr. Cutter; including for several months the editing and publication of the *Orunodoi*, or "Rising Dawn,"

a monthly periodical of a religious and miscellaneous character, commenced in January, 1846, and designed for circulation among the native population. Such a paper, it was thought, would exert a greater influence than tracts, if the people would subscribe for it, a condition most happily realized. ----

Report : 'Assam Mission' May, 1862, Forty-eighth Annual Meeting :

----The Orunodoi has an increasing circulation, and seems to awaken growing interest in the native mind. By this paper, we reach the hundreds of readers who cannot be reached by any other means, and who, if we attempted to preach to them, - which we have not the means to do at present, - would not hear. But here we mix in the knowledge of gospel truth along with news and matter which they are becoming eager for; and thus, all unawares to themselves, their modes of thought are undergoing a gradual but certain change.----

Report : 'Assam Mission' May, 1864 :

----The Orunodoi has been kept up and its circulation increased, though it still falls short of paying its own expenses. One influential Hindu native, residing in Nowgong, has just sent me about one hundred and fifty names of new subscribers, nearly the whole paying in advance. Many tea planters take a number of copies to circulate among the natives in their employ. The paper cannot fail to be a powerful instrument in changing the modes of thought of the native mind and diffusing information among this very ignorant people.----

Report : 'Assam Mission' May, 1865 :

---- It is believed to be doing a great deal of good in a general way throughout the province. If it were dropped, some native paper would be started, and, to judge from those in Bengal, it would mislead rather than improve the native mind.----

Report : 'Mission to the Assamese' May, 1868 : (Mr. Ward states:)

---- I do not feel willing to risk the consequences of raising the price of the paper, though it does not pay, for fear the great object in view will be defeated. The great aim is to have it read as widely as possible, and we can trust for its usefulness to the great law of influence, which works its own slow but sure results. Nothing that we issue at the Mission press is read so widely, and a large class can be influenced at present by nothing else.

Report : 'Mission to Assam' July, 1894 : (Rev. P. H. Moore from Nowgong)

---- We have made a special effort to interpret to the people this high death rate, and especially the " Kala-Azar," as a visitation from God on account of their sins. We have observed some indications that the people are thinking seriously along this line. We pray especially that God will, through His Spirit, convict them in respect of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.

No matter how we examine the benevolence of the American Baptist Missionaries activities, there are some basic truths associated with their actions. A truth is always a truth. The Baptist Missionaries proceeded from America to Assam, a journey of not less than ten thousand miles, knowing the hazard and perils of the journey. They traveled mostly by country boats on rivers and by walking hundreds and hundreds of miles. Some times they used elephants for local trips. Life-threatening diseases surrounded them. The early missionary families who went to Assam, lost their dear ones - some were young children and some were adults. No one in America forced them to go to such a remote and undeveloped area. There must have been a driving force associated with their long journey, and this force was the willingness to do some good work for mankind by spreading Christianity. Their hearts were great, and their minds were full of hope. It is true that the inspiration was from their Christian religion. But keeping religion aside, we must acknowledge the greatness of the people in their objective of serving mankind.

The following expressions tell us about the dedication of the Missionaries and how deeply they loved their foreign country.

Report : 'Mission to Assamese' May, 1868 : (Mr. Stoddard wrote : )

Gowahati is indeed a place of universal beauty, and picturesque in the highest degree. I cannot now name a place on the wonderful Hudson that can surpass it in natural scenery.

Report 'Mission to Assamese' Sixty-first Annual Report (Mrs Ward states )

I have the gratifying privilege of returning my salary for the past fourteen months, since Dr Ward's death, to the Mission treasury I commenced the year with the intention of drawing only what I might find necessary to my needs, and as the meal in the barrel and the cruse of oil, have not failed, I can praise God for the privilege of having given myself with earnest diligence to mission-work without remuneration

In a letter after returning from America Mrs Bronson wrote - ' Oh, this delightful November weather ! ----- I really think there is no more lovely spot on earth than dear, quiet Nowgong' ( Gun 1911 138 )

With sad and reluctant heart, Dr Bronson's parting words at his farewell at the river station in 1878 " I do not want to go, my heart is here I desire, above all things to live and labor for Christ here " Turning to a native Kohl preacher with us and placing his hand on his shoulder, he said, " Preach Christ, live Christ A great responsibility rests on the native Christians Be true, be faithful, my brother, and may God bless you" (Gurney 1887 254-255)

Rev S M Whiting states - " I am satisfied in the thought that Assam is my home, and my home for life" ( Gurney 1887 247 )

The bridge constructed between the American Baptist Missionaries and the Assamese people in the nineteenth century still exists On November 4, 1983, a large group of Assamese residents of America and members of the American Baptist Church celebrated the 100th Anniversary Convocation in honour of Dr Miles Bronson at the Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, Massachusetts The convocation president, Mr George Peck who was a missionary in Assam, welcomed the guests first



in fluent Assamese and then in English. In his address president Peck remarked :

“If we look with an opened mind at the missionary movement of the past one hundred and seventy-five years, especially at its nineteenth-century segment, I believe we shall marvel that in the providence of God, so striking a train of scholar-saints was raised up to give it leadership and in that company of scholar-saints the Bronsons are to be numbered.” Recalling Bronson and other scholar-saints like Judson and Nathan Brown, President Peck said, “These were people noted not only for their dedication and conviction but also for their capacity for cultural identification, their capacity for human empathy and for their ability to get inside of a community and a civilization and to become one with it. So that today in retrospect, they are famous not only as evangelists and church builders, themselves noble tasks, but also as persons who contributed profoundly to the language and culture of the folk among whom they labored” (Datta : 1985).

No doubt, the American Baptist Missionaries came to Assam only with the objective of propagation of Christianity. We find a combination of both negative and positive aspects in their attitude towards the indigenous people and culture of Assam having justifications from their missionary point of view. It is significant that under the circumstances, the people of Assam got benefitted by the ‘positive’ acts of the

Missionaries and in the process were indirectly gained a lot in terms of new and modern dimensions in so many fields.

In the final analysis we can make an objective assessment of the role of the American Baptist Missionaries in the following manner .

No doubt that the Missionaries worked for the transformation of the Assamese society particularly in the rehabilitation of Assamese language and in ushering in new ideas. But the fact remains that the Missionaries came to Assam as evangelists.

Through their philanthropic works they were successful in winning the hearts of Assamese people. But this was not the only objective. On the other hand, the Missionaries had a firm belief that the Christianity is superior to Hinduism. At the same time the Missionaries did not comment against Hinduism in all respects. The Missionaries contributed significantly in the fields of education, health, modern concept of language and literature, printing technology etc. and initiated a pioneering role, but they were not the only ones in pioneering the objectives.

The Missionaries had their individual genuine love for Assam. But, it is also true that they had a passive understanding with the British administration and an inert superiority feeling for their religion and culture. The Missionaries were not free from notions of racial and cultural superiority of western society.

In balance, it must be admitted that the positive points of the contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries outbalanced the negative ones and also that the feelings of attachment and gratitude of the Assamese community towards the Baptist Missionaries are not wholly misplaced.

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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix -A

### Letter from Captain Jenkins to the Board of American Baptist Missionaries

You have no doubt been sufficiently acquainted by the missionary gentlemen with the state of Asam, to know that since 1831, Lower Asam has been directly under the management of English officers, and that the division of the country called Upper Asam has been under the administration of a native prince, Rajah Purandur Sing, who paid a tribute to the British government, and who was subject to the control and interference of the British officers in political matters, and in cases of complaint of any gross mismanagement or injustice.

The administration of the Rajah, you may also have heard, has of late been considered unsatisfactory, so much so that it was consequently deemed necessary by the government to take the state of that part of the country into consideration. The result of the inquiry has been, that the Governor General has determined to resume Upper Asam, and to place it on the same footing as Lower Asam, under British officers.

This arrangement is now being carried into effect, and the country will be divided into two districts, the head of one of which will be Jurhath, and the other Lakimpur, on the north bank, in the vicinity of the Suban Shiri river. I trust this arrangement will be for the benefit of the people in all respects, and that I may congratulate your Board on the prospects it opens, of extending the usefulness of your mission, by the protection and assistance afforded to it by the European officers

Feeling persuaded that the sphere of the mission may, under the circumstances just noticed, be greatly enlarged, I beg to address your Board, in the full confidence that it will be inclined to take advantage of these improved prospects, to the extent of its ability, by increasing the strength of the Asam mission, and adding to its efficiency. I will therefore endeavor to point out such measures as seem to me most deserving the attention of your Board, for the furtherance of the enlightened views in which this mission was originally founded. And, in the first place, it will be necessary to advert to the distribution and employment of the gentlemen now composing this mission.

The Rev. N. Brown and Mr. Cutter are, as you are aware, located at Sadiya, and Rev. M. Bronson at Jaipur, a small post about thirty-five miles south-west of Sadiya, on the Buri Dihing river. The first gentleman is devoted to the instruction of the Khamtis, and through them of their kindred tribes of Shyan race, and also to the instruction of the Asamese inhabitants of the neighborhood. The second gentleman's principal attention is given to the press; and the third is making himself acquainted with the Singpho language, for the purpose of teaching the tribes who speak it. At Jaipur he has more means of associating with persons using the language than he had at Sadiya, as those around him are, with little exception, Moamariahs-Asamese by extraction, formerly slaves to the Singphos, or inhabitants of the districts occupied by them. I expect a large number of this class, now, to settle round Jaipur. They avoid the Singpho country, and are not being pleased with the rule of the chief who has the

administration of the Moamaria country. They will, I expect, settle west of the Buri Dihing, now it reverts to the hands of the British officers.

Mr. Bronson is likely, I think, soon to have more favorable means of communicating with the Singphos, by the gradual establishment of the supremacy of our government, from the interference of our troops, occasioned by the constant disturbance produced by the feuds of these wild, restless tribes and also by the increase of the manufacture and culture of tea, which will introduce, in all probability, at no distant period, much employment and wealth into these remote and now rude districts; and the consequences will be the same here as every where else, a great amelioration of the habits of the Singphos, by the civilizing effects of commercial intercourse. The tranquillity that will be the result of the altered state of things, which we have reason to expect, by the progress of the events now referred to, will enable the gentleman of Jaipur to visit with safety the Singpho colonies further up the Buri Dihing, and to reside for a portion of the year amongst them. And it is to be hoped some of the chiefs, alive to the influence obtained by education, will send their sons for instruction to Jaipur.

Schools have been established for some time at Sadiya, under the care of Mr. Cutter, and the ladies; and I have received not only from the missionary gentlemen but also from our officers, the most pleasing accounts of the attention of the children to their kind instructors, and of their progress. Mr. and Mrs. Brown have been indefatigable in getting up elementary books for these schools, and the specimens produced from Mr. Cutter's press, under the many unfavorable circumstances which necessarily attended the first efforts of these gentlemen, in languages lately so foreign to them, have afforded me much satisfaction; and they do the utmost credit to their judgment and industry.

But, as the various labors, which now devolve upon these gentlemen, are very heavy and the number of laborers appears so very insufficient, I trust your Board will endeavor to add, at least, two more gentlemen to their number. Hitherto, by the blessing of Providence, the gentlemen have enjoyed uninterrupted health, or, at least, have not suffered so much from attacks of sickness, as to have been prevented from pursuing their usual occupations; but if, in the present want of assistants, either Mr. Brown or Mr. Cutter were taken so ill as to be obliged to remove from the scene of their labors, there would be, I fear, a serious interruption of the mission. It seems desirable that there should be, at least, a third person prepared to take up the work, if either of the gentlemen suffer severely from those casualties we are every where so liable to, and particularly in a partially cultivated country. This third gentleman, in case all the members of the mission enjoyed their health, would be disposable for making periodical visits, in the cold season, to all the surrounding villages, whether Asamese or Khamti - an essential duty, which could now be scarcely performed, without stopping the labors of the mission at Sadiya - or must be so hastily conducted, as to leave little expectation of advantage from its performance.

As, however, your Board will perhaps consider it proper to make Sadiya the head-quarters of all your missionary efforts in this quarter, which I am inclined to

recommend, the addition of a fourth gentleman to this branch of your mission, seems to me very desirable, with a view principally to his relieving the other gentleman of the schools; as I consider this charge so important, as to call for the entire devotion of one gentleman to it. It might be a part of this gentleman's duty also, to prepare school books, so as to relieve Mr. Brown of this office, and allow him to devote his entire attention to the means of providing religious instruction for the people.

Mr. Bronson is now alone, and to prevent the chance of the labors he has commenced upon, being occasionally suspended, a second gentleman, as an assistant to himself, seems indispensable at Jaipur. This gentleman might also engage himself in the study of the language of the Nagas, the hill tribes of the mountains immediately adjoining, and to whom a readier access can be obtained from Jaipur than from any other part of Asam; the Nagas of that neighborhood having been brought into constant contact with the Asamese, by the salt wells in that part of the hills, and the long established and extensive trade in salt, which they have thus enjoyed. In the course of this traffic, the Nagas are still in the habit of constantly visiting and staying for short periods at Jaipur; and a missionary might, with perfect safety, reside among this tribe, (the Namsanghea Nagas,) whenever he thought it desirable. From the altitude of the mountains, extending from three to five thousand feet, it is probable that a residence on these hills would be unattended with any risk of health - rather, indeed, it might prove beneficial to constitutions injured by the heats of the plains.

Jaipur was once a considerable town, and from its position, in the vicinity of the principal tea tracts and brine springs, its commanding military position, in respect to the passes to Ava, and the advantages it possesses in the navigation of the Buri Dihing, this post promises to become again a place of some importance; and although, from the mismanagement of the late ruler, the population immediately around is very small, I have no doubt it will quickly improve in this respect. The lands in the neighborhood are inferior to none in Asam, in point of fertility, and cultivators will be attracted to them by the restoration of traffic.

These two are now your only existing missions; but if more laborers could be spared, I conceive a branch might be established at Lakimpur, in lat. 27-14, long. 94-7, a little west of the great river Suban Shiri, about as far from Sadia to the west, as Jaipur is to the S.W. Lakimpur is the midst of a fine grain country, and the district is in a comparatively flourishing state.

The great object of this mission should be the instruction of the Miris, a hill tribe, originally from the mountains between the Suban Shiri, and the Dihing - and as yet, with very few individual exceptions, not brought within the pale of Hinduism. Numbers of them are now scattered throughout Asam, and especially in the plains along the Suban Shiri. They are a very quiet, peaceable race, and access to their mountains might be obtained, I believe, by missionaries with the perfect safety. I met, last season, with the principal chief of the hill Miris, who followed me down to Jurhath; and he expressed an earnest wish that some gentleman might be sent up to visit him.

Further north, are a people we call Abors : they are Miris in language; and I believe the only difference is in the name, which is an Asamese term, meaning foreign, not friendly. (The distant Nagas, not in intercourse with the plains, are thus also called Abor. ) The Miris and Abors are under different rulers, and opposed to each other in exactly the same way as happens to all the hill tribes bordering the valley, and those immediately behind them; those nearest, always endeavoring to maintain an entire monopoly of the profits resulting from their intercourse with the plains, and preventing, with the strictest jealousy, any passage of their neighbors through their country. The Miri chief told me there was no hostility, at present, existing between his tribes, and those north, but how far it would be practicable for missionaries to visit the Abors, I cannot say.

Beyond the Abors, is a district of Thibet, under Chinese rule, but of it we know nothing farther than the agreement of all accounts in representing it as being well inhabited by a comparatively civilized people. The jealousy of the Chinese and of these intermediate barbarians, places a complete barrier, at present, to any direct communication with them, although the distance between these two countries, Asam and Thibet, totally differing in their products, which might profitably to each, be exchanged between them, can only be about ninety or a hundred miles.

If a mission could be established at all, at Lakimpur, it should not, I think, consist of less than two individuals, with their families. There is a much larger population of Asamese around, than at either Sadia or Jaipur, and of course these also would call for the attention of the missionaries, and schools could be opened at once on an extensive scale. (American Baptist Mission 1839 : 27-28)



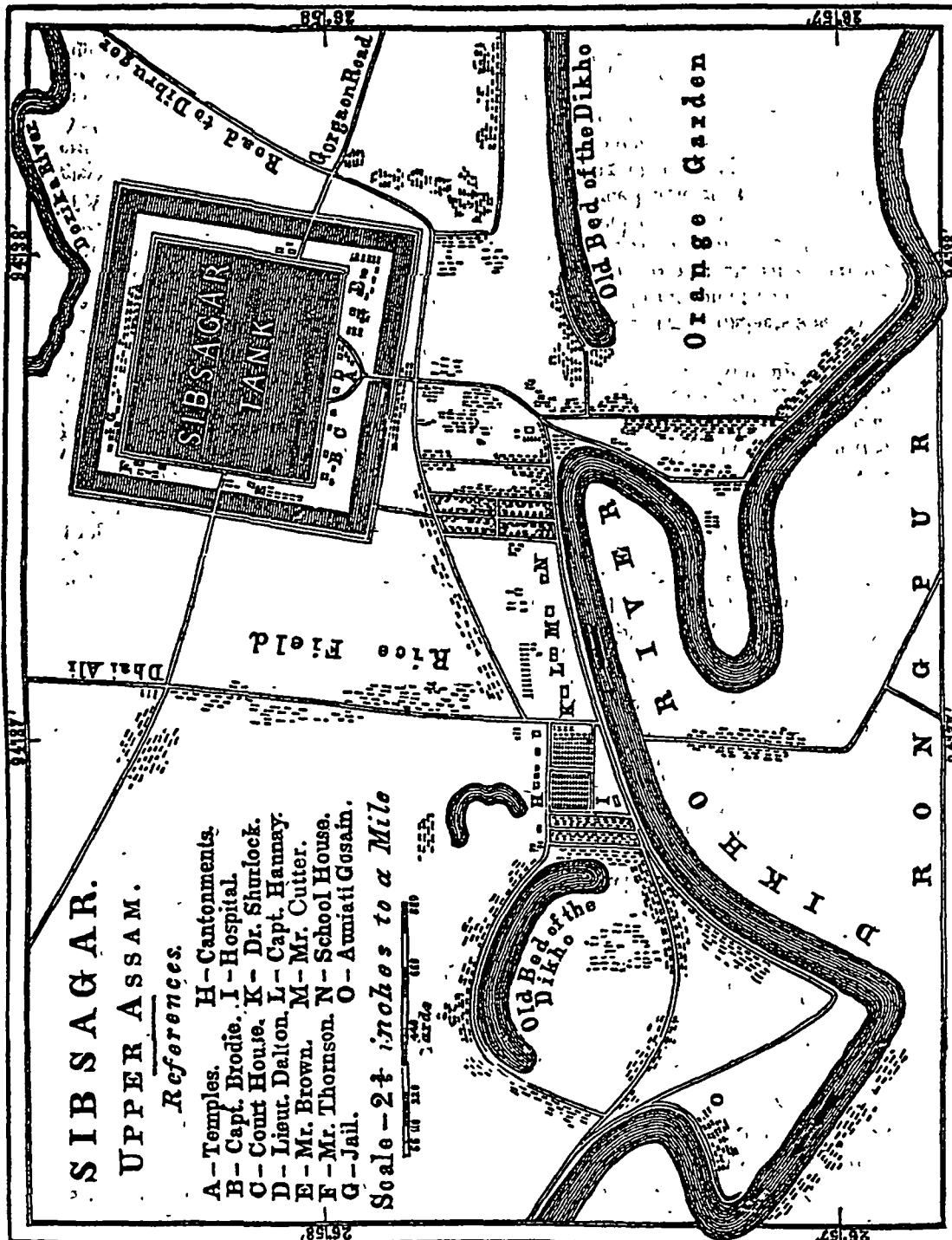


CHART of Missionary Service in the ASSAM MISSION, A.B.M.U.

STATIONS	1836	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846	1847	1848	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858	1859	1860	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886	1888									
C. Barker & Wife																																																					
A. H. Davenport & Wife																																																					
W. Ward & Wife																																																					
I. J. Stoddard & Wife																																																					
M. B. Comford & Wife																																																					
Mrs. E. P. Scott																																																					
Miss M. Rankin																																																					
M. Bronson & Wife																																																					
Miss C. Keller																																																					
C. E. Burdette & Wife																																																					
I. J. Stoddard & Wife																																																					
T. J. Keith & Wife																																																					
M. C. Mason & Wife																																																					
E. G. Phillips & Wife																																																					
Miss M. Russell																																																					
C. E. Burdette & Wife																																																					
Miss E. C. Good																																																					
E. W. Cheak & Wife																																																					
S. W. Riverburg & Wife																																																					
M. Bronson & Wife																																																					
C. D. King & Wife																																																					
W. E. Wilcox & Wife																																																					

Source: The Assam Mission of the American Baptist Missionary Union, 1886

Appendix No - C



Source : American Baptist Missionary  
 Annual Report - Asiatic Mission April, 1844

Appendix No - D

STATEMENT OF PRINTING

EXECUTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS, SIBSAGOR, FROM JANUARY 1, 1846, TO SEPTEMBER 30, 1851.

Year.	Title of Work.	Language.	Ed.	Size.	Pages.	No. Copies.	Total Pages.
1846	Report of Assam Mission, .....	English, .....	1	12mo.,	40	500	20,000
1846	Sheet Almanac, .....	Assamese, .....	1	4to.,	1	600	600
1846	Ephesians, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	16	2,000	32,000
1846	Second Catechism, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	30	1,000	30,000
1846	Discovery of America, .....	Assamese, .....	1	18mo.,	18	600	10,800
1846	{ Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians } { and Theasalonians, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	52	2,000	104,000
1846	Fables, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	24	1,000	24,000
1846	Treatment of Cholera, .....	English, .....	1	18mo.,	8	200	1,600
1846	Worcester's Primer, .....	English, .....	1	16mo.,	66	1,000	66,000
1846	Scripture Lessons, .....	English, .....	1	18mo.,	124	400	49,600
1847	Hymns: Second Part, .....	Assamese, .....	1	18mo.,	73	1,200	87,600
1847	Henry and his Bearer, .....	Assamese, .....	1	18mo.,	88	1,000	88,000
1847	Revelation, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	52	1,500	78,000
1847	Letter to Mohammedans, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	27	1,000	27,000
1847	Two Sermons and Appendix, .....	Assamese, .....	1	8vo.,	70	900	63,000
1847	Pastoral Letters, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	4	300	1,200
1847	Second Catechism, .....	Assamese, .....	2	12mo.,	30	600	1,800
1847	Tunes, .....	Assamese, .....	1	8vo.,	8	300	2,400
1847	Rep. Orph. Inst. and other Schools, .....	English, .....	1	12mo.,	36	400	14,400
1847	Luke, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	109	3,000	327,000
1847	Circular: Orphan Institution, .....	English, .....	1	4to.,	2	100	200
1847	Multiplication Table, .....	Assamese, .....	1	8vo.,	1	500	500
1848	History of Joseph, .....	Assamese, .....	2	18mo.,	62	2,000	104,000
1848	Mother and Daughter, .....	Assamese, .....	1	18mo.,	24	1,000	24,000
1848	Grammatical Notices, .....	English and Assamese, .....	1	8vo.,	108	150	15,900
1848	1 Corinthians to end of Galatians, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	88	300	26,400
1848	1 Timothy to Jude, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	108	300	31,800
1848	Religious Address, (large type,) .....	Assamese, .....	4	12mo.,	12	1,000	12,000
1848	First Catechism, (large type,) .....	Assamese, .....	6	16mo.,	18	2,000	36,000
1848	Circular, (Gowahati Female School,) .....	English, .....	1	12mo.,	4	60	200
1848	Four Gospels and Acts, .....	Assamese, .....	2	12mo.,	450	500	225,000
1848	Luke, .....	Assamese, .....	2	12mo.,	108	1,200	124,800
1849	Acts, .....	Assamese, .....	2	12mo.,	102	1,200	122,400
1849	New Testament, .....	Assamese, .....	2	12mo.,	782	300	234,600
1849	Sermon on the Mount, .....	Assamese, .....	2	18mo.,	20	2,000	40,000
1849	Alphabet and Spelling, .....	Assamese, .....	2	16mo.,	16	2,000	32,000
1849	Comparative Vocabulary, .....	English, .....	1	8vo.,	17	50	850
1849	Phrases, .....	Assamese and Dhekeri, .....	1	8vo.,	4	50	200
1849	First Catechism, .....	Assamese, .....	7	16mo.,	16	5,000	90,000
1849	New Testament, .....	Assamese, .....	3	8vo.,	630	2,000	1,260,000
1850	Obituary Notice of Rev. C. Barker, .....	Assamese, .....	1	18mo.,	28	1,000	28,000
1850	Hymn Book, .....	Assamese, .....	2	18mo.,	214	3,000	642,000
1850	Lines for Music for Hymn Book, .....	Assamese, .....	1	18mo.,	210	50	10,500
1850	Primer, .....	Assamese, .....	1	16mo.,	22	2,000	44,000
JUVENILE TRACTS.							
1850	Beautiful Garment, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	18	1,500	27,000
1850	African Prince, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	18	1,500	27,000
1850	Old Saul, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	18	1,500	27,000
1850	Warrior Chief, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	18	1,500	27,000
1850	Memoir of Hube, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	22	1,500	33,000
1850	Account of Ramgohi, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	22	1,500	33,000
1850	Account of Rebi, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	22	1,500	33,000
1850	The Pious Villager, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	22	1,500	33,000
1851	Account of Rajon, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	18	1,500	27,000
1851	Early Piety, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	22	1,500	33,000
1851	The Orphan Girl, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	22	1,500	33,000
1851	The Eagle's Nest, .....	Assamese, .....	1	32mo.,	18	1,500	27,000
1851	Table: Languages, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	4	25	100
1851	Vocables, .....	English and Assamese, .....	1	16mo.,	16	25	400
1851	Second Catechism, .....	Assamese, .....	3	16mo.,	70	2,000	140,000
1851	Pundit and Preacher, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	66	2,000	102,000
1851	Way of Salvation, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	18	2,000	36,000
1851	Error Refuted, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	18	2,000	36,000
1851	Geography of Asia, .....	Assamese, .....	1	12mo.,	146	1,000	146,000
						74,300	4,954,850

Of works which have been printed for the Government Schools, and for individuals, the number of copies mentioned below were printed as extra for the use of the Mission:

Observation on the Garos, .....	English, .....	1	8vo.,	24	25	600	
Mr. Elliot's Report on the Garos, .....	English, .....	1	8vo.,	28	25	700	
Mr. Stason's Report on the Garos, .....	English, .....	1	8vo.,	38	25	950	
Instructions of Court of Directors, .....	English, .....	1	8vo.,	12	25	300	
Relations with Angami Nagas, .....	English, .....	1	8vo.,	27	25	675	
Garó Primer, .....	Garó, .....	1	16mo.,	16	25	200	
Garó Reader, .....	Garó, .....	1	8vo.,	56	25	1,400	
Easy Reading Lessons, .....	Bengali, .....	3	12mo.,	42	250	10,500	
Bengali Primer, .....	Bengali, .....	4	16mo.,	12	250	3,000	
Land Surveying, .....	Bengali, .....	1	8vo.,	38	150	5,700	
Vocabulary and Phrases, .....	Bengali and Khamti, .....	1	12mo.,	35	150	5,250	
Scripture Catechism, .....	English, .....	1	18mo.,	20	125	2,500	
Vocabulary and Phrases, .....	English, Miri and Abor, .....	1	12mo.,	90	50	9,500	
						1,150	42,775
Oranoidi Newspaper, 55 numbers, up to December, 1850, and six extra pages, making 222 pages folio, 600 copies, .....							133,200
Nine numbers in 1851, 400 copies, .....							14,400
Magazine form, 55 numbers, up to December, 1850, with title page and index, and two extra pages, royal octavo size, 452 pages, 500 copies, making pages, .....							226,000
Nine numbers in 1851, royal octavo, 1,000 copies, .....							144,000
Total pages, .....						5,515,225	
Reported previously to 1846, .....						2,810,500	
Whole number from the beginning, .....						8,375,725	

Source : American Baptist Missionary  
Thirty-eighth Annual Report Mission to Assam May, 1852

Riddles.

সৰাৰ নিমিত্তে সাঁথৰ দিয়া ।

Riddles.

- ১। সাঁথৰ দিও বৃজ,  
গাত্তে আছে কুঁজ ।
- ২। আমাৰ ঘৰতে বুৰি বাই এটি আছে,  
নিভৌ টকলিয়াই ।  
ইয়াৰ অৰ্থ কি?
- ৩। পেট আছে, পেটু নাই,  
মুখ আছে, জিবা নাই ।  
ইয়াৰ অৰ্থ কি?
- ৪। আমাৰ ঘৰতে বুৰি বাই এটি আছে,  
জাঁওতে এগোৰ, আহোঁতে এগোৰ ।
- ৫। আমাৰ ঘৰতে বুৰি বাই এটি আছে,  
তাইৰ এহেজাৰ চকু ।
- ৬। আমাৰ ঘৰতে বুৰি বাই এটি আছে,  
নিভৌ টোটাৰাই ।
- ৭। ধনেকতে দেখা,  
লুটি তল জাই কটপ ।
- ৮। কচু পাতৰ টপলি,  
পানি পালে মুকলি ।
- ৯। এক খৰিবলৈ মাই চেক,
- ১০। বাসালি কাই, কনিটো পাৰিচে,  
পানিত তল নে জাই ।
- ১১। এই ঝিনিতে মাৰিলৌ টিপা,  
গৰগাঁও পালেগৈ দিপা ।
- ১২। জত নি সিঁচিলে, বোআও নাই,  
তাত মাই ধাকৌ, মৰা পাই ।  
এইবিলাকৰ অৰ্থ ।  
১, ধুঁতৰি । ২, খাৰনি সঁতা । ৩, কলহ ।  
৪, দুআৰ ডলি । ৫, চামনি । ৬, ধোঁআ  
ধোআ । ৭, তাঁত ধন । ৮, জাল । ৯,  
হাঁহ কনি । ১০, তেল টোপা । ১১, কুঁই,  
কঁপ । ১২, ধুব ।

Source : Orunodoi; May, 1851

সাঁথৰ দিয়া ।

Riddles.

- ১। গচ কুম্ব কৰন, লাগে পাঁচ বৰন,  
পকোঁতে জাকে জাকে পকে,  
মৰোঁতে এটি এটি মৰে ।
- ২। ওপৰৰ পৰা পৰিল চিলা,  
মুৰ নাই কিয়া গোটেই গিলা ।
- ৩। লাৰ ওপৰত লি,  
টাঁচি লগালে কাচি কামি,  
নে টাঁচি লগালে কি?
- ৪। চাৰি ফালে চাৰি বান,  
দুফালে দুখন কান,  
গোটে গোটে মানুহ গিলে,  
তেও নে জাই পান ।
- ৫। বজাৰ জপা একুৰি একলপা ।
- ৬। বজাৰ জি লৰি জাই,  
মদৌ ফুল মৰি জাই ।
- ৭। ই ফালে বা বাঁহ, সি ফালে বা বাঁহ,  
ভাগো ভাগো কৰে বাঁহ ।  
তেও নুৰে বাজ হাঁহ ।
- ৮। গচৰ ওপৰত গুটি, গুটিৰ ওপৰত গচ,  
ই নো কি গচৰ সঁচ?
- ৯। জঁপাৰ ওপৰত কুপা,  
কুপাৰ ওপৰত তেল,  
জৰ পুৰকৈ বান্ধি থৈচৌ,  
কোনে পাৰ মেল ।
- ১০। আম গুম গুম, চাম গুম গুম,  
পৰ্বতে গুম গুমাই বাসালিকাি,  
কনিটো পাৰিচে পানিত তল নে জাই ।  
ইয়াৰ অৰ্থ এই ।  
১, কুমাৰৰ পাগ মালি । ২, তোলা । ৩,  
এলাধু । ৪, ঘৰ । ৫, কলাডিল । ৬, নি-  
য়ৰ । ৭, দোলা । ৮, কেতেই কঁচাল । ৯,  
বাঁহ গাচি । ১০, তেল টোপা ।

Source . Orunodoi, August, 1851

Appendix No - F



Rev Pitt Holland Moore  
Source Historical Society of American Baptist Missionaries,  
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

### Appendix No - G

Epitaph of Rev. W. Ward, at the Christian Cemetary, Sibsagar, Assam



REVD WM WARD. D.  
 23 YEARS  
 BAPTIST MISSIONARY  
 IN ASSAM  
 DIED AUG. 12, 1873  
 AGED 52  
 HIS EARNEST LABORS  
 SWEET HYMNS AND TRANSLATION  
 OF PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE  
 PERPETUATE A FRAGRANT MEMORY  
 CHRIST ALL AND IN ALL

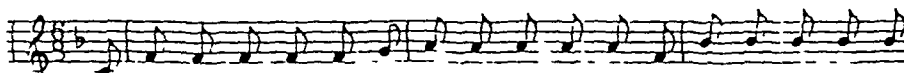
**Apendix No - H**



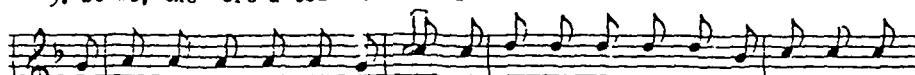
Photograph of Island City Baptist Church,  
Eaton Rapid, Michigan, USA  
Note : Dr. Bronson was associated with the Church  
after his return from Assam, India



## Appendix No - 1

ASSAMESE TUNE  
Christmas

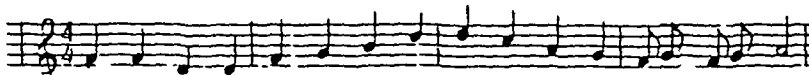
1. Now heaven is ringing, Let earth, too, be ringing, Sing praises to heaven
2. The stars of creation displayed adoration In heavenly blazing
3. So we, the cre-a-ted To God in-car-na-ted A ware of His Essence



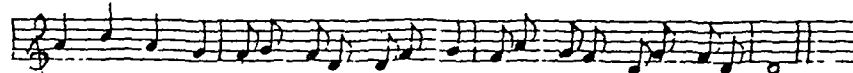
for love freely given, --out-poured. Creation re-joices Let men add their  
with glory a-ma-zing a -bove. The Shepherds astounded, the story pro-  
must stand in His presence, full-awed, With God-supplied fitness We join now



voices, With joy ce-le-bra-ting with those long awaiting the Lord.  
pounded; And wise men ap-pearing, rich gifts with them bearing in love.  
in witness, With angels in glory, We sing now the story of GOD.

ASSAMESE TUNE  
Calling "Jesus"

1. Brother, would you flee from Satan? Call on Jesus, in His name believe
2. Holy lowly, glad-one, sad-one In the peace of Jesus you may stand

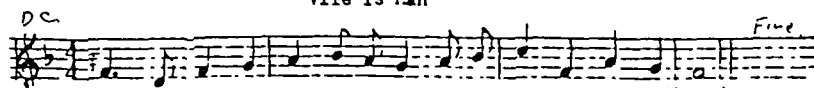


He did sac-ri-fice Himself on Calv'ry's tree That you might eternal  
Rise with Him one day in resurrection Joy. Go with Him to heaven's  
life receive.  
holy land.

(Same Tune)  
Satisfying Bread

1. Do you know Him, Jesus, Savior, Him of all created Beings, Head?  
He who is the true, the only living way. Giver of the satisfying Bread.
2. Lord of Love and Lord of Right-ness, Lord of all the holy ones is He.  
Lord who satisfies the hung'ring, thirsting soul,  
Lord who walks the path ahead for me.

ASSAMESE TUNE  
Vile is Man



1. Vile is man; God's anger is near. Hear O world; repent thy sin  
2. Mountains shake; the sun hides its light  
For the wrath of God is strong



Fear His plan; His face all will fear  
Islands quake; Can none flee His sight? Birds of air do hush their song.  
When His justice will begin.



Choir: Is there no way to flee? What? No escape for what shall my future be, then?  
Send a Savior.

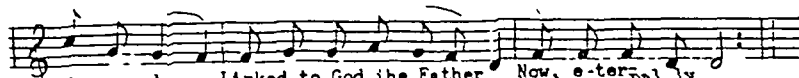
ASSAMESE TUNE  
Jesus' Name



Choir. Jesus' name, name of love, Shall I e'er forget, No! way of truth



Jesus' name; E-ver be it so. 1. With the Holy Spirit, May I  
2. With the Holy Spirit, May I  
3. More than love of Mother, May I  
4. On the cross, this Jesus! May I



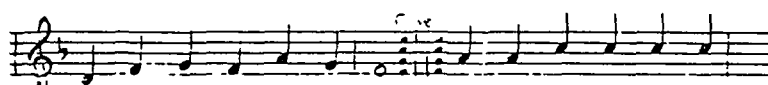
Driven be	linked to God the Father	Now, e-ternal ly
worship Him	With a mind now purified	Worship ever Him
so love Him	Brother loving brother	Worship ever Him
think of Him	Crucified on Calvary	Worship only Him

## ASSAMESE TUNE

Jesus' Name - 'Tis Sweet

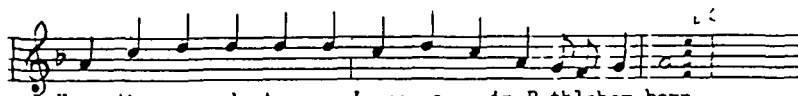


Je - sus; Name 'tis sweet, Living bread we eat,



Eat - ing, satisfied we be

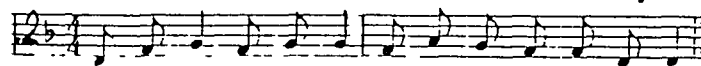
1. Down from heaven's glory
2. On the cross, behold him
3. See Him, God in essence.



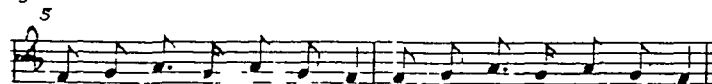
Hear the sacred story. Jesus came in Bethlehem born,  
 Death could never hold Him, Jesus died but came yet alive.  
 Stand before His presence, He, the Way, the Truth and  
 the life.

John  
3:16

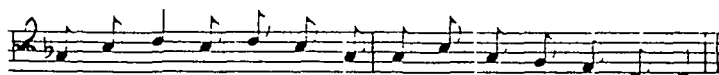
GOD SO LOVED

Assamese  
Melody

1 God so lov'd ev'ry one, That He sent His only Son

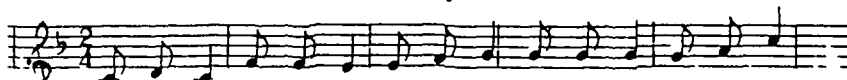


2 Gave Him up for you and me, That from sin we might be free



4 He who this will be-lie..ve Shall eternal life receive.

ASSAMESE TUNE  
Jesus' Name, Lovely Name



1. Je-sus' name, Lovely name, Je sus' name, Treasured name, Jesus' name,
2. Je-sus' name, Gracious name, Jesus' name, Soothing name, Jesus' name.
3. Jesus' name Mighty name, Jesus' name, Conq'ring name, Jesus' name,

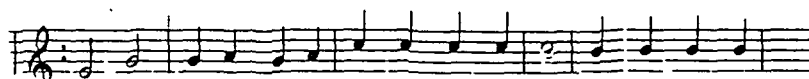


Royal name, Just now, Sing it out (Only-  
Gentle name, Just now, Sing it out (-after last verse)  
Holy name, Just now, Sing it out- Je sus' name!

ASSAMESE TUNE  
Brother, Sing a Song of Praise



1. Brother, sing a song of praise. Sing to Him the Lord of all.
2. Let your heart an anthem raise, Let your soul in worship call.



- 3 In-cense, ritual, formal does He not demand. Heart-devotion
- 4 In-cense, ritual, formal does He not demand. Heart-devotion

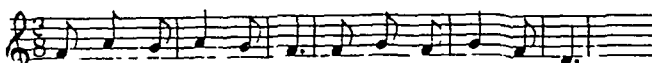


- 5 mer-cy on-ly seeks He from your hand.
- 6 mer-cy on-ly seeks He from your hand.
- 5 Brother, loving
- 6 Brother, loving



brother; Worship, Come to Him and sing His praise  
brother; Worship, Come to Him and sing His praise  
(Now, verse 1 once again)

ASSAMESE TUNE  
Give Heed, Oh, Weary Soul

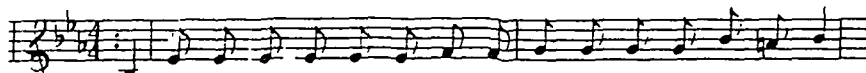


1. Give heed, O, weary soul. Jesus can make you whole
2. In Jesus find your rest, With living water, bless't
3. Your burden, O, how great, Throw on Him all its weight
4. Do leave the ways of sin, Today, come, enter in.

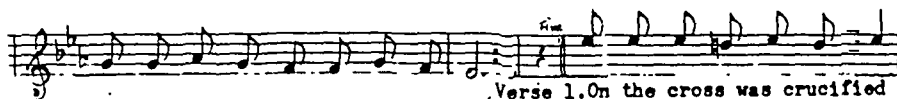


Rest for your soul from Him receive.  
Drink of this well, In Him believe.  
His yoke is easy, burden, light.  
His path will make the pathway bright.

ASSAMESE TUNE  
O Jesus Calls in Love



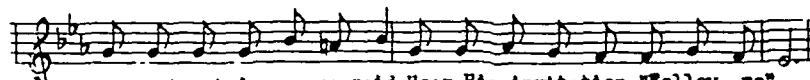
Cho. Oh, Jesus calls in love, Oh hear Him. Yes, He calls to you and me.



Hear His invitation, "Follow me". (2) Verse 1. On the cross was crucified  
2. You who suffer grief of heart



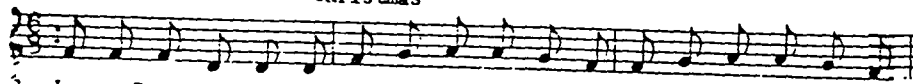
For my sins and yours He died. In a rock-cut grave was laid  
You who would a new life start. Stay no longer in your grief



Rose again, sin's ransom paid. Hear His invitation "Follow me".  
Take His offer of relief Hear His invitation "Follow me".

(Sing in this order: Cho. Verse. Cho. Verse. Cho.)

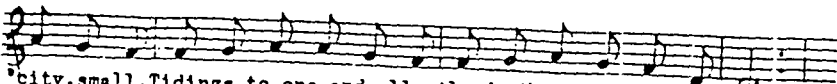
ASSAMESE TUNE  
Christmas



1. Je sus Im-man - u - el, "God with us" let it spell. For me on earth did dwell
2. Shepherds before Him bow, Angels adore Him now. Let us too praise avow



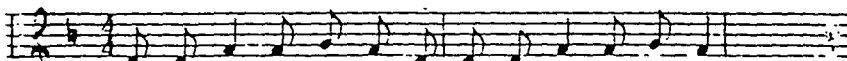
- Prophets did this foretell - Oh! Born in a manger small. Bethlehem  
Worship Him with me, Thou - Oh! Wise men observe the sight, Travelling.



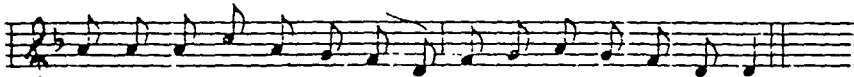
- city, small. Tidings to one and all. Aloud the message call - Oh!  
day and night, Led by a star so bright. With their gifts do alight - Oh!

ASSAMESE TUNE

Victory Over Sin



1. Vic-to-ry o-ver sin. O-ver death you did win.
2. On the cross you did die, In the grave you did lie.
3. You yourself learned devotion; Lead us safe thru Life's Ocean
4. Word of Truth, we must fear it; Worship God in the Spirit



All the world's included in Oh the matchless Love of God  
You did rise, ascend on high, Oh the matchless Love of God  
Feed us in the land of Goshen; Oh the matchless Love of God  
God is love; let all hear it, Oh the matchless Love of God.

North Bank Kachari (Boro) Tune  
GOD THE CREATOR



World's Creator God is He; World's Sustainer,  
God is He

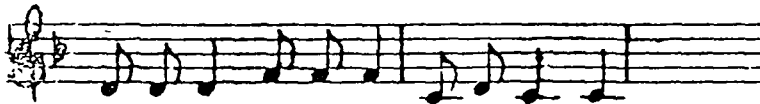


Love is He; Just is He; God, Creator the  
Almighty!

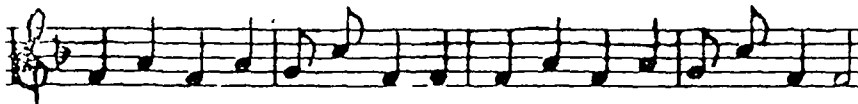
Chorus



All our heart, giving Him, Kneeling down,  
lauding Him.



Folded hands, thanking Him, Come, adore Him



God, Creator, the Almighty!  
God, Creator, the Almighty!

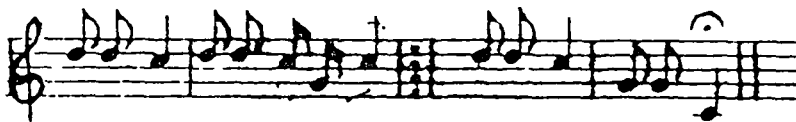
## North Bank Daphla Hills

## DAPHLA TUNE - "WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW"



In this transient world,  
Well, what do you know!  
All because of sin, Well, what do you know!  
On the cross He died, Well, what do you know!  
Only Jesus Christ, Well, what do you know!

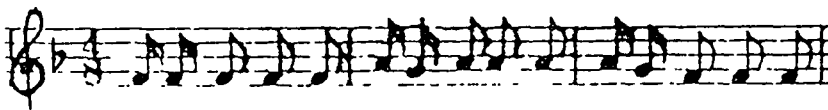
## CHORUS (only after 4th line)



Only Christ, Jesus Christ (2)  
Loves us all, you and me... (2)  
Ev'ry one, you and me!

## Assam Plains

## SOWRA TUNE



He is coming soon, Yes coming soon,  
He is coming soon,



Yes-s coming soon, Coming brother o' mine.



## HINDI TUNE

Happy Happy Be Your Heart - Kusi Kusi...Manow



Happy Happy be your heart, Happy Happy be your heart (2)  
 Ku-si Ku-si..... ma-now Ku-si Ku-si..... ma-now (2)

Fine.



Tell it out to one and a-ll In Christ there's victory! (2)  
 Bo-lo bo - lo Ma-seeh ha-i Ki Jai... Jai... Jai !



(Came from highest glory, Ever living story  
 Dying, yet ascending, Wonder never ending)

Mer-reh-liyah ah-yah Mer-reh-liyah jiyah (2)



I am His; He's mi..ne, Oh praise His wondrous name (2)  
 Mer-reh-liyah Je-su..neh, Doo--ook oo-ta-yah (2)

D.C.

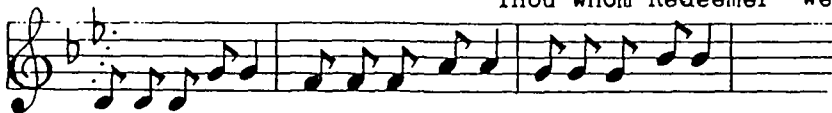


Are you His as well? Saved from death and hell?  
 My - Ma-seeh ka hoon. Hum Ma-seeh-keh hai

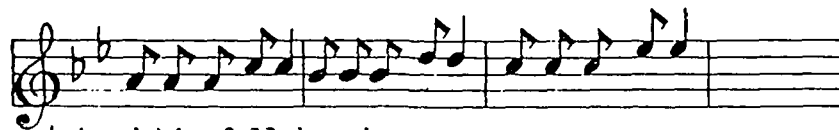
MERCIFUL LORD JESUS  
(Hindi Tune)



1. Jesus Christ, Thou Lord of Compassion,  
Thou the Creator of all.  
2. Sing we now our Hallelujah. Thou whom 'Redeemer' we call!  
8. Jesus Christ, Thou Lord of Compassion,  
Thou whom 'Redeemer' we call!



- 3 Glory forsaking, Manger-birth taking,  
grace-fully growing,



- 4 hardship full knowing,  
world-wide sin bearing,  
own life not sparing



- 5 All this Thou suffered for me!  
Loving Savior



- 6 All this Thou suffered for me



- 7 All this Thou suffered for me...  
All this Thou suffered for me.

## Appendix No - J

## Munda songs

## মুণ্ডা গীত

## অ চ্চিমিন ঢুলাড়

- ১। অ চ্চিমিন  
চুগাড় তাইং ইচু নতুম। (২)  
গেৰা তানক মুকুতিক  
নামেয়া ইচু নতুম।
- ২। নেবে বান জাতি পাতি  
নেবে বানচ্ছার চাতি চিনা জমপে (২)
- ৩। ঈশোৱাৰা আয়া দাসী এশাম তানা  
হেডেম বাচি চ্চিনী জমপে। (২)

## শুভবর্তী প্রচাৰ

- হায়বে হায়বে যীযু তাইং ভুলাৱা কানাম  
ডিচুম থালা ডুৱাড়মে মেমলে  
উডুমেম।  
অতঙিমে প্ৰাভু যীচুকে জানাম চুকুম  
নামেয়া।
- ১। নেবে আম্ দ' হডমৰা চুকু নামেনাং  
নিদাচিঙ্গিম উডুতানাম  
ঠডেম অতে দিচুম জানাৰ চুকুবালৱা
  - ২। ঈচুৱাৱাৰা এনেম খুবজি মাৰাং যেনা  
এনা নাতিম চু চাবিমে নামেয়াম চিবমাৰেণ  
জবং জিডাং বাচিকা।
  - ৩। প্ৰাভু যীচু ইদিমেয়াই চেটেব মেয়াই  
জিনিদ আপুৱা কয়বেং নামেয়াম কয়বেং  
জবং জিডান বাচিকা।

## ঈশ্বৰৰ প্ৰেম আৰু দয়া

- ১। চিবমা দিচুম চ্চিমিন চাঙ্গিন জিনিংগা  
জেতাই কাক উদুব চুঙুল চেবায়্যা (২)
- ২। চিবমা দিচুম চ্চিমিন মাৰং আচাৰা (২)  
চবেন চ্চিবু ছেন ছকাব বিতাৰ (২)
- ৩। চিবমা দিচুম চ্চিমিন ছুকু বাছিকান  
বেংঙ্গ মাৰাং বানৱা চিচ জেতায়  
ইয়াম গনয় বানৱা চিচ জেতায় (২)
- ৪। চিবমা দিচুম নেবেয়াতে দানাংকান  
নে দিচুম কৃণ্ডাসে হলাং নেলৱা  
নেবে—আতে বিদান হলাং নামৱা (২)
- ৫। চিবমা দিচুম মাচীহ তাবুই ছেনা কান  
নেলে হৰা তানায় জানাৰ আবুনাং  
এলায় মেনে তানা জানাৰ ৰুডোন নাং (২)
- ৬। চিবমা দিচুম মাচীহ তাবুই বাজাকান  
চুকু দুবাং চুড়া তান জানাৰনাং  
জবং জিবাং বান গেবাং জীউবে (২)

## Sadana songs

## চাদনা গীত

## অপব্যয় পুত্র

উইঠ ছাইল যাব হিয়া নাই বাহৰ  
বাপ ঘৰে ছাইল যাব (২)

- ১। বাপ মৰ ঘাৰে সনা কেৰ কেঁওঁবা  
বাহাৰ ভিতাৰ ঘাৰ দুৰা (২)
- ২। নাখে মৰ দাচা নাখে মৰ বাছা  
চোৰাঁইৰ লেখে মৰ খানা  
ডুৰে গাণ্ডুৰে মৰ বাছা (২)
- ৩। বাপ মৰ আগে গুনি গুন কাহাঁব  
বেটা লেখে না—দেখবে  
ধাঙ্গাৰ লেখে বাইখ লেবে (২)

## নিমন্ত্ৰণ

- ১। জানাস যুগ লাগীন  
ইস্ককে ধাবাল.....(২)  
প্ৰাভুহে বাইজ গুৰু বাইনকে জি উঠায়া...  
মাশিহে ধাবামগুৰু বাইনকে জি উঠায়া...
- ২। আশান্ত জীৱান পায়েক লাগীন  
ইস্ককে ধাবাল.....(২)
- ৩। স্বাবাগ সুখ পায়েক লাগীন  
ইস্ককে ধাবাল.....(২)

## Bodo Songs

## বড়ো গীত

## যীচুৱা নাৰ্জাৰ হাঁয়া

- ১। বিদা ফংবাই নাগাবজুইদো গাও গাওনী দায়খো (২)  
অল্লা অনথা যীচুৱা নাগাবগীন পাপখো (২)  
যীচুৱালো ফাফীখো বোখাংগ্ৰা (২)  
ঈশ্বৰাচান হৰাওবো নোজোৰ হোগ্ৰা (২)
- ২। চাছে বেংগ্ৰা ঈশ্বৰ দং জাংনি গেজেৰাও, (২)  
গোচা ফোখাইনি জাং বেংগ্ৰা ঈশ্বৰখোনো (২)
- ৩। গোচোৱাও দোন যীবুনাই অননাই জানিখো (২)  
বিফা ফিছা গোঠাৰ জীউৱা নেনোন নোখো (২)

## যীচুৱা ফাইনায়

- আয়ো আইফোৰ আয়ো আইফোৰ  
চানজা বেলানিয়াও প্ৰভু যীচুৱা দূত লানাতৈন।  
মঙলী ফৰখো চফাই চিগোন (২)
- ১। আয়ো আইফোৰ আয়ো আইফোৰ।  
চানজা বেলানিয়াও মঙলী ফোৰখো  
জমা খামনাতৈন বিচাৰ লাগোন। (২)
  - ২। পালক প্ৰচাবখো বাইনায় (২)  
আয়ো আইফোৰ আয়ো আইফোৰ  
ফাইনাতৈনসময়াও বিমা বিফায়া  
ৰাওবো বাচাইনি হানাই নঙা = বাহাই  
হানাই নঙা = (২)

## ঈশ্বৰণি গেদেতচিন থোনাই

- ১। বইখোবো দাখা বি বইখো খাংগ্ৰা বি  
বইখোবো অনথা বি বোলোখা ঈশ্বৰ বি  
গোচা হোচোনাতৈন আঠু শ্ৰুং খবাইদো  
আখাই খব্জব্ৰনাতৈন খুলুমদো  
বৈ দাখা ঈশ্বৰখোনো।
- ২। গাট্টেনো গোছাজাং গাট্টেনো বোলোজাং  
গাট্টেনো জীউজাংনো ঈশ্বৰখো লুখুমদো
- ৩। গামিনি মাঞ্জিখো গাতখো  
বাদি অনদো  
হেফাজাপ হোফুইদো জব্ৰা  
জঠা ফোৰখো।

## Chaora songs

## চাঁওঁৰা গীত

## নিমন্ত্ৰণ

যাবা ডং যাবা লা নিবুয়াং লাক্সাজি  
যাবা ডং যাবা লা নিবুয়াং তনানজি

- ১। যীচুনা আনুপলুপ লিঙান য়িৰাইবা  
যীচুনা আপুঞম লিঙান য়িৰাইবা
- ২। যীচুনা আনিনা আনমেং মানান  
যীচুনা আনিনা গানাব্ ডিল্ তুং মাৰান

## ডিমাড্ ডং

- ১। ডিমাড্ ডং ডিমাড্ ডং বোয়াং  
ডেনাবা ডেনাবা তনান  
যীচুন আলোপাড্ লেডীন  
যীচুন আকাপা লেডীন  
গানাই ব্লা কুলাম যি। (২)
- ২। কডি কডি আগি:দং লা  
কতা কতা আগি:দং লা  
বানাব বাব ই গডান লা  
আনাববু ই গডান লা  
আয়েবব্লা কুলাম যি। (২)
- ৩। কৰাং পাবচামান বাংতে  
তাকব্ব বাতামান ডাইতে  
ডাবডুম তাবগে য়েব তাইলা  
বানতং ডাবগে য়েব তাইলা  
যীচুন লা ই বাজান। (২)
- ৪। চেলেতেন ওৱান আয়েবতে  
চডামলেন ওৱান গামতে  
গানলে মানাং গিতাতে  
বোতেন ডঅংবেন বাবতে  
য়েৰাইবা লা কুলাম যি। (২)

## আবয়াব কেন

- আ বাংচা আমিয়াগ  
আডাআ আমডাংবা  
বিগাডা ইজ্জা  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান।
- ১। ইতেন পিণ্টুবেন তাবতে ?  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান  
ইতেন আমবেন আৰমেংতে ?  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান।
  - ২। ইতেন আবাংচাতাবেন ?  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান  
ইতেন পুৰবডান ডাকুতাবেন ?  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান।
  - ৩। ইতেন যাংগাবডা মাৰিয়তাবেন ?  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান  
ইতেন বেএংবেন ডাকুতাবেন ?  
যীচুন পুাং আমিঞামান।

## Mikir songs

## মিকিৰ গীত

## খ্ৰীষ্টান জীৱন

- ১। পেপ্লাংথা হেমফো থেং পি আকসে  
লাংকুং আথেংপি আচন পেচাম—এ  
আংকুবকেছাক লাপেন আংজক কেমি  
চেপ্লাংল দ'পাব নিংকাংচাম আথে  
থান পালামচু থানেং নিংকাতাং আনলে  
কাহিংনৌ পেন উন আন নেংফান গাঁচে-অ  
আবনাম আনিং আথাকলে নেংপোদৌ।  
দুনলং নাংজিনে হা আবনাম আংন
- ২। নেংজক্ নাংজিলা কেচুং আংবংপেন  
দৌবাপ ৰেবজি খ্ৰীষ্টব আহাবচ্ছি পেন  
আবনাম-এ আথেংপি আংজক মেচেন  
পিৰথে ৰজি ক্ৰেমক্ৰে আথেংপি
- ৩। কাইকে আস্থত তা আৰনি  
কেমেলং।  
বেছৌ আফুটুপ নে ফান পাচে কুবলং  
খ্ৰীষ্ট পেনচি হাদাক দৌবাপ ৰেবলং  
বেংমে পাব হাদাক চিনিং আংচং
- ৪। কেচুং কেবয় কাংচ্ছিবনাংইট পুকে  
আৰে হাদাক থাং তাচ্ছিমিন নাং নে  
চেব আকুং কেবত আৰকি কাজুমে  
আংদি কেকান পেন নিং আৰং  
জুটয়ে।

## Dafala songs

## দফলা গীত

## যীচুৰ আৰ্চ্যা প্ৰেম

- ১। ঙুলুব মেলিচি  
ফ্ৰিচিৰ ফ্ৰিতলা (২)
- ২। ঙ্গশুব ব আবদে  
মিব—ক ঙাম  
জিপব পানামে (২)
- ৩। ঙ্ৰেহাব দ্বাবদবে  
যীচু ব থ্ৰীষ্টদে (২)
- ৪। ঙুলুব মেলিগে  
ফ্ৰিচিৰ ফ্ৰিকুবে  
চিনিব কোনেব (২)
- ৫। দফ্ৰি ব আউবে  
এনি ব কোনে ব (২)
- ৬। ঙুলুব মেলিচি  
হেম্পব আলেবে  
দদুব কোনেব (২)
- ৭। লকতা হাতালিন  
ঙুলুব মেলিচি মেগাব—  
এগলাজু (২)

## নিমন্ত্ৰণ

- ১। ঙকে বুগে আজিন ঙাল....,  
ন ফ্ৰিচি ফ্ৰিকবে....,  
যীচু—বদে থ্ৰীষ্টদে....,  
চিনি বুগে কোনেব  
হ—বুগে মেলালা....,  
ঙ্গশুব বুগে আবদে  
ঙুল বুগে মিলিঙাম  
আয়া বুগে দেনেকৈ।
- ২। ঙকে বুগে আজিন ঙাল....,  
ঙ্গশুব বুগে দকবে....,  
উকোৰ ঙাল তকোকা....,  
উয়ো বুগে দ-কুবে  
এমা বুগে ব-বকা  
ঙ্গশুব ব দে আবদে  
নাম ঙাল গডকে  
উকোৰ বুগে তকোকা।
- ৩। ঙুল বুগে যীচুদে....,  
আজিন বুগে মিলিঙাম,  
আয়া বুগে মাদনে  
হ-বুগে গাবেদে....,  
আজিনা যীচু নাম আয়াদ....,  
যীচু ঙাম আয়াদ।



*Apatani songs*

## আপাটানি গীত

### নিমন্ত্রণ

- ১। আত আত যীচুকা আগিনহ (২)  
ইজকু ইজকু যীচুকা আগিনহ (২)  
চিল আকদা চিল আকদা (২)  
আয়াব তালিওকে আয়াব তালিওকে (২)
- ২। কুজুল কুজুল যীচুকা আগিনহ (২)  
আগা আত আগা আত (২)  
যীচুকা আগিনহ যীচুকা আগিনহ (২)  
নোনোমি আয়াদ নোনোমি আয়াদ (২)
- ৩। মুলাংজা আকোম্ত মুলাংজা আকোম্ত (২)  
যীচুকা আগিনহ যীচুকা আগিনহ (২)  
হল আকদা হল আকদা (২)  
আয়াব তালিওকে আয়াব তালিওকে (২)
- ৪। কুজুকল কুজুকল যীচুকা আগিন্ (২)  
চিল চিল যীচুকা আগিনহ (২)  
হজা হেস্ত হজা হেস্ত (২)

Miri songs

## মিৰি গীত

ঈশ্বৰমে যীচুক আমিন্লক্ কুমলাই

মিছিং

কাজে গিবই ঈশ্বৰকে লেদুল',  
যীচু ইম্না, যীচু ইম্না ;  
কাজে...কোম্লাবই।

- ১। বিদেচি টানিলক গ্যামেন্ লালা,  
ঙলুক...আচিন্ চ';  
ঙ লুবিদোং ঙলুকে মিছিংছেগ,  
আপিঙে...টাত্তকা।
- ২। যীচুকে লেদুল' ঙলো গিবই,  
বিক্কে...ধবম্দো;  
অক্কম্ ইনাইন আজনেম কুম্না.  
বিক্কে আলৈদক।
- ৩। কাজে গিলাজে বিক্কে আমিন্লক্,  
আজন...ওকুম্ক';  
আজ্জন ওকুম্দ'; গিকুম চুগেলা,  
বিক্কে দইংদেম কিমান্ নাবই।

## Nepali songs

## নেপালী গীত

## ২৭৬ গাওঁো য়়েগুজীকো

গাওঁো য়়েগুজীকো জয় গাঁন  
গাওঁো য়়েগুজীকো শুভ নাম।

- ১। যৰুশলেম শহৰকো বৈতলহম গাঁৱৈয়া  
আজ জনু বালক জমকো য়়েগু নাম  
শান্তিকা বাজা, তিমীলাই প্রণাম। গাওঁো...
- ২। খ্ৰীষ্ট য়়েগু আঁৱতাৰ ভয়—ঘৃণা হেলা টাঢ়ী ভয়ো  
প্ৰেম জনুয়া প্ৰেম বড়খো প্ৰেম বঢ়ুদৈ গো  
প্ৰেসকা বাজা, তিমীলাই প্রণাম। গাওঁো...
- ৩। ইমানুএললে জন্ম লিয়ে, হাম্মো ভব ভো উজ্জ্যালো  
পাপকো বিনাশ জয়ো, সত্যনে জিত্যো  
সত্যকা বাজা, তিমীলাই প্রণাম। গাওঁো

## ২৭৭ পৰমেশ্বৰ পিতাকো

পৰমেশ্বৰ পিতাকো স্তুতি গাউঁ হাম্মীলাই বচাউনে উতৈ ছন্  
সৰৈ পাপীলাই গৰ্ছন্ ক্ষমা, সৰৈ বোগীলাই গৰ্ছন্ চক্ষা।

- ১। ধন্যবাদ দিই ওনকা আসলমা, আনন্দ ভই আউ  
ওনকা শবণমা  
সঙ্গীত গাওঁুদৈ খুশীলে, মুক্তিকো পহবামা জয় জয় গবোঁ।
- ২। উতৈ ছন্ হাম্মা পৰম পিতা, হাম্মীলাই চিঠাওঁুছন্ সৰ্ব সদা  
কালো বাদলকো পর্দা জস্তো, পাপলাই হটাইদিঙ্কন্ সদা।

## Appendix No - K

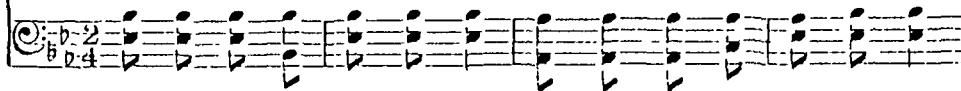
## Jesus Loves Me

Anna B. Warner, 1820-1915

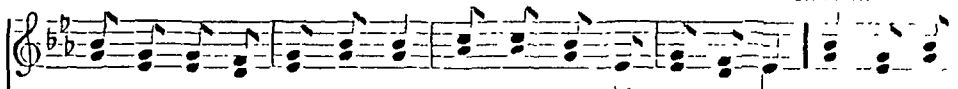
William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868



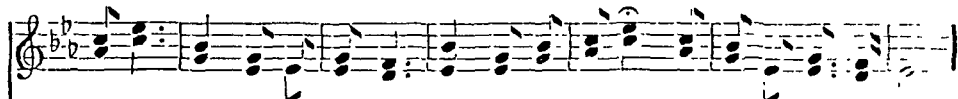
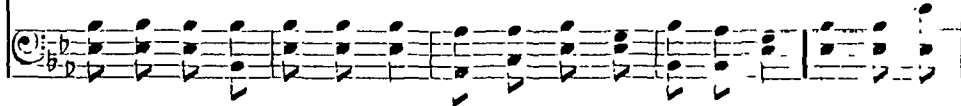
1. Je - sus loves me! this I know, For the Bi - ble tells me so;  
 2. Je - sus loves me! He who died, Heav-en's gate to o - pen wide;  
 3. Je - sus loves me! loves me still, Though I'm ver - y weak and ill;  
 4. Je - sus loves me! He will stay Close be - side me all the way;



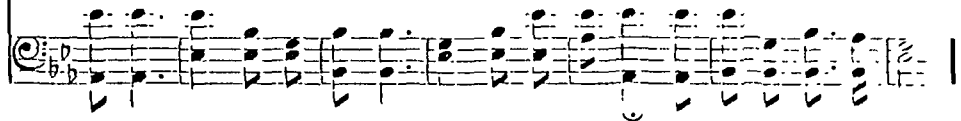
## REFRAIN



Lit - tle ones to Him be - long; They are weak, but He is strong.  
 He will wash a - way my sin, Let His lit - tle child come in. Yes, Je - sus  
 From His shining throne on high, Comes to watch me where I lie. Yes, Je - sus  
 If I love Him, when I die He will take me home on high



loves me, Yes, Je - sus loves me, Yes, Je - sus loves me--The Bi - ble tells me so.



**Note :** Translation of this song 'Jesus Loves Me' in Assamese by Asamiya Sahitya Committee and Rev. Miles Bronson is printed on the next page.

## শিশুবিলাকৰ গীত

Jesus Loves me.  
(E. Flat-sol) Bradbury.

- ১। সৰু আছোঁ অতিশয়,  
হম মই কোমল দয়াময় ;  
খঙাল নহম কোনো কাল,  
খং নেদেখে কেৱে ভাল ।
- দোহাৰ—যীচুৱে মোক ভাল পায়,  
যীচুৱে মোক ভাল পায়,  
যীচুৱে মোক ভাল পায়,  
শাস্ত্ৰে এই কথা কয় ।
- ২। মই শিক্ষকক কবিম প্ৰেম,  
মিছলীয়াৰ লগ নলম ;  
দিনৰ দিনটো নম্ৰ ভাৱ  
বাখি কবিম যীচুৰ স্তৱ ।
- ৩। কবিম সন্ত লোকক মান,  
ছুষ্ট লোকক নিদিম থান ।  
যীচুৰ নম্ৰ শিষ্য হম,  
তেওঁৰ নাম লোকৰ আগত কম ।

মাইল্‌চ, ব্ৰন্‌চন্

Jesus Loves me  
( E . Flat-sol) Bradbury.

( সুৰ—সৰু আছোঁ অতিশয় )

- ১। যীচুৱে ভাল পায় জাহোঁ,  
কাৰণ বাইবেল তাক কয় ;  
শিশু সৰুৰ তেওঁৰেই হয় ;  
নলৱান তেওঁ, মই দুৰ্ভল ।
- দোহাৰ—যীচুৱে মোক ভাল পায় ;  
হয়, তেওঁ মোক ভাল পায় ;  
যীচুৱে মোক ভাল পায়,  
বাইবেলে তাকে কয় ।
- ২। যীচু মৰি মোৰ কাৰণ  
মেলি দিলে স্বৰ্গৰ দ্বাৰ,  
যি খুচাই মোৰ পাপৰ মল,  
কবিলে গুচি, নিৰ্মল ।
- ৩। তেওঁ থাকিব মোৰ কাষে  
জীৱনৰ শেষলৈকে ;  
যদি তেওঁক কৰোঁ মই প্ৰেম  
শেষে লভিম স্বৰ্গধাম ।

অননীয়া সাহিত্য কৰ্মিণী

## Children of the Heavenly King

PLEYEL'S HYMN

John Cennick, 1718-1755

Ignaz J. Pleyel, 1757-1831

1. Chil-dren of the heav-en-ly King, As we jour-ney let us sing;  
 2. We are trav-el-ing home to God, In the way our fa-thers trod;  
 3. O ye ban-ish-ed seed, be glad; Christ our Ad-vo-cate is made;  
 4. Fear not, breth-er-en, joy-ful stand On the bor-ders of our land;  
 5. Lord, o-be-dient-ly we'll go, Glad-ly leav-ing all be-low:

Sing our Sav-iour's wor-thy praise, Glo-rious in His works and ways.  
 They are hap-py now, and we Soon their hap-pi-ness shall see.  
 Us to save our flesh as-sumes, Broth-er to our souls be-comes  
 Je-sus Christ, our Fa-ther's Son, Bids us un-dis-mayed go on.  
 On-ly Thou our Lead-er be, And we still will fol-low Thee. A-MEN.

২৪৩

### Children of the Heavenly King

John Cennick ( G-mi ) Pleyel's Hymn. ( Tune No. 2 )

- ১। স্বর্গীয় বজ্রাব হে সন্তান, যাত্রাত গোবা মধু পান  
 প্রভু ত্রাণকর্তা তোমার, স্তুতি কবা যোগ্য তেঁর।
- ২। আমি যাবঁ স্বর্গধামে খোজত সাপ্ন সফল্য,  
 তেওঁলোক এতিবা সুখী, আগিও ত্যব হমগৈ ভামী :
- ৩। নক জাক আমি, জয় হম, খ্রীষ্টব ওচবত বিজ্ঞান ;  
 পুৰস্কাৰ স্বর্গরাজ্য, তাড যুগ্ত আসন নিখল।
- ৪। খোজত খিৰহৈ থাকা ভাই, তোমাব লক্ষ্য সুখৰ ঠাই :  
 যীচু, পিতৃৰ পুত্র হয়, যাত্রা কবা নিঃসংশয়।
- ৫। তেতিয়া সব ছুখৰ শেষ কবি প্রভু, শক্তিমান,  
 বাখিব পবম কনান য'ত-কৰিবা অমৃত পান।

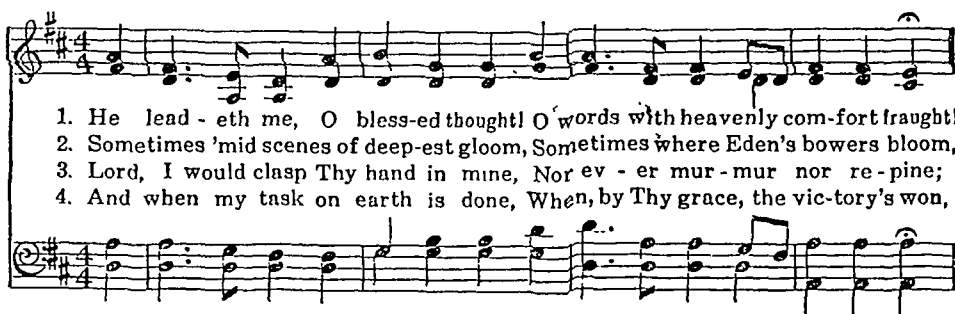
নিধি লেবি ফাব্ৰেন

## THE CHRISTIAN WAY OF LIFE

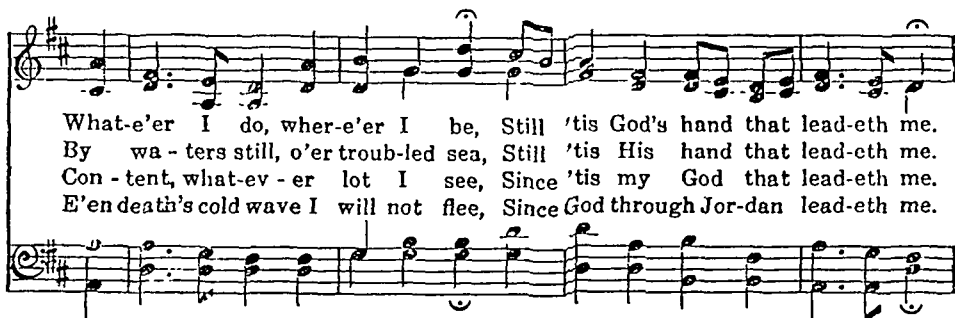
## He Leadeth Me

Joseph H. Gilmore, 1834-1918

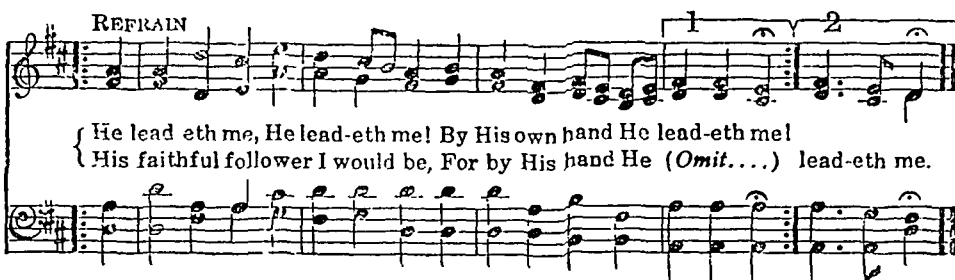
William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868



1. He lead - eth me, O bless-ed thought! O words with heavenly com-fort fraught!  
 2. Sometimes 'mid scenes of deep-est gloom, Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,  
 3. Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine, Nor ev - er mur - mur nor re - pine;  
 4. And when my task on earth is done, When, by Thy grace, the vic-tory's won,



What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be, Still 'tis God's hand that lead-eth me.  
 By wa - ters still, o'er troub-led sea, Still 'tis His hand that lead-eth me.  
 Con - tent, what-ev - er lot I see, Since 'tis my God that lead-eth me.  
 E'en death's cold wave I will not flee, Since God through Jor-dan lead-eth me.



REFRAIN

{ He lead eth me, He lead-eth me! By His own hand He lead-eth me!  
 { His faithful follower I would be, For by His hand He (*Omit. . .*) lead-eth me.

Note : Translation of this song 'He Leadeth Me' in Assamese by Rev. Miles Bronson is printed on the next page.

## He Leadeth Me.

J. H. Gilmore (D-sol) Wm. B. Bradbury. S.S. 542

- ১। “তেওঁ মোক চলায়,” বাইবেলে কয়,  
অহ, কেনে আনন্দৰ বিষয় !  
বি যি কৰোঁ. বা থাকোঁ য’ত,  
ঈশ্বৰৰ হাতে চলায় ত’ত ।

দোহাৰ — তেওঁ মোক চমায়, তেওঁ মোক চলায়,  
নিজ হাতে তেৱেঁই মোক চলায় ;  
দিনাসী সেৱক হম সদায়,  
কাৰণ তেওঁৰ হাতে মোক চলায় ।

- ২। গলেও ধোৰ দুখ-সমুদ্ৰে গই  
বা এদেন উত্থান সুখালয়,  
স্থিৰ জল বা চৌৰ আফালনত  
নিৰ্ভয়ে থাকোঁ তেওঁৰ হাতত ।
- ৩। হে প্ৰভু, তোমাৰ হাত ধৰি,  
সন্তুষ্ট মনে যাওঁ চলি ;  
যি ভাগ নপৰক, গাম সদায়,  
ঈশ্বৰে যাত্ৰাত মোক চলায় ।
- ৪। পৰিলে ওৰ আয়ুসৰ কাল,  
কৰিব পাৰ প্ৰভু দয়াণ ;  
যৰ্দ্দনৰ চৌত ব্যাকুল নহওঁ,  
তাতো ঈশ্বৰে মোক চলায় ।

থাইফ্ৰ, ব্ৰনচন



## O Happy Day

Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

Edward F. Rimbault, 1816-1876

1. O hap - py day that fixed my choice On Thee, my Sav - iour and my God!  
 2. O hap - py bond, that seals my vows To Him who mer - its all my love!  
 3. 'Tis done: the great trans - ac - tion's done; I am my Lord's, and He is mine;  
 4. Now rest, my long - di - vid - ed heart; Fixed on this bliss - ful cen - ter, rest;

Well may this glow - ing heart re - joice, And tell its rap - tures all a - broad.  
 Let cheer - ful an - thems fill His house, While to that sa - cred shrine I move.  
 He drew me, and I fol - lowed on, Charmed to con - fess the voice di - vine.  
 Nor ev - er from my Lord de - part, With Him of ev - 'ry good pos - sessed.

§ REFRAIN FINE  
 Hap - py day, hap - py day, When Je - sus washed my sins a - way!

D. S.  
 He taught me how to watch and pray, And live re - joic - ing ev - 'ry day;

Alternate tune without Refrain: HAMBURG, No. 177

Note : The translation of this song 'O Happy Day' in Assamese by Rev. Miles Bronson is printed on the next page.

O Happy Day that fixed My Choice.  
P. Doddridge. (G-sol) Happy Day. S. S. 866

- ১। যি দিনা মই লৰোঁ আশ্ৰয়  
মোৰ ত্ৰিয় যীচু ত্ৰাপকৰ্ত্তাব ;  
জহু, কেনে আনন্দৰ সময় !  
ভাক গাই বৰ্ণাম গোটেই সংসাৰ ।

দোহাব—খণ্ড দিন, ধন্য দিন,  
তেওঁ ধুই গুচায় মোৰ পাপ অসীম ।  
পব দি প্ৰাৰ্থিনলৈ শিকায় ;  
তাতে আনি-দত হুওঁ সদায়,  
ধন্য দিন, ধন্য দিন,  
তেওঁ ধুই গুচায় মোৰ পাপ অসীম ।

- ২। হুল, সিদ্ধ হলে, এই প্ৰধান কাৰ্য্য,  
গীচ মোৰ প্ৰেভ, মই তেওঁৰ দাস ;  
তেওঁৰ নিমগ্ন কেনে আশ্চৰ্য্য !  
আনন্দে বাণিম তেওঁতেই আশ ।

- ৩। ওনা, মোৰ ভ্ৰমি ফুৰা মন,  
এই প্ৰথম ভাগ নেবিবা আৰ ;  
তেওঁ প্ৰেম-সংঘাৰ, পতিত-পাৱন,  
স্বৰ্গীয় সুখ সন্দয়ে মোৰ ।

- ৪। কৰিলোঁ যি দৃঢ়াঙ্গীকাৰ,  
“অলৰ হৈ থাওক প্ৰভুৰ ওচৰ ;  
জওক জীৱন-কালত এয়ে সাৰ,  
মোৰ মৃত্যুৰ শয়্যাবো ওপৰ ।

মাইলচ্, প্ৰমচন

## THE GOSPEL

224

## Arise, My Soul, Arise!

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

Source Unknown  
Har. by Daniel B. Towner, 1850-1919

1. A - rise, my soul, a - rise! Shake off thy guilt - y fears;  
2. He ev - er lives a - bove, For me to in - ter - cede;  
3. Five bleed - ing wounds He bears, Re - ceived on Cal - va - ry;  
4. The Fa - ther hears Him pray, His dear a - noint - ed One;  
5. My God is rec - on - ciled, His par - doning voice I hear;

The bleed - ing Sac - ri - fice In my be - half ap - pears.  
His all - re - deem - ing love, His pre - cious blood to plead;  
They pour ef - fec - tual prayers, They strong - ly plead for me;  
He can - not turn a - way The pres - ence of His Son:  
He owns me for His child, I can no long - er fear:

Be - fore the throne my Sure - ty stands; My name is writ - ten  
His blood a - toned for all our race, And sprin - kles now the  
"For - give him, O for - give," they cry, "Nor let that ran - somed  
His Spir - it an - swers to the blood, And tells me I am  
With con - fi - dence I now draw nigh, And "Fa - ther, Ab - ba,

on His hands, My name is writ - ten on His hands.  
throne of grace, And sprin - kles now the throne of grace.  
sin - ner die! Nor let that ran - somed sin - ner die!"  
born of God, And tells me I am born of God.  
Fa - ther!" cry, And "Fa - ther, Ab - ba, Fa - ther" cry. A - MEN.

Note : Translation of this song 'Arise, My Soul, Arise !' in Assamese by Rev. Nathan Brown is printed on the next page.

Arise, My Soul, Arise.  
Charles Wesley. (A Flat-doh) Lenox

- ১। উঠা, হে মন, উঠা, দূৰ কৰা পাপ-সংগয় ;  
যীচু-বলি চোৱা, তেওঁৰ তেজ মোৰ কাৰণ বয় ,  
মোৰ জাৰ্মিন হৈ তেওঁ স্বৰ্গে গল, ( ২ )  
মোৰ নাম তেওঁৰ হাতত লিখা হ'ল ।
- ২। তেওঁ যি পাঁচোটা ঘা পাইছিল গলগথা খান  
নিবেদে প্ৰাৰ্থনা সেই সকল মোৰ নিদান,  
ৰোলে সদায়, “কমা কবক, (২)  
এই পানী জন- নিস্তাৰ হওক ।”
- ৩। পুত্ৰৰ নিবেদনত পিতৃয়ে সন্তোষ পাই,  
নকমে সিবাৰণ, তেওঁৰ প্ৰিয় জনাক চাই ;  
পো বুলি মোক বহো লব, ( ২ )  
তেজ আৰু আৰু, সান্না হয় ।
- ৪। গুৰুৱা তেওঁৰ কুৰাৰ মাত, ঈশ্বৰ সহিত মোৰ মিল  
লৈছে মোক তেওঁ পোলাত, সকলো ভয় গুচিল,  
সাহ পাই তেওঁৰ কৰি দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস, ( ২ )  
“হে আৰু, পিতৃ” বোলোঁ দাস ।

নেথন ব্ৰাউন

## Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

ST. AGNES

John B. Dykes, 1823-1876

1. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it, heaven-ly Dove, With all Thy quick-ening powers;  
 2. In vain we tune our for - mal songs, In vain we strive to rise;  
 3. Dear Lord, and shall we ev - er live At this poor dy - ing rate?  
 4. Come, Ho - ly Spir - it, heaven-ly Dove, With all Thy quick - ening powers;

Kin - dle a flame of sa - cred love In these cold hearts of ours.  
 Ho - san - nas lan - guish on our tongues, And our de - vo - tion dies.  
 Our love so faint, so cold to Thee, And Thine to us so great!  
 Come, shed a - broad a Sav - iour's love, And that shall kin - dle ours. A - MEN.

This tune in higher key, No. 50. Alternate tune: AZMON, No. 49

### Come Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove.

Isaac Watts (A-sol) Melody. SS 188.

- ১। পবিত্র আত্মা, দূত কপৌ, লোৱাহি আমাত বাস,  
এই টেঁচা মনত প্ৰভুব প্ৰেম দি জনোৱা উৎসাহ।
- ২। বগাইছোঁ সংসাব-মায়াৰ জাল, বৃথাতে লগাই মন;  
অনন্ত পবম মুখলৈ নুঠে আমাব চিন্তন।
- ৩। অনৰ্থক আমাব মুখৰ গীত, উন্নতিৰ শ্ৰম বিফল,  
জয়ধ্বনি মুখত ক্ৰান্ত হৈ যায়, ভক্তি আমাব অচল।
- ৪। হে প্ৰিয় প্ৰভু, এনে ৰূপ হৈ থাকিম কিমান দিন?  
আমালৈ তোমাব প্ৰেম প্ৰচুব, আমাব প্ৰেম কেনে হীন!
- ৫। পবিত্ৰ আত্মা দূত কপৌ, বাস কৰা আমাব মন,  
তাতে প্ৰভুব প্ৰেম বাকিলে, দ্বীপ্ত হয় আমাব প্ৰাণ।

নেখন ব্ৰাউন

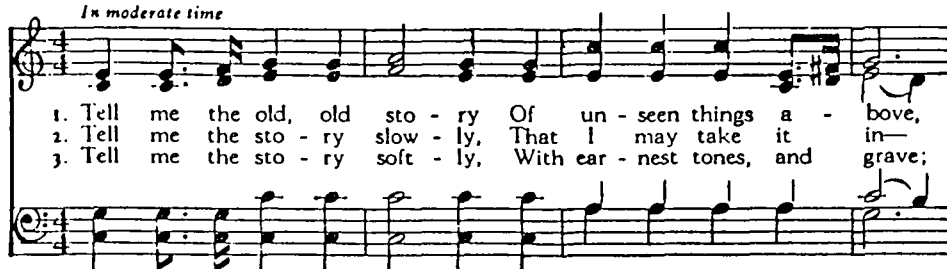
## THE BIBLE

## Tell Me the Old, Old Story

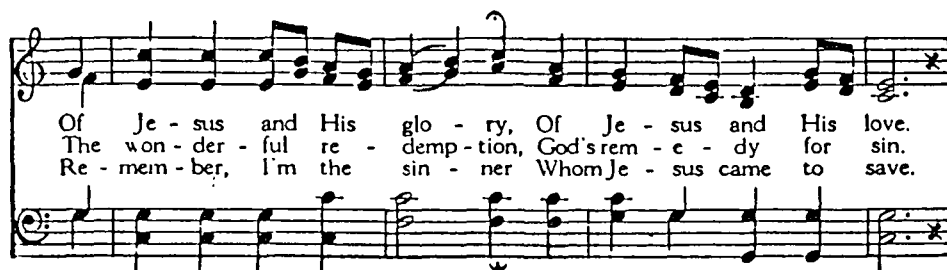
OLD, OLD STORY. 7. 6. 7. 6. D. with Refrain.

KATHERINE HANKEY, 1834-1911  
*In moderate time*

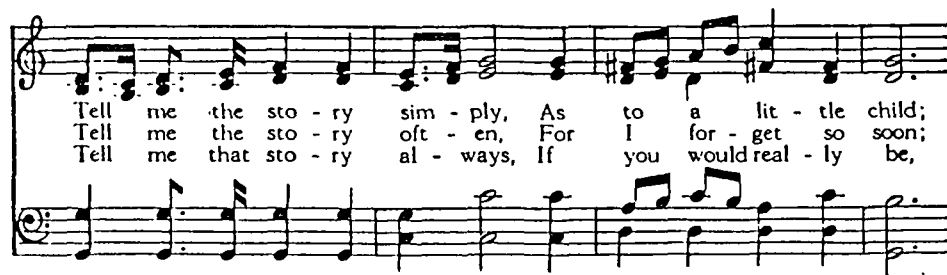
WILLIAM H. DOANE, 1831-1915



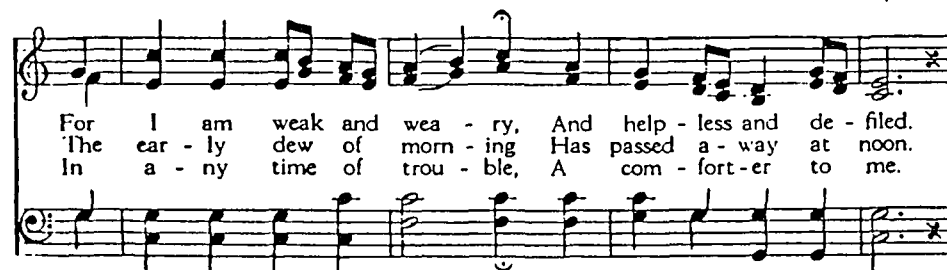
1. Tell me the old, old sto - ry Of un - seen things a - bove,  
2. Tell me the sto - ry slow - ly, That I may take it in—  
3. Tell me the sto - ry soft - ly, With ear - nest tones, and grave;



Of Je - sus and His glo - ry, Of Je - sus and His love.  
The won - der - ful re - demp - tion, God's rem - e - dy for sin.  
Re - mem - ber, I'm the sin - ner Whom Je - sus came to save.



Tell me the sto - ry sim - ply, As to a lit - tle child;  
Tell me the sto - ry oft - en, For I for - get so soon;  
Tell me that sto - ry al - ways, If you would real - ly be,



For I am weak and wea - ry, And help - less and de - filed.  
The ear - ly dew of morn - ing Has passed a - way at noon.  
In a - ny time of trou - ble, A com - fort - er to me.

## REFRAIN



Tell me the old, old sto - ry, Tell me the old, old sto - ry.



Tell me the old, old sto - ry Of Je - sus and His love. A - MEN

Note : Translation of this song 'Tell Me the Old, Old Story' in Assamese by Golok Chandra Christian is printed on the next page

Tell Me the Old, Old Story.  
Kate Hankey (C-mi) Evangel. S.S. 1131

- ১। কোৱা পুৰণি কথা, সেই স্বৰ্গৰ বিবৰণ,  
প্ৰভু যীচু, তেওঁৰ প্ৰভাপ, আৰু প্ৰেম-প্ৰদৰ্শন।  
সহজকৈ কোৱাচোন তাক, মই যি অজ্ঞানী ছন,  
ছৰ্বল, ক্লান্ত শিশু মই, নিবাসয় সৰ্বক্ষণ।

দোহাৰ—কোৱা পুৰণি কথা, কোৱা পুৰণি কথা ;  
কোৱা পুৰণি কথা, যাচু আৰু তেওঁৰ প্ৰেম।

- ২। কোৱা তাক লাহে লাহে, মনত যেন বুজি সত  
আচৰিত উদ্ধাৰ-সাধন, পাপবো প্ৰতিকাৰ।  
কোৱাচোন বাবে বাবে, বেগাই পাহৰি যাওঁ,  
বাতিপুৰাৰ সেই নিয়ৰ ছপবায়ী নাপাওঁ।
- ৩। কোৱা তাক বোমল ভাৱে যেন মই বাখিম মন  
পাপীৰ হেতু যে যাচু আছিলিহি জগতত।  
সেই কথা কোৱা সদায়, ত্ৰাতে বৰ উপকাৰ,  
আৰু ছুখৰ কালত মোৰ শাস্তনাৰ এক আধাৰ।
- ৪। কোৱাচোন নিৰ্ভয়ে মোক সেই পুৰণি কথা,  
যেতিয়া মোৰ মনত দেখা নংসাবলৈ বেথা ;  
আৰু যেতিয়া মোৰ মনৰ হয় ছুখৰ বাতি শেষ ;  
কৰা পুৰণি কথা সেই দাঁচুৰ প্ৰেম অশেষ।

গোলোক চন্দ্ৰ খ্ৰীষ্টিয়ান

# The King of Love my Shepherd Is

DOMINUS REGIT ME. 8. 7. 8. 7.

169

HENRY W. BAKER, 1821-1877

JOHN B. DYKES, 1813-1876

*In moderate time*

1. The King of love my Shep - herd is,  
 2. Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow  
 3. Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed,  
 4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill  
 5. Thou spreadst a ta - ble in my sight;  
 6. And so through all the length of days

Whose good - ness fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 My ran - somed soul He lead - eth, And where the ver - dant  
 But yet in love He sought me, And on His shoul - der  
 With Thee, dear Lord, be - side me; Thy rod and staff my  
 Thy unc - tion grace be - stow - eth; And O what trans - port  
 Thy good - ness fail - eth nev - er: Good Shep - herd, may I

I am His And He is mine for - ev - er  
 pas - tures grow, With food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 gen - tly laid, And by me, re - joic - ing, brought me  
 com - fort still, Thy cross be - fore to guide me.  
 of de - light From Thy pure chal - ice flow - eth  
 sing Thy praise With - in Thy house for - ev - er A - MEN

**Note :** Translation of this song 'The King of Love my Shepherd Is' in Assamese by G. R. Camphor is printed on the next page.



The King of Love My Shepherd is  
H. W. Baker. (Gini) Dominus Regit Me "Cecelia."

- ১। প্ৰেমৰ বজ্জা বৰ্খায়া মোৰ,  
তেওঁৰ প্ৰেমৰ গুণ নুচুকায়।  
তেওঁ মোৰ হলে, নাই অভাৱ মোৰ,  
আক মই তেওঁৰ হম সদায়।
- ২। বোৱতী পাৰ্ণী য'তে বয়,  
এনে ঠাইত তেওঁ মোক চৰায়।  
স্বৰ্গৰ কোমল ঘাইনিলৈ,  
মৰমেবে মোক চলায়।
- ৩। ভুল-ভ্ৰান্তিৰ মাজত ফুৰিলেও,  
প্ৰেমমেবে মোক বিচাবে ;  
মৰমেবে কান্ধত লৈ তেওঁ  
গৰ্বাললৈ মোক আনে।
- ৪। মৃত্যু-ছাঁয়াৰ উপত্যকাত  
চলিলেও ভয় নকৰে।  
শাস্ত্ৰনা পাওঁ তোমাৰ দয়াত,  
বিশ্ৰামো তোমাতেই পাওঁ।
- ৫। আয়ুসৰ সকলো কালত  
মোৰ সঙ্গী দয়া, মঙ্গল।  
বাস কৰিম যিহোৱাৰ গৃহত  
যুগে যুগে সদাকাল।

জি, আৰ, কেশৱ

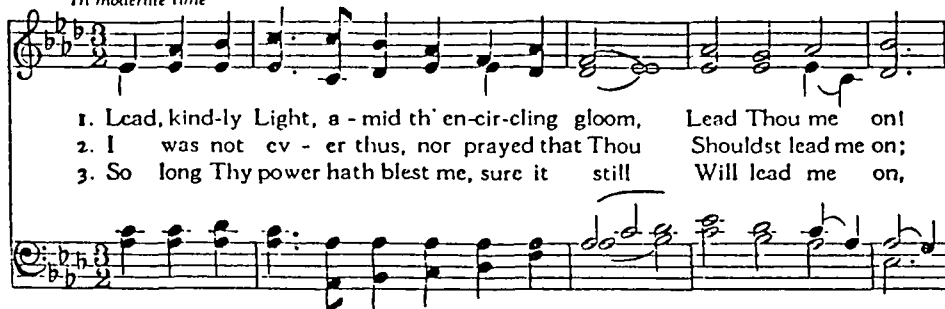
## THE LIFE ETERNAL

## Lead, Kindly Light, Amid th' Encircling Gloom

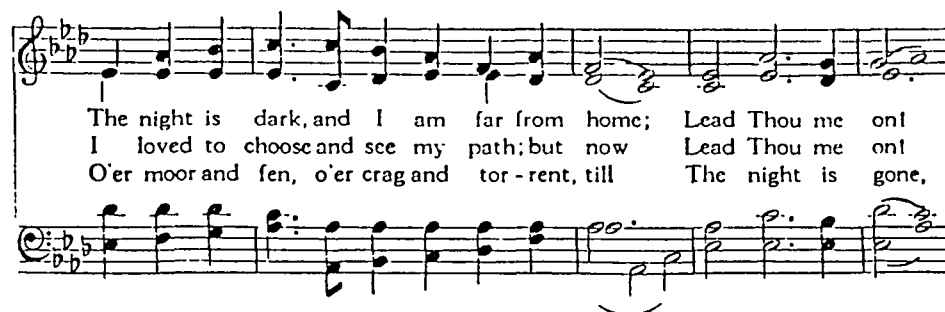
LUX BENIGNA 10 4 10 4. 10 10

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, 1801-1890  
*In moderate time*

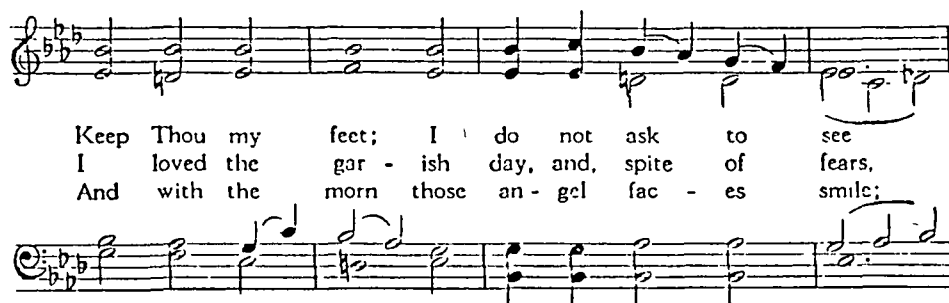
JOHN B. DYKES, 1823-1876



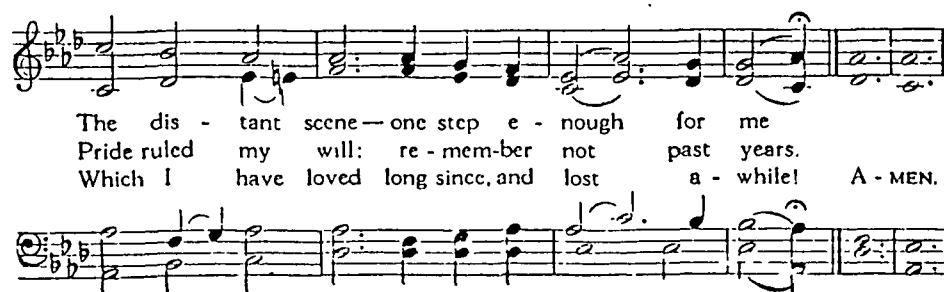
1. Lead, kind-ly Light, a - mid th' en-cir-cling gloom,      Lead Thou me on!  
2. I was not ev - er thus, nor prayed that Thou      Shouldst lead me on;  
3. So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still      Will lead me on,



The night is dark, and I am far from home;      Lead Thou me on!  
I loved to choose and see my path; but now      Lead Thou me on!  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and tor - rent, till      The night is gone,



Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
I loved the gar - ish day, and, spite of fears,  
And with the morn those an - gel fac - es smile;



The dis - tant scene — one step e - nough for me  
Pride ruled my will: re - mem-ber not past years.  
Which I have loved long sincc, and lost a - while!      A - MEN.

**Note :** Translation of this song 'Lead, Kindly Light, Amid th' Encircling Gloom' in Assamese by Kandura Rolin Smith is printed on the next page.

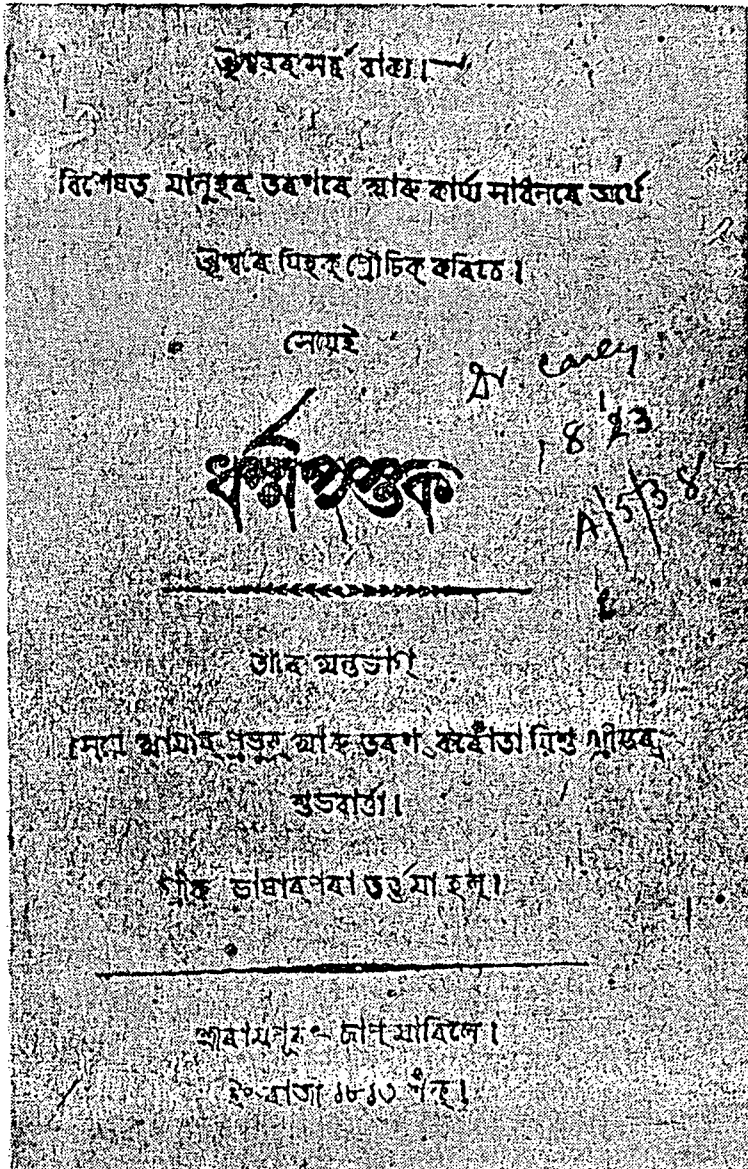
Lead, Kindly Light.

J. H. Newman (A Flat-sol) Lux Benigna.

- ১। হে স্বৰ্গৰ পোহৰ, আন্ধাৰ কালত, মোক দেখুওৱা বাট  
বাতি আন্ধাৰ, ঘৰো হৈছে দূৰ, নিয়ক দেখুৱাই বাট।  
দূৰৈত কি ? এতিয়া মই নাচাওঁ তালৈ,  
এখোজ এখোজকৈ বাম তোমাৰ লগ লৈ।
- ২। তোমাক পথদৰ্শক লবলৈ সদায় মোৰ মন নাছিল ;  
নিজ বাট উত্তম বুলিছিলোঁ, মোৰ এই কি ভুল হৈছিল  
ভয় হলেও, কবিলোঁ অহঙ্কাৰ।  
হে দয়াময়, আৰু মুগ্ধৰবিৰা আৰ।
- ৩। তোমাৰ শক্তিয়ে ইমান দিন বখাত, নেদিনা মোক।  
বাতি নাযায়মানে নিৰাপদে মোক চলাই নিয়ক।  
যি প্ৰিয় লোক নিদ্ৰিত হৈ গল আগেই,  
আকৌ লগ পামগৈ বাতি পুৱালেই।

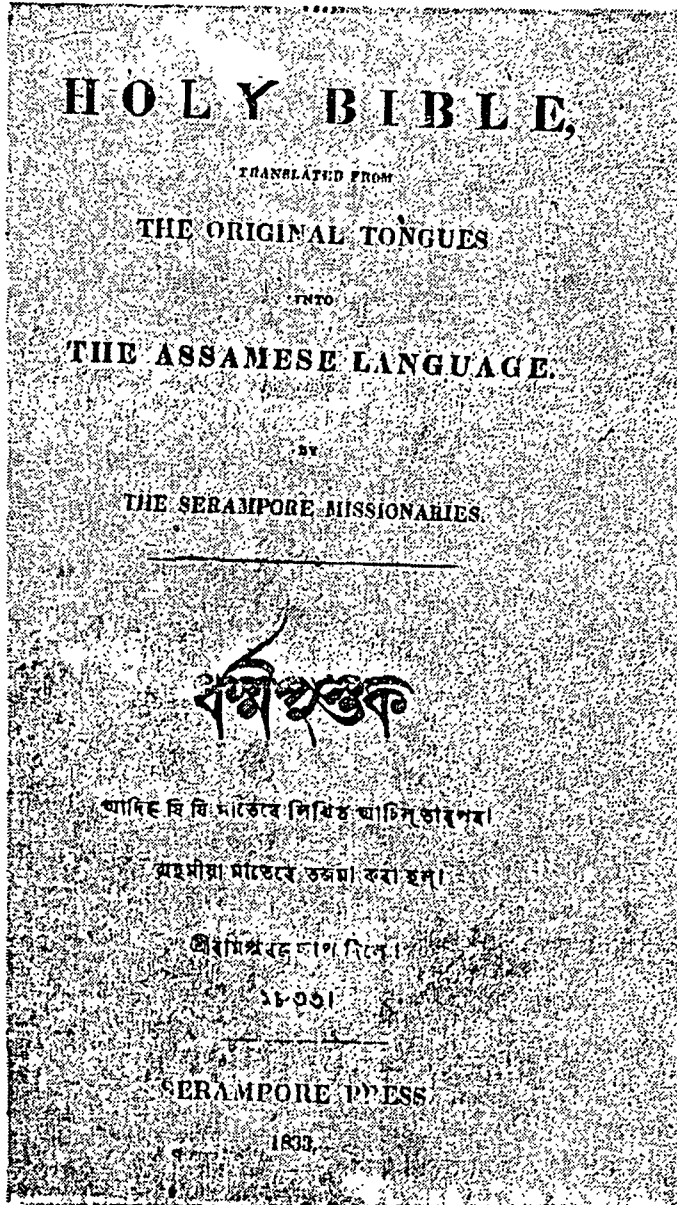
বাসুদেৱ বৰ্মন প্ৰীত্

Appendix No - L



১৮১৩ত ছপা হোৱা "ধৰ্মপুস্তক" অন্তৰ্ভাগৰ নাম-পাত  
 শ্ৰীৰামপুৰৰ কেৰি লাইব্ৰেৰি এণ্ড কেৰি মিউজিয়ামৰ সৌজন্যত

Source : Orunodoi



১৮৩৩ত ছপা হোৱা “ধৰ্মপুস্তক”ৰ আদিভাগৰ নাম-পাত

শ্ৰীৰামপুৰৰ কেৰি লাইব্ৰেৰি আৰু কেৰি মিউজিয়ামৰ সৌজন্যত

Source : Orunodoi

A FEW REMARKS  
ON THE  
ASSAMESE LANGUAGE,  
AND ON  
VERNACULAR EDUCATION  
IN ASSAM.  
BY A NATIVE.

---

SIBSAGOR, ASAM:  
PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS,  
1856.

A  
**DICTIONARY**  
 IN  
 ASSAMESE AND ENGLISH.



অসমিয়া আৰু ইংৰাজি  
 অভিধান ।

COMPILED  
 BY  
 M. BRONSON,  
 AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARY.

*First Edition.*

AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS,  
 SIBSAGOR.

[ 800 copies. ]

1867.

# অকণোদয় ।

যীশু খ্ৰীষ্টৰ বিষয়ে ল'ৰা-  
চোৱালীৰ শিক্ষা ।

স্বৰূপেই পহুৱ সন্তোষ দিওঁতা, আৰু চকুৰ পক্ষে  
সূৰ্য্য দৰ্শন উত্তম । উপদেশ ১১ ; ৭ ।

প্ৰথম ভাগ ।

THE PEEP OF DAY.

TRANSLATED FROM ENGLISH INTO ASSAMESE,

BY  
MRS. JESSIE (T. MOORE), 1857-1936



First Edition. 1500 Copies.

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARY UNION,  
NOWGONG, ASSAM.

1895.

মূল্য ১০ এক আনা মাত্ৰ ।



THE HISTORY  
 OF  
 PHULMONI AND KORUNA,  
 TRANSLATED FROM THE BENGALI.

ফুলমনি  
 আৰু  
 ককনাৰ বিবৰন।

BY NIDHI L. FARWELL.

SIBSAGOR, ASAM:

PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1851.

TWENTY YEARS IN ASSAM,

OR

LEAVES FROM MY JOURNAL.

EDITED AND PUBLISHED

BY

MRS. P. H. MOORE.

---

“He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. Zech. ix. 10.”

---

FIRST EDITION, 500 COPIES.

NOWGONG, ASSAM, INDIA.

1901.

# FURTHER LEAVES FROM ASSAM.

*A continuation of my Journal "Twenty Years in Assam."*

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BY

MRS. P. H. MOORE.

~~~~~  
"In Him was life ; and the life was the light of men."—John i. 4.  
~~~~~

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# AUTUMN LEAVES FROM ASSAM.

*A continuation of my Journal "Twenty Years in Assam,"  
and "Further Leaves from Assam."*

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BY

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"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." —  
Romans vi. 23.

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1910.

# STRAY LEAVES FROM ASSAM

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in Assam*," "*Further Leaves from Assam*,"  
and "*Autumn Leaves from Assam*."

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BY

MRS. P. H. MOORE.

---

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of  
my life."—Ps. 23:6.

---

First Edition, 500 Copies.  
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, U. S. A.  
1916.

A  
SPELLING BOOK

AND

VOCABULARY,

IN ENGLISH;

3039.168

A'SA'MESE, SINGPHO, AND NA'GA.

BY M LRONSON,  
*Missionary of the Am Bap Board of Foreign Missions.*

JAIPUR

PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1839.

## A VOCABULARY,

18

ENGLISH, A'SA'MESE, SINGPHO AND NAGA.

In *Singpho* and *Naga*, the accented syllables are indicated by a *hyphen* following them, except where the accent falls on the last. The point under the vowels, denotes *abruptness* of sound.

<i>English</i>	<i>A'sa'mesc.</i>	<i>Singpho.</i>	<i>Naga.</i>
Above	u po rot	nɪŋ cáŋ	á khò-nay
Ache, <i>v.</i>	bíkh	me cí-u	cá-o
Aged	búr há	dɪŋ lá	té-ká
Air	hai u	mbún	pón
Alike	é li ki á	ndai-pá	a rọ-ray
All	a tai	yon	phaŋ-tay
And	á ru	yá máŋ	í ro ko vá
Anger, <i>n.</i>	khoŋ	me cin	rin-khá
Ant	pó ru á	gá gin	cip chak
Arm	hát	let tá	clak
Arrive	pá	dú-u	i chú-o
Arrow	káŋ	pe lá	lát chán
Ascend	úth	ró-tu	kó-o
Ashes	shai	dap	tap lá

গননৰ কিতাপ।

দ্বিতীয় ভাগ।

ELEMENTARY

ARITHMETIC,

ON THE

INDUCTIVE SYSTEM;

DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS

PART SECOND.

BY MRS. E. W. AND REV. N. BROWN.

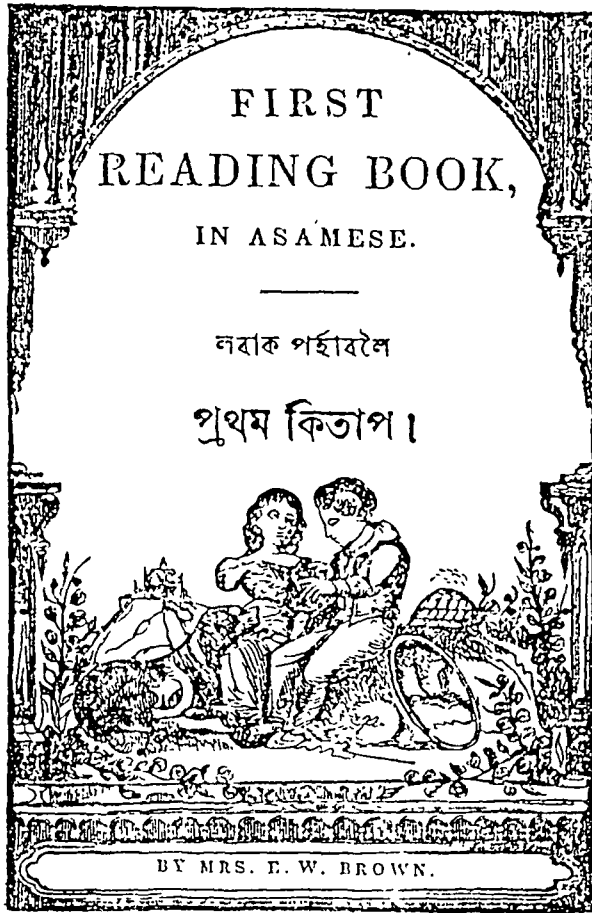
SIBSAGOR, ASAM:

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1845.

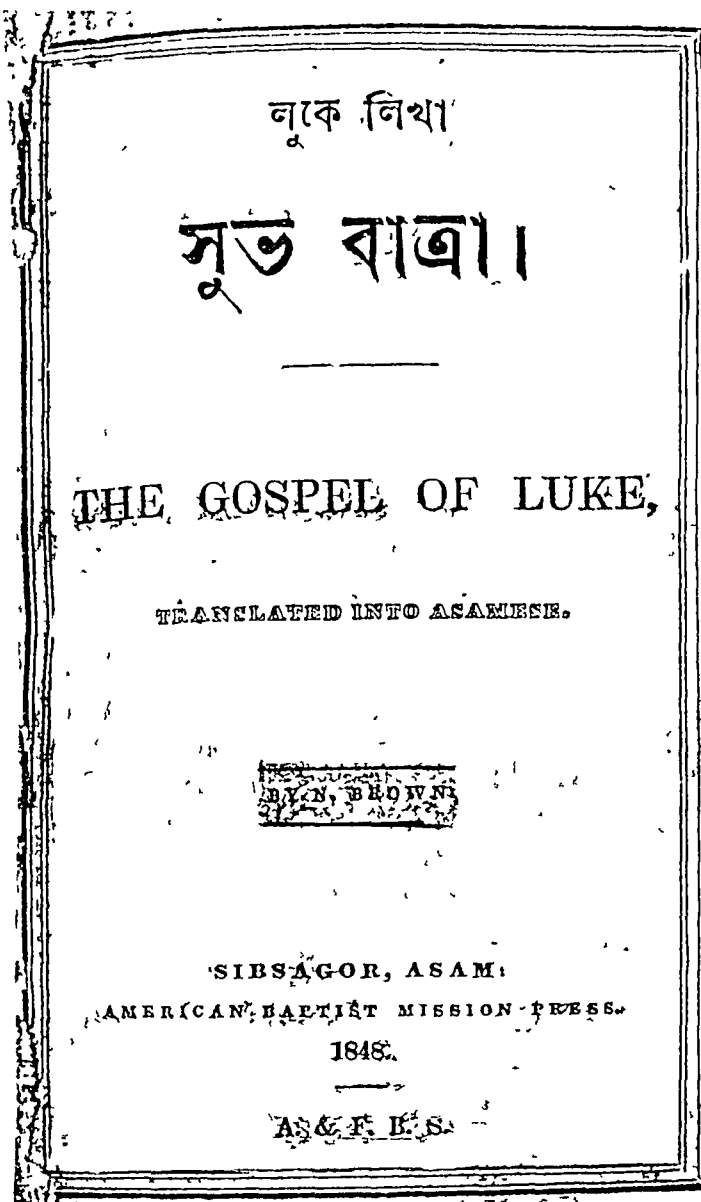






JAIPUR: C  
AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1842.



মাথি, মাৰ্ক, লুক, য়োহান, এই চাৰি খন পুথিৰ পৰা

ক্রমেৰে লিখা

# খ্ৰিষ্টৰ বিবৰন

আৰু সূত বাত্ৰা ।

THE

LIFE AND GOSPEL OF CHRIST,

ARRANGED FROM THE

TEXT OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS,

IN THE FORM OF

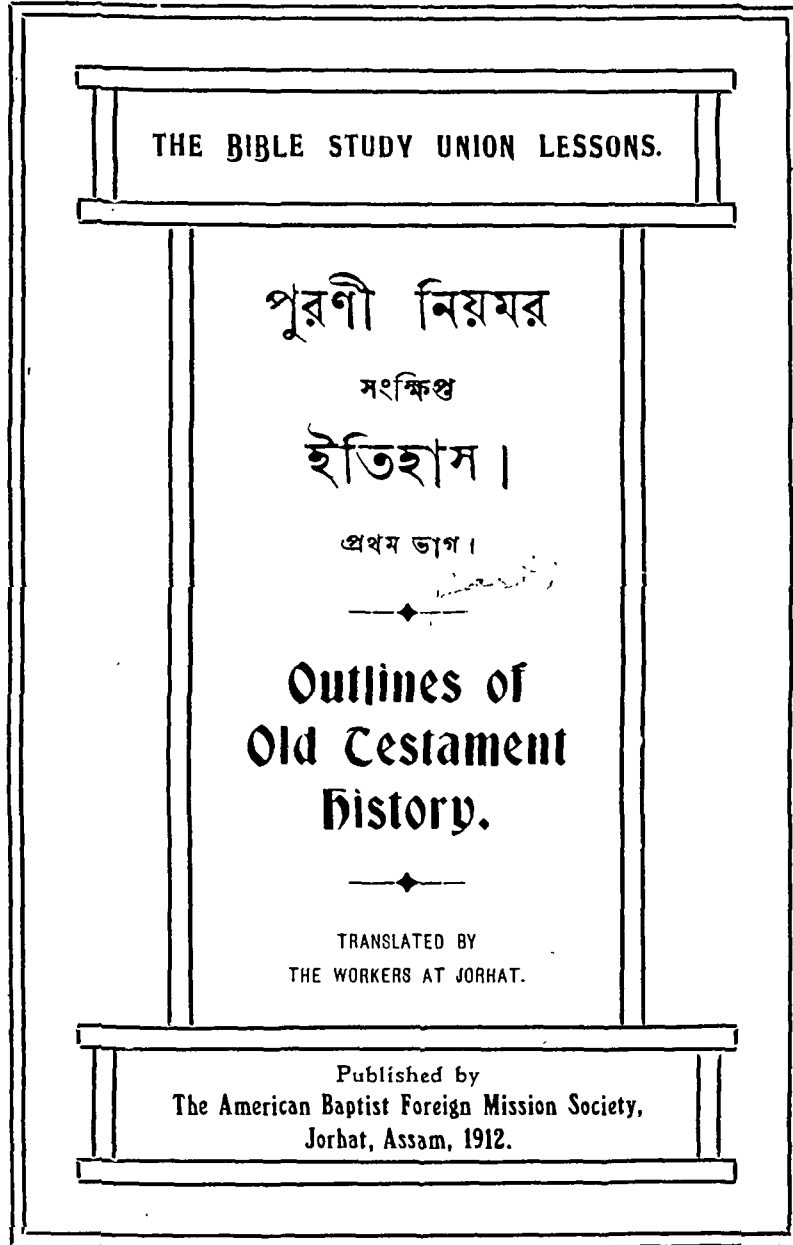
A CONTINUOUS NARRATIVE.

BY N. BROWN.

SIBSAGOR, ASSAM:

PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1851.



THE BIBLE STUDY UNION LESSONS.

পূৰণী নিয়মৰ

সংক্ষিপ্ত

ইতিহাস।

দ্বিতীয় ভাগ।

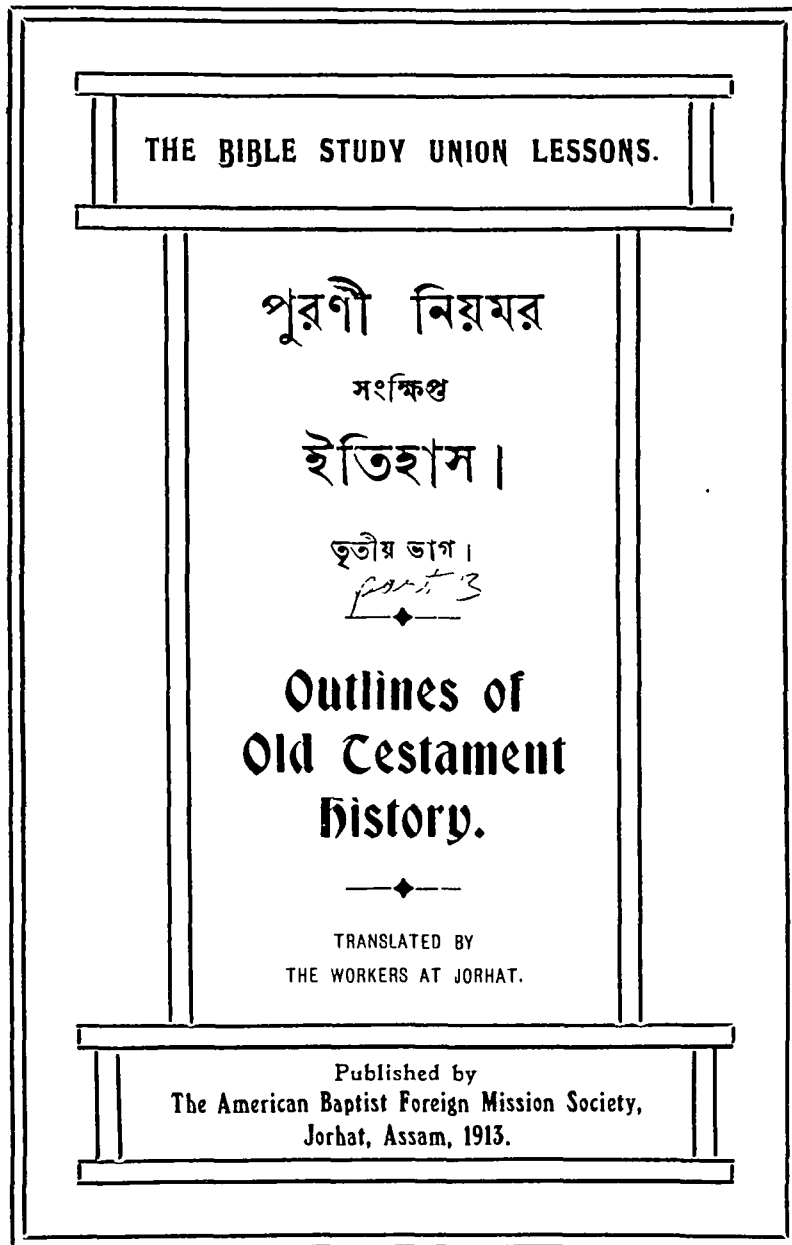
—♦—  
*part 2*

Outlines of  
Old Testament  
History.

—♦—

TRANSLATED BY  
THE WORKERS AT JORHAT

Published by  
The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society,  
Jorhat, Assam, 1912.



শুশ্রুত

— অৰ্থাৎ —

মই জগতলৈ কেনেকৈ আহিছোঁ ।

---

WHAT A YOUNG BOY  
OUGHT TO KNOW.

BY

Rev. A. JEWSON.

---

TRANSLATED BY  
DR. AND MRS. W. E. WITTER WITH ASSAMESE HELPERS  
PUBLISHED BY  
THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION, ASSAM

PRINTED BY U. N. DASS AT  
THE SAMYA PRESS, 6, COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA  
1923.



# হৰিদাসী ।

এটি পাৰিবাৰিক চিত্ৰ ।

## Haridasi.

A sketch of a Family Life.

\* \* \* \* \*

GAUHATI, ASSAM.

AMERICAN BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY

—  
1922.

এলোকেণী বৈশ্যৰ বিষয়।

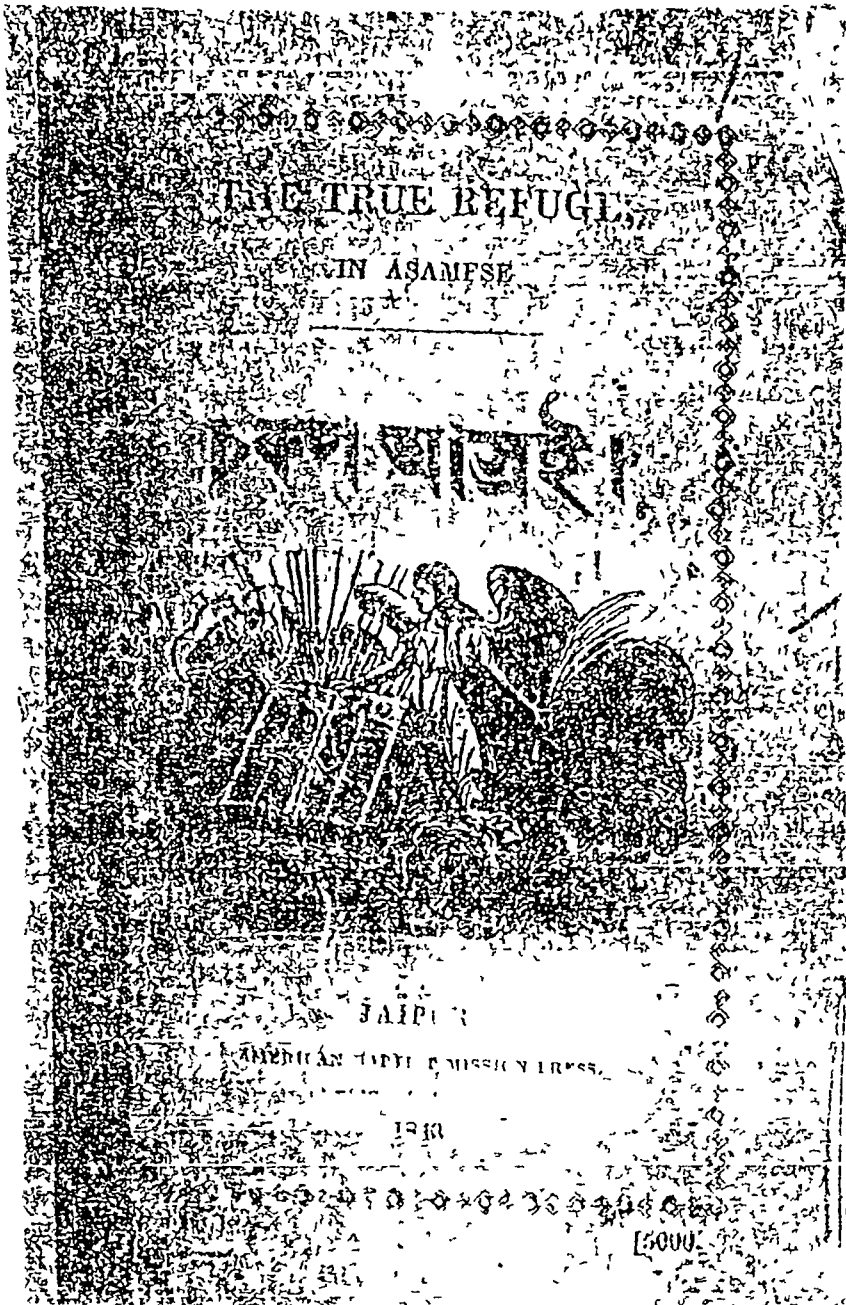
শিহ. ম. ই. মেইলীৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰকাশ।

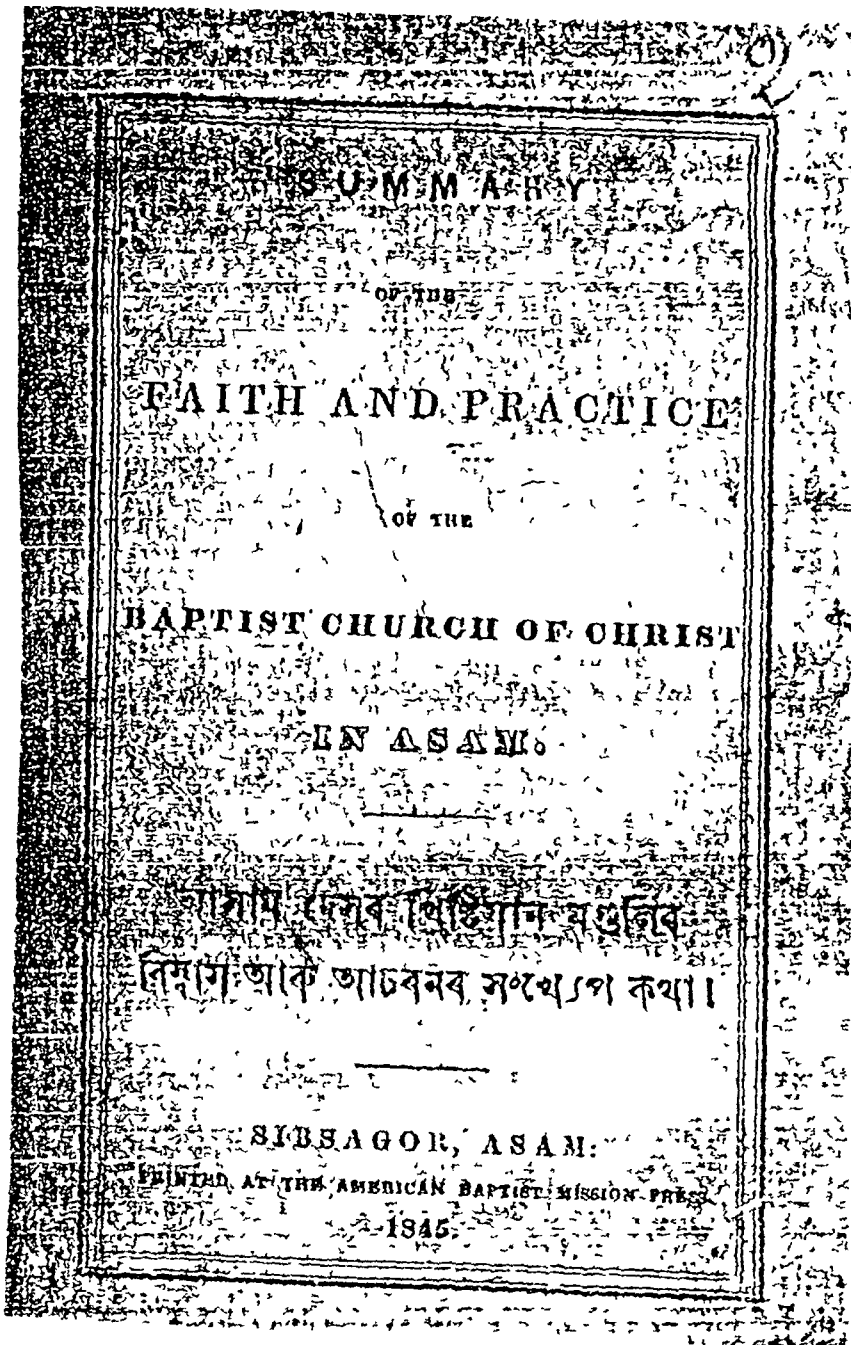
STORY FOR FALLEN WOMEN

By M. E. LESLIE, 1834-1907

BAPTIST MISSION PRESS, SINGAPORE.

A. K. GUNNET. 1877. 1500 Copies.





SUMMARY  
 OF THE  
 FAITH AND PRACTICE  
 OF THE  
 BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST  
 IN ASAM.

সামান্য ক্ৰীষ্টান মণ্ডলিব  
 বিদ্ভাৰ্ম আৰু আচৰনৰ সংক্ষেপ কথা।

SIBSAGOR, ASAM:  
 PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS  
 1845

REPORT

OF THE

ASAM ORPHAN INSTITUTION,

AT NOWGONG.

1847—48.

SIBSAGOR, ASAM

PRINTED AT THE AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSION PRESS

1848