CHAPTER - IV

THE CHANGING PATTERN
The two preceding chapters indicate the type of administration the British first adopted for the three hills under review. As yet their control was not firm enough to warrant any direct responsibility for the administration of the hills. Though a pattern of tribal administration had been developed for the Garo Hills, no attempt was made to assume control over the entire tract as border raids and disputes with the Zamindars continued to demand the attention of the British administrator. In the Khasi and Daintia Hills, however, the British position was clearer, twenty five Khasi states were recognized as independent and dependant states under British paramountcy, in between which were pockets of British villages, while the entire Daintia Hills had become part of British India. These two hills were, therefore, either directly or indirectly placed under the administrative or political charge of a single political officer who was directly responsible to Government at Calcutta.

Call for Reexamination:

Lister continued to remain in charge of the Political Agency at Cherrapunji and the command of the Sylhet Light Infantry till March 1654. His Assistant, Harry Inglis,
who was also his son-in-law and the proprietor of Inglis and Company held office for a similarly long period till his resignation in 1850, when the office was taken up by Lieutenant Cave. The rules for the administration of the Agency were vague indeed. They were found in Lister's and Inglis' appointments, in Act VI of 1835 and as Lister stated by the spirit of the Assam Rules. The anomaly in this was that the extension of the Assam Rules to these hills was done without any authority whatever. It appears that the Sudder Court forwarded to the Political Agent for his information a copy of these rules supposing that the Agent had been instructed to be guided by them. But such was not the case. Further, the rules so forwarded were those which had not received the confirmation of Government and had therefore not been introduced in Assam. Government did not lay down any further rules nor did it take steps to give the existing rules any precision.

In such a situation where there was no direct control over the two officers of the Agency mismanagement crept in, corruption became rampant and consequently the Cherra courts lost the entire confidence of the people. Lister may have

2. Ibid., p.10.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., Dalhousie Muniments, GD 45/6/137/1, Administration of Justice in the Non-Regulation Provinces, March 1849.
been above corruption, not so his son-in-law. Towards the close of 1848 charges were preferred against Harry Inglis by Thomas Jones, formerly a missionary who had afterwards settled in Cherrapunji, by Syiem Singh Manick of Mylliem, by Rajendra Singh, the ex-Raja of Sajntia, and by various others, of the Political Assistant's oppressive conduct towards them and various acts of bribery. Accusations were also levelled against Lister of partiality towards his Assistant. Government directed Dunbar, the Commissioner of Dacca to proceed to Cherrapunji and hold an enquiry into these charges. Inglis in the meantime was suspended from service. The enquiry was accordingly held and although evidence of the witnesses for the prosecution was very positive, the degree in which most of them were under the influence of persons inimical to Inglis; the discrepancies in the testimony and the great improbability of many of the statements led Dunbar to declare that the charges were not proved, but that the exculpation of the Political Assistant was not complete. Soon after this enquiry Inglis resigned his post.

Dunbar's enquiry was followed by a more elaborate and detailed report by A.3.M.Mills, Officiating Judge of the Sudder Court who was deputed to the station at Cherrapunji to make a report and recommendations for the administration of the Agency. His report, submitted in September 1853,

6. Political Despatches from Court of Directors, No.2 of 1851.
7. Ibid.
particularly noted that the administration of justice had become a "nullity," "a bye-word" and a "reproach." The more serious disputes in connection with trade in limestone, coal and other speculations formed the subject of suits in the Cherra Court, Mill's enquiry revealed that Inglis and Company controlled by Harry Inglis figured prominently in these disputes.\(^8\) Though out of Government service, Inglis continued to have so much influence that his successor, Lieutenant Cave, was often wont to pass judgement far above those he was empowered in favour of Inglis and Company. Mills could not quite agree with the allegations of U.H.T. Sweetland, Agent of the Coal Company at Cherrapunji that Cave "a well intentioned honourable young man" had been guilty of systematic wrong though he did admit that in his judicial proceedings Cave had "committed "grave irregularities and betrayed an extreme infirmity of judgement." Mills explained this in the man's ignorance of judicial duties when appointed Assistant to the Political Agent, in the most awkward position he was faced with in passing judgement on his superior's son-in-law; in the trade rivalries that emerged and the disputes between rival competitors that tore society into cliques. That Cave espoused Inglis' cause there was no doubt and under such influences his excessive credulity led him to

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put entire confidence in the truth of Inglis' complaints and unconsciously to do injustice. While European competitors to Inglis took their grievances to court, the state of feelings among the Khasis was such that no one would dare to bring an action or evidence against Inglis. This Hills could verify from what the people told him and by the proceedings of the court which certainly strengthened the impression.10

Taking advantage of the impending promotion of Lister, Mills made a suggestion 'that the Cherra Courts should be placed in regard to appeals in all civil and criminal matters under the control of the Civil and Sessions Judge of Sylhet. He also suggested that the Political Agent should be empowered with full powers of a Magistrate who might or might not be placed in the command of the corps stationed at Cherrapunji and who should manage British relations with the Khasi chiefs. Such an office should be in the hands of an officer of experience and judgement whose one condition of his holding the civil appointment be that he should make himself conversant with the Khasi language. Finally, he suggested that Bengali which had hitherto been the court language, should be replaced by English by which means the business would be more expeditiously and satisfactorily conducted.11

10. Ibid.
11. TH?.. p.25.
Lord Dalhousie recorded that the report by Mill unhappily confirmed the correctness of the belief of the necessity for enquiring into the administration of the Agency and of a closer superintendence than had hitherto been given by the Bengal Government. The Governor-General expressed in clear terms that there should be a thorough reform for which he thought the proper arrangement would be to place the affairs of the Khasi and Daintia Hills in the hands of the Commissioner of Assam in the same manner as had already been done with the Garo Hills and Cachar. Till this was given effect to, the Assistant should be replaced and the Agent’s powers limited to small cases. All heinous cases and all appeals should go to the Zillah judge at Sylhet.  

The Political Agency at Cherrapunji ceased with Lister’s promotion and retirement of his civil employ and the appointment of C.K.Hudson in April 1854, as Principal Assistant Commissioner of the Khasi and Daintia Hills district. Hudson was given the full powers of a Magistrate under the Assam Commission and divested of the military command of the Sylhet Light Infantry.

The new administration did not receive a fair trial. Government called for a second report on the administration of

12. Ibid., pp.113-115.
the Khasi and Daintia Hills by U.D. Allen of the Board of Revenue. Allen showed, in his report submitted in October 1858, that there were some practical problems in the administration of the district. Hudson might have been a "laborious, upright, and a very meritorious public servant," but it was not altogether judicious to select an uncovenanted officer who had hitherto held for so long only a subordinate position in the Assam Commission to inaugurate the new system and to succeed a military officer of rank who had exercised sole military and civil authority in the hills for many years.

Allen considered it would have been proper had a military officer belonging to the Assam Commission been appointed to the charge of the district. On these lines he recommended that as long as the Khasi and Daintia Hills remained attached to Assam it should be under the charge of one of the Commissioner's Military Assistants for he pointed out:

> These wild Mountaineers respect and stand in awe of the visible emblems of Military power; but they have yet to learn the ready obedience which more civilized races cheerfully yield to purely Civil authority."

Allen could not but agree with Mills that all civil and criminal appeals should continue to be under the Civil and Sessions Dudge at Sylhet who should be instructed to conduct his proceedings in these cases in conformity with the Assam

14. Ibid., p.34.
15. Ibid.
Rules. This he wanted unchanged as Sylhet was closer to Cherrapunji than Gauhati and as the roads to Assam were not healthy at all times of the year. The one exception that could be made in this matter, Allen pointed out was to permit those living in the northern foothills to take their appeals to Gauhati instead of Sylhet. The administration of the Agency, Allen remarked, failed to give satisfaction to the Government and the people, apparently, not on account of any defect in the system, but because of the very intimate connection that existed between the Political Agent and his son-in-law, who field, despite the conditions in his appointment, almost the whole trade in the hills. So powerful was Inglis\textsuperscript{1} influence with the Cherra authorities, that in every case in which he was concerned the Cherra Court never obtained any credit with the public for impartiality, and English traders fled the district rather than encounter the risk of their decisions. It was certain that a root and branch change of administration was most urgently required in order to convince the people of the hills that the Government wished and intended them to receive impartial justice. "It was not, however, the system that was at fault, but the administrators

16. Ibid., pp.34-36. The Assam Rules must have received the confirmation of Government as Mills makes reference to these Rules in his Report on the Province of Assam.
of it were entirely in a false position, and, however just and unimpeachable their official acts and proceedings might have been, they could never have inspired confidence or given satisfaction to the people."

On the resignation of Hudson in 1860, Captain Roulatt was placed in charge of the district, which was reverted to the charge of the Assam Commissioner's Military Assistants, from that date the Khasi and Daintia Hills district would remain under the supervision of the Assam administration.

Paramountcy:

As the relationship between the British and various Khasi chiefs was not formally defined, Lord Dalhousie minuted "that the paramount and direct authority of the British Government over the whole assemblage of these petty chieftainships as well as over the remainder of the territory comprised within the Agency, should be asserted and proclaimed in legal form" with the view not to extend the interference of the British authorities in the affairs of the Khasi chiefs or to alter the kind of degree of subjection in which they were placed, but rather to legalize the power which had been hitherto exercised by the Agent.\textsuperscript{1B}

\textsuperscript{17} I Bid., p.37.
\textsuperscript{18} A.D.n.Mills, \textit{op.cit.}, p.118.
directed that a simple code of rules of civil and criminal procedure should be drawn up on the lines of a draft that had been made for Arracan and Tenasserim in British Burma, modified only so far as to suit the Khasi-3aintias and the peculiar position in which Government was placed in regard to some of the chiefs. The Khasi states were categorized into semi-independent and dependant states. Cherra, Khyrim, Nongstoin, Langrin and Nongspung were referred to as semi-independent states as they had never been actually coerced by a British force. The remaining twenty states recognized as dependant states were those that had been restored to their chiefs following the Anglo-Khasi War, or in the case of the five Sirdarships were those states that were created by the British. There was, however, no important distinction between the two types of Khasi states.

The systems of the semi-independent states were permitted, Allen observed, to exercise with the aid of their durbars and elders* sole criminal and civil jurisdiction in their respective states over their own subjects on matters pertaining exclusively to them. It was tacitly understood.

19. Ibid., pp.119-120. The proposed rules were to regulate the powers of Sirdars and Doljois as well.
22. A.Mackenzie, History of the Relations of the Government Uith the Hill Tribes on the North-Eastern Frontier of Bengal, p.238. The 25 Khasi states were -
by these Syiems that they were bound to administer public affairs in accordance with the traditional and established usages of the land, to keep the peace and to obey without demur all the mandates of the British Government. The dependant chiefs were permitted to investigate and decide all civil and criminal cases in which the parties were their own people with the exception of cases of murder, homifelde and accidental death which were to be reported to the Cherra authorities for their decision. Both categories of states were bound to take to the Cherra court cases of every description in which British subjects and the inhabitants of two or more states were concerned. They were also required to deliver up on the demand of the British all persons charged with offences committed in British India who had taken refuge in their states. Allen reported that only one case of recusancy to a requisition of this kind. In 1849 Singh Manick, Syiem of Khyrim refused to deliver up some of his people who

Syiems of Khyrim refused to deliver up some of his people who


(d) State under Uahadadars: 1.Sheila.


24. Ibid., p.28.

had committed a criminal offence in the Daintia Hills. A military force was sent against him to enforce obedience to the Political Agent's orders. The Syiem was compelled not only to produce the accused, but to pay the expense of the expedition sent against him.²⁶

British paramountcy was further extended over the Khasi states by formalizing succession to chieftainship. Though the British recognized hereditary and elective succession as was in vogue, formal recognition of succession in the dependant states only followed after the Principal Assistant Commissioner had verified the claimant's rights and after no objection came from a state's population. If objections were raised the people were called to vote whether they would or would not have the claimant as chief. If the claimant obtained a majority vote in his favour, he was considered duly elected. Should the claimant have failed to secure the confidence of the electorate, another election was held to elect any other person eligible for the office. The Principal Assistant Commissioner would then confirm the candidate unless there were personal or political objections against him. Such Syiems, Lyngdohs, Uahadadars and Sirdars were made to realize that their appointments came from the British Government and that they could be removed from office if they did not co-operate with the authorities. All

²⁶. Ibid., p.27.
²⁷. TH?, p.28-29.
Cessions in the Khasi states appeared to have been regularly reported to the Principal Assistant Ceramissiener by the claimants though only succession to the Cherra Syiemship was reported to Government at Calcutta. 29

In 1856 a dispute arose regarding the succession in Nongkhlau. One of the claimants died before the dispute had been settled and as Bor Singh, another claimant was considered to have no family claims and was objected to by many of the electorate, the Company's Government took over the administration of the state. It was subsequently decided that the Syiem should be chosen by the assembled Myntris and headmen of the clans. The choice fell on Bor Singh who was accordingly appointed Syiem. 30 In March 1857 a rather peculiar arrangement was made regarding the succession to Maulong, when a paruana was issued authorizing the two sons of the late Sirdar Zuffar Lusker to conduct the administration of the state, by turn for one year each. 31

Mention must be made here of a disputed succession in Cherra for it will be referred to again in a latter chapter. On the death of Syiem Subha Singh on 5 Dune 1854 his eldest nephew Ram Singh represented to Hudson that he had succeeded his uncle. The succession was reported to Government and the Governor-General sanctioned the succession of Ram Singh. The new Syiem, however, had not been elected according to the custom of the state, by the Khadarkur or the heads of

30. C.U. Aitchison, op.cit., Vol.XII, 1931, pp.78, 156.
31. Ibid.
the twelve founding clans of the state. Consequently a great many of the influential people refused to acknowledge Ram Singh as their Syiem. As the performance of the funeral ceremonies of the late Syiem by Ram Singh, would, according to the usage of the state, have been conclusive in regard to succession, the Khadarkur did not permit the dead body of Subha Singh to be cremated. It was thought inexpedient to hold another election as Ram Singh was not personally disqualified and another election would have aroused passions and might have been attended with untoward consequences in the critical period of July-August 1857. Only after Allen had explained that the succession of Ram Singh would not be taken as a precedent, but that in all future successions the ancient and established usages of Cherra would be strictly abided by and faithfully observed, were the Khadarkur willing to have Ram Singh as their Syiem. 32

In the absence of any formal relations with the Khasi chiefs, U.3. Allen made a number of suggestions for Government to consider. Succession to the five semi-independent, and the four principal dependant states of Wylliem, Maharam, Hyriaus and Nongkhlaus should be reported to Government for its confirmation. Each succeeding Syiem of these nine states should be required to present a huzzur to, and receive a khilut from Government and each Syiem should execute an ikrarnamah and receive a sanad of appointment from the Government. 33 Allen

33. Ibid., pp. 77, 79.
did not think it would be necessary that these ikrarnamahs should contain any minute articles of agreement, "it would suffice for the Syiems to promise to govern their states according to its ancient and established usages, to reside in the state, to keep the people contented, and satisfied and to obey any orders that might be given to them by the paramount power. The stipulation regarding residence was considered necessary because the state of Flylliem had for many years been in a deplorable condition owing to the absence of its Syiem, Hazar Singh, who had been residing for many years with his wife's family at Cherrapunji. Succession to the remaining states should be reported to the Governor-General's Agent, who might be empowered to grant sanads of succession. Though it was not the intention of Government to demand any payment of tribute or revenue from the Khasi states, Allen was of the opinion that Government could be fully justified to call upon them to contribute, according to their means, towards the payment of expenses in maintaining order and security to life and property. He, however, did not think it was opportune for making the fiscal experiment till the resources of the hills were more fully developed.

Towards Direct Rule

When the Jaintia Hills first came under British

34. Ibid., p. 11*. According to Khasi custom, a man is expected to live in his wife's home.
35. Ibid., p. 80.
36. Ibid., n
control, the Political Agent permitted the Dollois and Sirdars to try all civil suits without limitation, and all criminal cases not of a heinous character in the nineteen elakas of the hills. Of these elakas, fifteen were under a Dolloi each, and thirteen Sirdars were in charge of the remaining four divisions. In time when it became apparent that the Daintias were not satisfied with the proceedings of their village chiefs, the Political Agent considered it necessary to place further restrictions on their civil and criminal powers. Accordingly in 1841, Lister limited their jurisdiction in civil suits to the value of rupees fifty, and prohibited them from trying all criminal cases in which they, their relatives and dependants, and other chiefs were in any way concerned. An appeals were decided by the Cherra authorities. Initially the Jaintias were allowed to annually elect, retain and remove their Dollois. This system was partially changed in 1850 when the office became a tenured one for three years, after which elections would take place.37

Following Mills' report, a police station was set up at Souai. The Principal Assistant Commissioner, however, had but a nominal control over the Daintia Hills. Allen, therefore, suggested posting a European officer on an experimental basis at Souai, for the development and more efficient administration of the hills. The officer should be

expected to thoroughly acquaint himself with the Khasi language and the Jaintia dialect and to gradually assume to himself the judicial powers of the Dollois and Sirdars. The court to be established at Douai should be of the simplest kind, somewhat similar to the procedure adopted in the Santhal Parganas. It appears that Allen was thinking on the lines of Dalhousie who had earlier made a similar suggestion which had not been implemented. 39

The Daintias did not pay any tax to the British but one he-goat from each village. This was "a continuation of a practice which the Saintias gave their Raja. 40 Lister suggested in 1849 the imposition of a house tax on the Jaintias in consequence of the disposition evinced by some of the people to assert their independence. The imposition of such a tax was not adopted as it appeared that such a measure would not likely allay the feeling of the Daintias towards British rule. 41 Rills thought it sound policy to exact some payment however small the amount might be as a token of submission. He regretted that there was no such demand from the Daintias when the hills were annexed. If the Nagas, Mikirs and other hill tribes paid either a house or poll tax, it was unwise and unequitable to exempt these hillmen from doing the same. 42

41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., pp.13-14.
Dalhousie agreed to Mills' report and directed that the Political Agent tour the Jaintia Hills, to carefully enquire into the resources of the hills and to ascertain and report whether it was practicable to obtain a revenue at a reasonable cost of collection.  No report on this matter was due to the change in the administration of the Agency. Allen took up the issue again. He was of the opinion that the tax should not be one on land as the Jaintias were unaccustomed to that mode of taxation, but that it should be a house tax as it was the simplest and most convenient form of taxation and one which was best adapted to the habits and customs of the people. The Mikirs who had migrated from the North Cachar Hills and settled around Shampung in the Daintia Hills paid a house tax of rupees tuo per house. There was, therefore, no reason why the Mikirs should be taxed and the Daintias exempted from taxation. Allen reported that a house tax of Rs.10,000 could be raised through the Dollois and Sirdars who should be given a percentage of the collection as remuneration.

Reaction

Before any attempt is made to trace the circumstances that led to the Jaintia rebellions and its aftermath, it would be worthwhile to enquire why the Khasi-Gaintias played no part

43. Ibid., pp.120-121.
44. Ibid., pp.71-72.
45. Ibid., p.72.
in the upheaval of 1857-1858, The Khasi-Daintias did not have cause to be as much disgruntled as others were. Their religion was not at stake, for neither was it institutionalized to resist change, nor had Christianity taken deep root to arouse reaction to its activities. These hillmen were not recruited into the army nor were the states annexed into British India but for the Saintia Hills and a few Khasi villages. The Khasi-Saintias must have been aware of rebellions against British rule for the "mutiny" had reached the Brahmaputra and Surma valleys to very little effect in these hills. U.3. Allen who had been deputed to Cherrapunji some months before the commencement of the disturbances was temporarily put in charge of the north-eastern frontier. He reported that exaggerated rumours of the fall of the British power had caused some excitement among the Khasi chiefs. Specific mention was made of the ex-Saintia Raja Rajendra Singh's intrigues with the Cherra Syiem to recover his lost possessions. Government's first reaction to this report was that Rajendra Singh should be seized if possible and sent to Calcutta. But Allen cautioned that this would be making the Raja and the whole proceedings of more importance than it deserved. Rajendra Singh was ordered to reside in Sylhet under the watchful eye of the authorities.

46, C. E. Buckland, Bengal under the Lieutenant Governors, Vol. 1, pp. 142-143.
A house tax was introduced in the Daintia Hills in January 1860 following a census by the Dollois and Sirdars which was completed in December the previous year. Government authorized its collection at the rate of rupee one per house. It was supposed that such a tax would be the least detestable and most easily collected and that there would be no reason to apprehend any disturbance. The first intimation that appears to have reached B. Shaduell, then Officiating Principal Assistant Commissioner, Khasi and Daintia Hills, that a disturbance was likely to occur in the Daintia sub-division was conveyed to him in a petition dated 20 February 1860 from Solomon, the Tahsildar of Souai. Solomon informed that he had been opposed by a large body of the Nungjungée villagers on his attempt to enter their village to enumerate their houses and collect the tax. Many other villages followed suit, principal of which were Shampung, Souai, Sutnga and Raliang. Despite a stern warning that severe measures would be taken to ensure obedience, meetings were held in market places where the Daintias unanimously decided and accordingly informed the authorities that they would resist any move to compel them to pay the tax. This refusal stemmed from the Daintia's declaration that they would pay a tax to Rajendra Singh, their deposed Syiem. It appears, therefore, that the ex-Raja was

47. H.P.C., 19 May 1860, No.39.
49. Ibid.
aware that his former subjects would resist the imposition of the house's tak long before he gave any information to that effect to the Magistrate of Sylhet. There was every reason to suspect that Rajendra Singh, his relatives and agents were hatching a plot to create disturbances. One of his muktiars was actually present at a meeting near Cherrapunji where the resort to arms was openly talked.

The Gherra authorities took immediate steps to curb the opposition by despatching a contingent of the Sylhet Light Infantry to Douai under Shadueli and Lieutenant Buist. All the Daintia Dollois were summoned and those among them who were suspected for having been concerned in the outbreak were taken to Cherrapunji and placed in confinement. Recalcitrant villages were visited and eventually made to pay the tax. Roulatt's recommendation that Rajendra Singh and his relatives should be removed from Sylhet to be detained in some place where no further communication could be kept up between them and the Jaintias resulted in their removal to Dacca.

The first Jaintia rebellion died out soon after it had begun. By the summer of 1860, U.S. Seton-Karr, Secretary to the Government of Bengal could report that the Daintia Hills "is now tranquil, the revenue is being paid with punctuality; there are no signs anywhere of discontent and
measure's have already been adopted for the better administration of the district. Hudson was empowered to remove the Dollois for misconduct, while at the same time, the powers of these functionaries were increased. All crimes were to be reported to the police who were not, however, to interfere vexatiously in village affairs.

The peace was soon to be disturbed in an even more devastating manner in a second rebellion. The Sai'ntias could no reconcile themselves to British rule as their sentiments were aggravated by a number of measures as will be referred to presently. The second rebellion came as an after effect of the first rebellion and under similar circumstances to that of 1860 in that the British officers were not aware of any dissatisfacion. On the morning of 17 January 1862 the villagers of 3owai, Dalong, Latobef and Shampung in number about two hundred strong, surrounded the polled guard at 3owai. They were repressed but afterwards mustered six hundred strong reappeared on the night of 23 January and set fire to the thana, the mission school and the houses of some Christian villagers. Road'communication from'Douai and Amwye to Cherrapunji were simultaneously closed. On hearing of the outbreak, Colonel Richardson commanding the troops at

54. Ibid., no.61.
56. Parliamentary Papers, Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition in India during the year 1861-1862. Part 1, p.312.
Cherrapunji hastened with all available men to relieve Jouai where he arrived on 25 January. When word got to Calcutta of the outbreak Government directed the Commissioner of Dacca to send a detachment of the, Eurasian Regiment stationed there by steam to Sylhet, while from the Presidency was sent the '28 and 33 Native Regiments. A full scale military operation went under way. The rebels led by Kiang (Wongbah proving more obstinate than had been anticipated, a proclamation was issued on 26 March forbidding the carrying of arms without licence in the entire district. This was followed by another proclamation declaring the Sainitia Hills to be in a state of rebellion and setting up a Commission for the trial of offences referred under Act XI of 1857. The military Commissioner first issued a proclamation to the people to assist him in restoring the peace and to those who had rebelled to apply for pardon. Meanwhile military operations continued. The general plan was to reduce stockades erected by the rebels, to cut off their supplies and to post detachments at the strongest points of resistance to prevent any large number of Sainitias from assembling. By the end of May,

57. Ibid. H.P.C., 4 April 1862, Mo.5.
58. Ibid.
59. HTPTC, 17 May 1862, No. 120.
60. Parliamentary Papers: Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition in India during the year 1861-1862. Part I, p.313; H.P.C., 10 June 1862. No.58.
Showers reported that the military operations were at an end and that the spirit of the insurrection had been subdued.

The circumstances leading to this outbreak were very obscure though they generally indicate the deep seated discontent among the Daintias towards British rule. It was generally accepted that the imposition of an income tax was the prime cause of the second rebellion. When the necessities of imperial finance imposed an income tax in British India in 1861 the Assam Commissioner applied to Government to know whether the new impost was to be levied in the Saimtia Hills together with the house tax introduced the year before. The reply that came was hardly expected of Government. The district administration was required to collect the income tax along with the house tax, "the incident of the two being different." It appears to have been the belief at Calcutta that the new tax would practically be inoperative in these hills. One cannot agree with Mackenzie that the tax for 1860-1861 was paid without murmur. H. Hopkinson, the Governor-General's Agent and Commissioner of Assam found that the number who had been called upon to contribute to the tax in the district was larger than he expected. Out of a total assessment of 360 persons, 323 were Daintias, and of these no

61. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
less than 68 belonged to Dowai. Hopkinson doubted the policy of the new taxation as it had aroused the Dollois and other minor functionaries. "Who had held almost uncontrolled sway on Dynteah, for so long and had been accustomed only to levy contributions* not to pay them." It was no wonder, therefore, that they rebelled and enlisted the support of the people. 65

The sentiments of the Daintias was further aggravated by the actions of Rowlatt who disarmed those who had broken out in rebellion in 1860 by confiscating their weapons and shields, an act rendered more offensive for shields were burned before their eyes. The darogah of Dowai made matters worse by interfering in one of the religious dances at Dalong just a few days before the storming of the Jowai police outpost. More offence was added by his imposition of restrictions on the cremation of the dead near the Dpwai station. 67 Bengali traders unanimously attributed the uprising to the system of taxing the Sainities and the use of the taxed in a region where trade was to a great extent conducted by barter. 68

65. H.P., 28 March 1862, No.65. Hopkihson faced a similar opposition to the income tax by the Burmese, when he was Commissioner of Tenasserim and Martaban Provinces. He was transferred to Assam as he had shown no credit in judgement and discretion in handling the disturbances there. Abstracts of Letters from India, 1861. No.6, pp.3-5.
66. H.P.C., 13 October 1860, No.60; H.P.C., 17 May 1862, No.119.
Crushed apparently in four months after its outburst the rebellion once again broke out. Roulatt was removed owing to his ignorance of the feeling of the people and Captain B. U. D. Morton took charge of the district. While military operations were pressed anew, C. Haughton the Assam Commissioner who had succeeded Hopkinson was placed in direct charge of the district where he was to remain on the spot to confer personally with the officer commanding the troops to render the assistance of the civil authorities. Every effort was made to contain the rebellion from spreading by direct military action and closing markets in the Daintia Hills, along the border with Khyrim state, Nougong and Sylhet to stop the insurgents from procuring articles of food. Concurrently, conciliatory measures began with a free pardon to all except the leaders of the rebellion. The Deputy Commissioner was directed to refrain from burning villages and indiscriminately harassing the people. No offensive operations of any sort were to be undertaken by the military except on the requisition of the civil authorities. The Commission appointed under Act XI of 1857 was cancelled.

On the failure of negotiations and the pardon

69. Ibid., p. 365. Morton had come from Goalpara.
70. B.3.F., November 1862, No. 378.
71. H.P.C., 10 September 1862, No. 51, C. Haughton Collection, MSS Eur D 529/10, Letter Books of John C. Haughton, Book 1, Haughton to Cecil Beadon, 8 January 1863.
72. Abstracts of Letters from India. 1862, Judicial, No. 56, pp. 689-692.
offered to the rebels a renewed offensive began in November 1862. More troops were called in, the Commission to try offenders was reintroduced, and a reward of one thousand rupees was offered for the apprehension of Kiang Nongbah, the prime mover of the rebellion and a reward of five hundred rupees for each of the other rebel Dolloi and leaders whose capture was likely to hasten the pacification of the hills. Assistance was also given to the civil and military authorities by the Khasi chiefs when called upon to aid the British with a small contingent. The measures had the desired effect. Kiang Nongbah was captured on 27 December, tried by Morton and Colonel Dunsford three days later and hung at the market place in Jowai three hours after his conviction.

The auxiliary force raised by the Khasi chiefs mopped up the remaining rebels through January and February 1863. U Sauar, the Dollai of Sutnga was shot while attempting to rally the rebels after their defeat at Surtiang; U Monsa, the Dolloi of Rambai, was killed by his own people at or near Surtiang; U Long of Padoo, died of sickness; and U Chye Rungbah, the reputed military coadjutor and one of the "most mischievous" of the rebels was killed in an encounter with the inhabitants of Nongbah. Several others surrendered themselves on the sole

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73. Abstracts of Letters from India, 1863, Narrative of the Government of Bengal, No.64, pp.50-57.
75. Ibid., pp.269-270; H.P.C., 11 February 1863, No.29.
condition that their lives be spared, and those that held out
latest were brought in by Syiem Rabon Singh of Khyrim. By late
March 1863 Haughton could communicate to Government that the
Daintia rebellion was at an end.

The Aftermath of Rebellion

After the rebellion came reorganization, even while the rebellion was still under way General Showers suggested that a civil officer should be stationed at 3ouai to supervise the native element of Government who should be entrusted with greater judicial and police powers.* He strongly recommended that the income tax should be abolished by law and would have said the same for the house tax but wanted this continued in consequence of the uprising. He clearly pointed out that the general rules that were applicable elsewhere in the empire should not be adopted "for this uncivilized race,""77 Haughton made similar suggestions though he went a step further in supporting that the Sainitias should have their own Raja, which he C3-Viewed not as a retrograde step but one of trust to hold good so long as it was found to be conducive to the public welfare."79 Both officers were conscious of the need to improve roads, set up schools, encourage trade and arouse a feeling of confidence in Government. 80

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79. 3.C.'Haughton Collection, NSS'Eur D 529/5. Letter Books of John C.Haughton, Book 1, Haughton to Cecil Beadon, 14 November 1862.
80. Ibid., H.P.C., 25 September 1862, No.59.
Government supported these recommendations (though not Haughton's plan to have a Baja for the hills) and the stationing of a European Officer at Dowai with full powers of a Magistrate in charge of a sub-division with judicial, police and revenue powers under the general control of the district's Deputy Commissioner. Government laid down that the main principle to be adopted towards the Daintias is not to leave them in their old state, but while adopting a simple plan of Government, suitable to their present condition and circumstances, and interfering as little as possible with existing institutions, to extend our intercourse with them, and endeavour to introduce among them civilization and order.

The troops stationed in the hills were not to be withdrawn till confidence was thoroughly restored.\(^1\)

Accordingly Captain Clark assumed office as Assistant Commissioner of the Daintia Hills' sub-division, the geographical limits of which was defined much later by a notification of 16 November 1869.\(^2\) The settlement of the tract progressed rapidly enabling Government to withdraw all the troops except two regiments of native infantry which were permanently stationed in the hills till 1885 when the charge of the protection of the sub-division was handed over to the civil police.\(^3\) The Commission appointed for the trial of offenders was dissolved and the ordinary courts resumed their

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\(^1\) Abstracts of Letters from India, 1863, Judicial, No.34, pp.621-622.
\(^2\) The Calcutta Gazette, 24 November 1869, p.2067.
function. The Board of Revenue likewise resumed their authority in revenue matters throughout the district. It was not till November 1863, however, that the last of the rebel leaders surrendered and was sentenced to transportation that the pacification of the Daintia Hills could be said to be complete.

Clarke was confident that the Jaintias fully appreciated the frightful hardships they had undergone during the rebellion and had begun to appreciate the comfort and safety from a state of peace and loyalty to Government, or to the Maharani as they said. The people fast recovered from the temporary poverty during the disturbances. Hats were better attended than ever before and agriculture, trade and commerce recovered.

The Bengal Government directed the Commissioner of Assam to submit a draft set of rules framed on the basis of the existing laws for the local administration of the Jaintia Hills. Haughton's first reaction to this was, that "incautious legislative enactment" had been the cause of rebellion. He argued that it was essential for the administration of justice in these hills that the operation of the general laws of India should be restricted.

84. Ibid.
85. J.C. Haughton Collection, MSS Eur D 530/214, The Letters of J.C. Haughton, Haughton to Richard Haughton (his father) 31 January 1864. Haughton sentenced just this one "ruffian." The Special Commission had sentenced two to death and twenty others to short periods of imprisonment.
86. Charles Uood Collection, MSS Eur F 78/89/ Bundle 3, Clarke to Hopkinson, 28 February 1865.
and those laws should only be enforced insofar as they might be consistent with the circumstances of the tract. The remark he made, he said, applied with equal force to nearly the whole of the hill tribes under his charge including the Garos, Kacharis and Khasis. Citing the instance of excluding the Santhal Parganas from the operation of the general laws and regulations, Haughton wanted the same done for the tribes in question. The Commissioner prepared a draft set of rules, which he admitted was a deviation from the instructions he had received, "but I could see no other satisfactory mode of meeting this difficulty." These rules empowered the Dollois to try civil and criminal cases except those involving Europeans and people not of their tribe. All suits were to be tried in open durbar in the presence of a plaintiff and a defendant or their representatives and with not less than three respectable witnesses. There were to be no appeals to the Deputy Commissioner's court. The latter could, however, call for the proceedings of the local courts. The Assistant Commissioner of the sub-division was invested full powers of a Magistrate in criminal justice. Cases involving a fine to a limit of rupees fifty were entrusted to the Dollois. Simultaneously draft revenue rules were made. The house tax of one rupee per house was to be collected by the Dollois who were to receive a percentage of the collection as remuneration for their efforts. The income tax was to be collected only where it was leviable. The police

87. B.3.P., June 1865, No.129.
88. Ibid., |b.131.
89. Ibid., No.132.
90. Ibid., to.133.
duties was to be undertaken by the regular police and the village authorities. Apparently these draft rules were only brought into force in the district from 12 August 1872 following a general exclusion of the hill tribes of India from the general rules and regulations in force in British India.

**Permanent Station**

It was the geographical situation of what became the British station at Cherrapunji that rendered its development as the centre of British civil and military authority in the hills. Fisher had wanted the cantonment to be set up near Nongkrem, while Scott preferred Mylliem. This was an indication of what was to come for Cherrapunji had served its purpose. Allen continued the search for a new settlement and set the direction when he suggested in his report that the land around Laitlyngkot which Government had acquired from Bur Hanick in January 1830 and which had afterwards been returned to Mylliem state, should be resumed by Government to set up a sanatorium and a cantonment for European troops.

The suggestion to shift the civil and military station from Cherrapunji to Shillong was first mooted by Roulatt in September 1860 following an enquiry by the Military Department for the settlement of non-commissioned officers in the Khasi Hills. The enquiry led to a proposition that a sanatorium for

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92. B.3.P., October 1873, No.4.
93. Bentinck Papers, PUJF 2791/111 Fisher to Scott, 16 October 1830.
European residents of Assam and the district's civil station should be located in the vicinity of the intended settlement for the troops. In choosing Shillong as this station Rowlatt principally had in mind the central location of Shillong which would be more easily accessible to the people than the existing station. Jenkins wrote very approvingly of Rowlatt's proposition but said that it would be premature to do anything until the question of cantoning a European regiment in the Khasi Hills was finally considered. His successor Henry Hopkinson represented that even though Europeans should not be cantoned at Shillong, the place would, still remain a far more suitable location than Cherrapunji for the head-quarters of the civil administration of the district, but that the transfer should not be made until it were previously determined to immediately construct a road between Gauhati and Shillong.

The political reasons which gave Cherrapunji the importance at the time it was first established had long been at an end. The practical disadvantages that rendered it unsuitable to continue as the centre of British administration in the hills was that it received an extraordinary amount of rainfall. The few houses there were barely sufficient for its residents. There was then scarcely any evidence of European enterprise and not even a decent market where its residents could procure the common articles of consumption, a far cry from what it was in the early

96. F.P.P., September 1863, No.25.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid"
Moreover, the supervision of the district by the Assam Commissioner could be more feasible from Shillong than Cherrapunji.

A Committee of enquiry was appointed comprising among others, of Colonel Richardson, commanding the troops at Cherrapunji and Morton the Deputy Commissioner, to report on the suitability of the proposed site. Its report was that the northern slopes of the Shillong range and the plateau of Yeuduh fully and entirely answered the object, and recommended the use of both places for the object in mind. Taking all these into consideration the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir John Peter Grant sanctioned on 29 October 1861, the transfer of the Deputy Commissioner's establishment from Cherrapunji to Shillong.

Earlier in March that year, Melay Singh, Syiem of Mylliem agreed to give rent free land for the Shillong station. 1626 acres of land was ceded under an agreement and money payment was made for the purchase of an additional 759 acres from individual proprietors. The Government, however, did not want the Syiem's land gratis as it "would have certainly been misunderstood by the neighbouring hill chiefs, and would have exposed the government to the imputation of taking advantage of a weak and powerless dependant state for the purpose of obtaining a coveted land."
A second agreement was made with the Syiem on 8 December 1863, revising the transfer of land on acceptance of rupees two thousand as "token compensation." 105 Shillong became the headquarter of the district in 1864.

**Economic Control**

British rule brought about a significant change in the economy of the Khasi-Daintias. The introduction of new vegetables, fruits and cereals dramatically changed the purpose of production from one of home consumption to one of export. The principal crop was potato, the annual production Mills estimated in 1853 at 30,000 maunds. That their gambling character induced the Khasis to frequently take their crops to Calcutta in the hope of large returns though frequently to their complete ruin is no doubt an indication of Khasi enterprise. 107 Potato cultivation was initially confined to the central portion of the hills. The demand for potato had grown so enormously at Calcutta that Allen noticed an increased cultivation of the crop to the east, in the Jaintia Hills and to the west in Maharam state. \(^{108}\) The 50,000 maunds exported in 1858 reached an estimated export of 200,500 maunds by 1876-77. \(^{109}\) Similarly, the demand for Khasi oranges in Bengal resulted in its more extensive cultivation. This trade, however, was entirely in the hands of Harry Inglis who held leases on at most all the orange groves on the southern

foothills. The more sturdy Sheila orange almost inevitably ended in the Calcutta market while the more tender fruit of the higher hills was sold in the bazars of neighbouring Bengal districts. Pineapple, pan, tezpat, betel-nut and some amount of cotton grown on the northern foothills continued to be the principal exports.

It appears that rice was not sufficiently grown in the hills as this commodity was the principal import from Sylhet. By far the greater portion of the trade of the Khasi and Daintia Hills was carried on with Sylhet despite a closer administrative link with Assam. The trade with Assam was comparatively insignificant being principally a barter trade. On the whole, it appears that the trade of these hills with Sylhet was about equally balanced.

More important for the British administration was the trade in the mineral resources of the hills for from this trade Government secured some revenue. Limestone trade continued to be the most extensive and gave Government a reasonably large revenue from rents of the limestone quarries in the British villages and in the Daintia Hills, which had been declared in 1855 to be the property of the British Government. Inglis and Company had a

113. U.D.Allen, op.cit., p.44.
115. U.D.Allen, op.cit., p.23. Little revenue appears to have been collected before 1853 when the amount, principally from rents of limestone quarries stood at Rs.1047. By 1858 revenue collection increased to Rs.23023 as a result of a more extensive working of limestone quarries.
practical monopoly of limestone trade. It had secured from Government the leases of seven quarries at an annual rent of Rs.20470 and the lease of fourteen other quarries from the Khasi chiefs. Three others, Mrs. M. Stark, M. Sarkies and Mohamed Mookim, had secured one lease each for quarrying limestone (from Khasi)... p 116.

The vast deposits of coal unlike limestone could not be worked profitably as the expense of carriage prevented it being of much commercial importance. Consequently its use was limited to stations in the vicinity of the hills. The two mines of importance were those of Cherra and Lakadong in the Daintia Q Hills. That of Cherra seemed to have been almost worked out by 1853. The Lakadong mines was first worked by Darley, Superintendent of the Cherra mines in May 1848 under a three year lease on the payment of a royalty of one rupee for every one hundred maunds of coal removed. The Sylhet coal company acquired the lease from Darley, Neither of the two lease holders made much effort to develop these mines. When the Eastern Bengal Railway proposed to extend its line to Assam, Government called for an examination of the coal tracts in the Khasi, Daintia and Garo Hills. The enquiry did not confirm the expectations formed of the richness of the coal deposits. Before this report could be made, the Agent of the Railway, Franklin Prestage... p 4.

proposed the formation of a company for exploring all the coal fields in the areas surveyed. 119 Nothing must have come out of Prestage's application for it was later reported that Government derived no revenue from any of the coal beds in the Jouai sub-division though some quantity of coal was quarried for use by Government and by Jouai's European residents. 120

The iron trade was entirely in the hands of the Khasis. Despite the extensive beds of surface ore the iron industry in the hills could not develop on the lines that of coal and limestone did as extracting and smelting of iron ore involved a labourous process. Moreover, there was no large capital investment in this industry which was then, and still is today a cottage industry. The smelting centres were in the Khyrim state around Nongkrem and Nogundee, in Cherra and around Hairang. Iron articles such as daos, swords and arrow heads were manufactured in the hills. The greater bulk of the smelted iron was sent to the Sylhet plains in small circular lumps. The Bengali blacksmiths there preferred Khasi iron to English iron because of its malleability. Khasi iron was chiefly used by Sylhet boat-builders for making fastenings for the timber of their boats. The import of cheaper English iron into the plains saw the near collapse of this Khasi industry by the 1870's. 122

The principal markets at the foot of the hills on the Sylhet side were Bholaganj, Chattak, Lakhat, Saintiapur, Dafl'ong, Pharalbazar, Maodong, Ponatit, Sonapur, Molagul and Lengjut, which were held at regular intervals of eight days to permit the hillmen to visit the different hats in rotation. The bulk of the trade remained in the hands of the Khasi-Saintias and a few Bengali traders. Curiously enough, there was an absence of Maruari merchants, who were found to have then penetrated into the farthest corner of the Brahmaputra valley. In time the local economy in the hills was integrated into the colonial economy through the weekly markets which were held on successive days of the eight day week. The development of urban centres at Cherrapunji, Shillong and Douai and its concomitant requirement of plainsmen to staff the administrative and police establishments further encouraged the economic activities of Khasi, Saindia, Bengali and later Maruari traders to meet the material requirements of the town's people and supplying other necessary articles to the smaller hats.

Such a prospering economy could not have been possible without a more extensive network of road communication. There were eight principal roads in the district by the 1870's. The main road connected Gauhati and Shillong which was opened for

123. Ibid., p.241. The Sijems of Cherra and Khyrim levied market duties at Lakhat and Bholagunj respectively.
124. Ibid., p.228. Both the Khasis and Jaintias reckon eight days in the week which are called after the active markets.
wheeled traffic throughout its entire length by 1877. The road built by David Scott traversing the entire hills continued to be of use to the Khasi states of Nongkhlaw and Cherra which were to bear part expenses for its repair. Other roads led to Mawphlang, to Nongstoin near the Garo Hills, to 3owai and on to 3aintiapur in Sylhet and another from the sub-division head-quarters to Nowgong, Another important road linked Shillong with Cherrapunji.

Education and Literature

Another significant catalyst of change was the work of the Christian missions. It may be said that the Bible followed the ledger book\textsuperscript{Q}, both of which came into these hills before the flag. When the Charter Act of 1813 opened British India to missionary activity, William Carey's Baptist Mission at Serampore sent Krishna Chandra Pal, its first Indian convert to Sylhet. The farthest Pal could go into the hills was Pandua where he is said to have converted two Khasis to Christianity. Otherwise the Baptist Mission could not make any headway in this direction and therefore its work was abandoned in Sylhet in 1818. Carey, however, continued his zeal to spread the Gospel by providing a Bengali translation of the New Testament published in 1824.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., pp.231-232.
\textsuperscript{126} John H. Morris, The History of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists' Foreign Mission, pp.70-72.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., p.72, 500 copies were printed. The translation was so imperfect as to be altogether unintelligible to the natives.
Though David Scott had shown much interest in setting up Christian missions in the Garo Hills (which will be discussed in the next chapter), there is little to show that he did anything on these lines in the Khasi Hills. He always maintained the opinion, that 'people in a rude state of civilization, like the Garos and Khasis, "whose ideas of a future state, and the Supreme Being, were vague and indistinct, were much more likely to be converted than races further advanced," like the Hindus and Muslims. Like Carey, Scott believed that the efforts of the missionaries should be combined with instruction in agriculture and the mechanical arts, with the view of raising the material lot of these people. Unfortunately few of the early missionaries took their advise.

For almost twenty years there was no mission among the Khasis till Carey sent eighteen year old Alexander Lish to Cherrapunji in late 1832 to set up a school at the recently acquired British sanatorium. The school for boys, which at first promised exceedingly well came close to closure as the novelty wore away. Lish did the first Khasi translations, all in the Bengali script of portions of the Bible. Soon two more schools were opened at Mawsmai and Mawmluh. His efforts to evangelize the Khasis did not apparently met with success as he found the people "so steeped in ignorance as to make it almost impossible

129. J.H. Morris, op. cit., p.73. Lish had reported that he was preparing a Khasi Grammar. How far he proceeded with it is not known.
to convey any religious ideas to their minds." Towards the close of 1837 the Serampore Mission was amalgamated with the Baptist Mission Society and in the following year its work in the Khasi Hills was abandoned.

There was little evidence of Lish's work when Thomas Dones and his wife arrived in Cherrapunji in June 1841 to start the Welsh Presbyterian Mission there. This mission did not come to the hills from any Government encouragement (as was the case with the American Baptist Mission in Goalpara and the Brahmaputra Valley), but from a recommendation made by Jacob Tomlin, a former London Mission Society missionary who had spent some months in these hills, and a generous offer to pay the passage cost of its first missionaries. Dones opened schools where Lish had earlier begun work for the education of the Khasis and like his precursor began translations and preparing school books, first in the Bengali characters "which proved an insuperable difficulty to his pupils," and followed "inspite of much adverse criticism," by adopting Roman characters.

As the number of missionaries joining the mission

130. Ibid., p. 74.
131. Ibid., p. 75.
132. Ibid., pp. 34-35. Tomlin had also suggested two other fields in Manipur and Gujarat, though he urged the mission to first take up work in the Khasi Hills.
133. Ibid., pp. 80-81; D.H. Morris, The Story of our Foreign Mission, pp. 26-27. (This is a later and abridged edition of Morris' first full length account of the Mission.) Morris writes that criticism to Dones use of the Roman script came from both those at home and in India. Alexander Duff supported his efforts, so did Tomlin.
in the Khasi Hills grew, so did its efforts to start more schools and publication of religious and school material. Though the education of boys posed numerous difficulties, they were not in any degree greater as experienced with the training of girls, for to both sexes the idea of educating a woman appeared ridiculous. By the end of 1851 when the mission had completed its first ten years two more schools had been opened at d'ongsaulia and Sheila. William Lewis who guided the mission in these parts for eighteen years, however, could only regret:

there is no regard to education in this country. . . . . . . The chiefs give us no help, nor do they give any good example to the people, by sending their own children, nephews, and others to be educated. Not one of the chiefs are able to read themselves, and the Cherra chiefs is a great opponent to education."

Mills gave a favourable report of the mission work and suggested that Government should give an impulse to the well sustained exertions of missionaries by establishing a vernacular school "to show that government was not indifferent to the diffusion of education amongst them."

Dalhousie expressed great satisfaction at the earnest zeal of Lewis, and the encouraging though moderate success of his labours.

137. * Ibid., pp.121-122.
Instead of establishing a vernacular school, it appeared to the Governor-General that a better way to aid education among the Khasi-Jaintias was to give financial assistance to the mission either in the way of salaried teachers for secular instruction, or by defraying a part of the cost of translating and printing suitable books either in Bengali or in Khasi languages. "The absence of religious prejudice, and almost of religion, among the Khasias and other hill tribes in that direction removes the objection that might be taken to the promotion of secular instruction by Government in other parts of India through the means of missionary aid." Early in 1854 Government communicated its decision "that the spread of education among the Khasi and other hill tribes could be most effectively secured by extending help to the Missionary Institution," and voted a small monthly grant of rupees fifty. It is interesting to note that this was the first grant made by Government towards education through the agency of a religious organization.

By the close of 1857 the mission schools numbered sixteen with 240 pupils, among them was a school in Douai. Allen gave a favourable report of the mission's work in educating and "civilizing" the Khasis though "it cannot be said that these educational operations have proved successful." The

schools were not popular with the Khasis. William Robinson, the
Inspector of Schools, himself a one-time missionary, and Hudson,
the Principal Assistant Commissioner, attributed this attitude
in a great measure to the use of the Khasi language and the
Roman character in these schools. Both officers were of the
opinion that there would have been less opposition and greater
success had instruction been given in the Bengali language, and
even had the Bengali instead of the Roman character been
used in reducing the Khasi language to a script. It has
been argued very rightly "that the missionaries adopted the
Roman characters because that was the easiest course for them
to take, insofar as it was the way in which their own languages
were written." The Khasi chiefs and people were reluctant
to send their children to the schools as no Bengali was
taught to give them the required knowledge to communicate with
the plainsmen with whom they were so dependant on for the
two ways trade.

Both Allen and Robinson supported the start of a
Bengali school at Cherrapunji, for as the latter pointed out,
so long as the Khasis continued to be ignorant of the Bengali
language they would be obliged to efface themselves in the
hands of Bengalis for the transaction of all important
business matters. Though Lewis very naturally dreaded the

142. F. S. Downs, Christianity in North East India, pp.251-252.
144. Ibid., pp.42-44; B.E.P., 11 August 1859, No.9.
common use of Bengali as the medium of instruction in the schools since he feared it would lead to the irruption of "dissolute Bengallees" into the hills, he nevertheless began to teach that language in all but the elementary schools under his superintendence. General Showers noted this very same dilemma in the schools in the Saintia Hills and therefore suggested the opening of Bengali schools in the sub-division. This whole question of the medium of instruction in the schools of the district as settled in Government's reply to the various letters and reports it had received. The Lieutenant Governor, Cecil Beadon observed "to educate the Cossyahs is... a duty the discharge of which is forced upon the Government as a means no less of governing the hills than of improving the condition of the people," but he was "inclined to leave the whole management of all the schools... in the hands of the Welsh Mission, subject only to the inspection of an officer appointed, under the authority of the Inspector of the Worth East Circle for this special purpose." When Haughton raised the issue again Cecil Beadon made Government's policy in this matter more clear when he added that he "doubted the expediency of giving instructions to the Cossyahs otherwise than in their'oun language and in English."

145. B.E.P., 11 August 1859, No.9.
147. B.E.P., November 1862, No.45.
148. B.3.P., 6 April 1863, No.49.