CHAPTER IV

TRANSITION

During the First Anglo-Burmeish War, Gambhir Singh was allowed to raise a contingent known as the 'Manipur Levy' paid and officered by the British Government. This Levy rendered splendid services during the later part of the war with Burma and successfully drove the Burmese out of Manipur. Considering, therefore, the services rendered by Gambhir Singh and his irregulars the Governor-General in Council allowed the Manipuri Chief to increase the strength of his Levy to two thousand men and to appoint Captain F.J. Grant and Lieutenant R.B. Pemberton as the Commissioners of the Levy and another British officer, Lieutenant George Gordon as its Adjutant.

Shortly after the restoration and recognition of Gambhir Singh as the Raja of Manipur the Supreme Council decided, with rather undue haste, to withdraw subsidies payable to Gambhir Singh on account of the Manipur Levy. But Manipur at the time had not settled down to normal and peaceful conditions and the troops were busy in subduing the refractory hill tribes, as stated above; and no one was certain about the future designs of the arrogant and disgruntled Ava authorities. At that time the withdrawal of the British help

1. Supra., p.27.
2. F.Polti. 'A' Progs., April 1864, No.107; Memorandum on British relation with Manipur.
could have spelt disaster to Manipur and the security of the whole North Eastern Frontier would have been greatly imperilled; for to the Burmese Manipur was the key to Assam and Cachar. The British officers at Sylhet pointed out that it was essential to the tranquility of the North Eastern Frontier that Manipur should be kept an ally devoted to the Company's interests and it was observed that it would not be prudent economy to risk the State for the sake of a few thousand rupees (Rs 18,000 a month). David Scott, the Agent to the Governor-General rightly observed that the time was not ripe to withhold the services of the British officers and the subsidies payable to the Government of Manipur and, therefore, strongly held the view in favour of the retention of the Levy. Scott's report opened the eyes of the authorities in Calcutta and Gambhir Singh was once again allowed to increase the strength of his Levy up to three thousand men. Thus, during the time when Gambhir Singh needed the services of a strong force at his command, particularly in his attempt to bring the whole of the hills and plains of Manipur under his effective control, the Manipur Levy, indeed, began to play a significant role.

Inspite of the advocacy of the local authorities, the retention of a body of irregulars like that of the Manipur Levy did not find favour with the Governor-General in Council. On March 28, 1833, Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, while reviewing the activities of the military

5. S.P., 15 September 1826, No.37.
establishment in Manipur, questioned the utility of the policy of identifying the British interest, with those of the petty State of Manipur which was separated from the Company's dominion by an extremely difficult tract of country. The advantages of retaining connection with Manipur appeared to His Lordship very problematical as the enquiries conducted by Pemberton and Jenkins clearly showed that the small State was still considered totally incompetent to defend itself against Burmese invasion. The Governor-General however, did not rule out the necessity of retaining a small garrison of British troops under the direct command of British officers. His Lordship in Council observed that the presence of a British detachment in the State would certainly increase the feeling of security in the minds of the Manipuris. The Supreme Council, however, invited opinions from the local authorities. Scott, Agent to the Governor-General adhered to his earlier opinion about the retention of the Levy, but held a different view on the question of keeping a garrison of British troops in Manipur. He felt it advisable to place only two hundred and not the whole strength of the Levy under the sole and immediate control of the British officers in the State. This divergence in opinion between the man on the spot and the authorities in Calcutta finally led the Supreme Government to the conclusion that the question of retention of the Levy should entirely be handed over to the discretion of the Government of Manipur.

THE POLITICAL AGENCY:

On 7 February, 1835, British superintendence over the Manipur Levy was withdrawn. The Governor-General in Council, however, thought it expedient to retain the service of one British officer in Manipur for the preservation of a friendly intercourse and as a medium of communication with the Government of Manipur and as occasion might require with the Burmese authorities on that frontier, and more specially, to prevent border feuds and disturbances, which might lead to hostility between the Manipurians and the Burmese. With this object in view, His Lordship in Council instituted in March 1835, a separate office known as the Political Agency in Manipur with Lieutenant George Gordon as its first Agent on a consolidated salary of Rs 12,000 per annum.

The duties of the Political Agent were to preserve a friendly intercourse and to serve as a medium of communication with the Government of Manipur and the Burmese authorities on the frontier and more especially to prevent border feuds in that direction. In the discharge of his duties the Political Agent was informed that he had to receive instructions from and correspond directly with the Secretary to the Government of India in the Political Department. The Agency was thus kept under the direct control of the Government of India up to 1867. But in 1867, a question relating to the transfer of the Agency from the direct control of the Government of India to that of Bengal arose and subsequently, with the institution of Assam into a separate Chief Commissioner's province in 1874 the above Agency was placed under the control of the Chief Commissioner of Assam and the Political Agent was instructed to forward his letters through him (the Chief Commissioner) under flying seal.

5b. Ibid. 6. Ibid.
7. See Appendix F; List of the Political Agents from 1835-91.
The establishment of a Political Agency in Manipur did not necessarily mean that the Rajas of the State had to conduct their administrations under the dictates of the Political Agent only. From the above Minute of the Governor-General it was evident that the duty of the Political Agent at Manipur was like that of an ambassador. "The Political Agent is dependent on the will and pleasure of the Maharaja for everything." ¹⁰ "His very word and movement are known to the Maharaja. He is in fact a British Officer under Manipur surveillance. If the Maharaja is not pleased with Political Agent he cannot get anything, he is ostracised, from bad coarse black atta which the Maharaja sells him as a favour, the dhobi who washes his clothes and the Nagas who work in his garden: he cannot purchase anything at any price. The court is almost openly hostile, though they have pliancy enough to pretend to a great regard for the Political Agent and the Sirkar."¹¹ Since the past history of Manipur showed that the State had been the scene of civil wars, murders, devastation and misery under the nominal control of her chiefs, the presence of a Political Agent at Manipur, as a rule, assured security, peace, order and comparative prosperity in the State. But this did not necessarily mean that the Political Agent had to keep in control the movements and ambitions of the Raja and the other princes in Manipur and to impose restrictions in the use of guns, muskets and ammunitions that had

¹⁰ J. Clark, Precis of Correspondence regarding Manipur affairs, p.23.
¹¹ Ibid.
been given to them by the British for the purposes of the defence of the country\(^{12}\). He was distinctly instructed by the Supreme Government that the right to interfere in the internal affairs of Manipur was above his jurisdictions.

Thus, the early history of the Political Agency allowed no room for interference in the internal politics of Manipur. However, when a long series of succession wars and revolts occurred one after another in the State, the reigning Chiefs solicited more and more the help and protection of the British Government for their own protections and advancements to the throne. This new development led the Supreme Government to believe that Manipur could not stand without the British help and, therefore, began to consider her as one of the protected states. But the meaning of this 'protection' raised by the Supreme Government, nevertheless, did not arise from any bilateral agreement, but was purely a unilateral act of the British, who, cautiously supported the Government of Manipur to make it stable and strong so that the Burmese might not have a foothold again in that State to attack the adjoining British districts. The Government of Manipur simply regarded the British as an ally always sympathetic to the cause of the state but never as 'a sovereign protector'. This gross misunderstanding in the interpretation of the word 'protection' between the two Governments led to a series of unhappy incidents in the history of the Anglo-

\(^{12}\) F.C., 13 December, 1850, No.190.
Manipuri relations as will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

CHANDRAKIRTI SINGH AND THE POLITICAL AGENT:

In 1844 Captain W. McCullock succeeded Gordon as the Political Agent of Manipur. The early relations between Chandrakirti Singh and the Political Agent were far from being friendly. He could not forget the indifference of McCullock to the repeated requests he had made, while he was at Cachar, to restore the throne of Manipur. At last when he managed to occupy the guddi purely by his own prowess, the Kabaw Valley compensation was again suspended and there was also delay in recognising him as the Raja of Manipur. This further offended him. McCullock was aware of the displeasure of Chandrakirti Singh but he was convinced that the Raja would finally be able to realise his strength and position. However, in 1850 things changed from bad to worse. McCullock, after collecting information from Yumnaba Lila Singh Subedar, the Officer-in-charge of the northern Nagas, reported that Chandrakirti Singh had supplied arms and men to Gausai Nagas of Konowah Village, who were by then in a state of rebellion against the Hon'ble Company. The report revealed that eight Nagas from the above village came to Manipur and presented two elephant tusks and a slave to the Raja of Manipur for the latter's help against the British. Major Jenkins, the Agent to the

14. Ibid.
Governor-General, North East Frontier, also reported that a considerable section of Manipuri Sepoys had ascended the Gaumai Hills for the purpose of giving aid to the Gaumai Nagas. After the perusal of the above records, the Governor-General in Council directed McCullock to inform Chandrakirti Singh that His Lordship in Council had learnt the news of the Raja's help to the Gaumai Nagas with surprise and, therefore, expressed concern on the circumstances that were connected with the arrival and reception of the above Nagas at Manipur. The Supreme Council further instructed McCullock that the latter should inform Chandrakirti Singh that though the Government had generously left to Manipur perfect independence as to its internal management, it would not tolerate any action that might evince the Raja's intention of supporting any enemies or rebellious subjects of the Supreme Government.

Chandrakirti Singh was also informed that before the Supreme Government had recognised him as the Raja of Manipur, he should not try to involve himself in any matter that might establish a strained relation between him and the Government. When McCullock conveyed the displeasure of the Supreme Government to Chandrakirti Singh, the latter denied the charges against him. However, the Raja instituted an inquiry and therein, he found out the truth that the Gaumai Nagas came to Manipur with one elephant tusk and a slave to Chongtha Selungba.

15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., No.152, Halliday to McCullock, 27 December 1850.
17. Ibid., No.367, Jenkins to Halliday, 9 December 1850.
and the latter, with the consent of Shetu Singh, the Senapati, accepted the above presents with an understanding that the above Nagas be helped with men and money from Manipur. Since the Senapati was involved in the Gaumai incident, Chandrakirti Singh reported to the Government that he had degraded the former and had deprived him of all the insignia of office and that a guard was placed over him. After this incident Chandrakirti Singh abjured all hostile activities towards the British, and the Supreme Government, in return, guaranteed the Raj of Manipur to him and to his descendants and agreed to prevent by force of arms, if necessary, any attempt that might dislodge him from his power. Thus the marked hostilities between Chandrakirti Singh and the Supreme Government came to a peaceful end. However, the Political Agent was instructed to help the Raja in the execution of his administration and, if necessary, in the protection of his subjects against any oppressive act of the latter; because the Supreme Council believed that if such measures were not taken properly the Raja's rule might be tyrannical. The authorities in Calcutta, however, knew that the above instructions were clearly outside the purview of the Political Agent and, therefore, might be interpreted as a sign that they intended to interfere gradually in the affairs of Manipur so that they could gain the upper hand in the domestic matters of the State by reducing the status of the State to a nominal independence.

18. Ibid.
Chandrakirti Singh realised that the inhabitants of Manipur needed peace and prosperity. He also knew that it was not possible on his part to establish a stable Government in his State without the active support and sympathy of the Supreme Government. In view of these circumstances, he did not attach undue importance to his status as an independent ruler, but began to establish more friendly relations with the British. By that time Mutiny broke out in India. On receipt of the information, the Raja called upon the Political Agent and offered his assistance. McCullock accepted the Raja's help and reported the matter to the Supreme Government. Since there was no suspicion of a mutinous spirit by the men of the Sylhet Light Infantry in Cachar by that time, the Agent conveyed the Manipuri Chief that he found no immediate necessity of calling on the latter's help in that affair. However, the Agent expressed his opinion that if anything happened to that frontier he had more confidence in the Raja's friendliness.

On 18 November, 1857, three companies of the 34th Native Infantry broke into open mutiny. When this news reached Manipur it caused considerable sensation in the State. As the mutineers advanced north-wards it was also rumoured that they were making for Manipur. After marching through the jungles of Tipperah the mutineers entered the district

22. P.C., 28 May, 1858, No.139, McCullock to Secy. Govt. of India, 12 February, 1858.
of Sylhet with the object of joining in Cachar Varendrajit Singh, alias Sana Chahi Ahum, a son of the late Raja Chourjit Singh, who along with Parbitar Singh and Milambar Singh attempted for the throne of Manipur as narrated in the previous chapter. At a place known as Latu they encountered a detachment of the Sylhet Light Infantry on December 18, 1857 and succeeded in killing its Commandant Major Byng. But they were closely followed and repeatedly attacked by Lieutenant Ross until they were reduced to a paltry few who escaped into the jungles.

On December 25, intelligence of the action at Latu was received at Manipur. The Manipuris in Cachar were supposed to guide them to Manipur. Chandrakirti Singh, at the request of the Political Agent, ordered four hundred men under a Major to start for the Jiri, the boundary between Cachar and Manipur, to intercept the mutineers, should they come that way. If Varendrajit Singh ever conceived the project of gaining the throne with the help of the mutineers, it was rightly felt that, he would have had a fair chance of success, for the idea of a revolution was always attractive in Manipur. But it was observed that his success would be a signal for anarchy in the State and a danger to the security of the frontiers in that direction. McCulloch, therefore, held the view that if the prince and his party be kept away by the British detachment from entering into villages and procuring food, they would,

24. P.C., 28 May, 1858, No.139.
apparently, be of little consequence, even if they were joined by evil-disposed Manipuri Princes. The Political Agent rightly observed that the crossing of the Hills that separate the valleys of Cachar and Manipur without food would surely be their death. McCullock by that time realised that the Manipuris did not understand the meaning of the Mutiny. They held a different opinion on the outbreak and were convinced that the mutineers would do no harm to them. However, Chandrakirti Singh had a different sentiment. He was always sympathetic to the cause of the British. Taking advantage of the sympathies of Chandrakirti Singh with the British, the Political Agent induced the Manipuri chief that a prince with the mutineers would possibly bring a revolution in Manipur and a revolution would certainly bring the Burmese into Manipur and thus might alter even his position in the State. If the Raja could keep the mutineers out of the State, the fear of a revolution in Manipur might, perhaps, be averted. Chandrakirti Singh concurred in the opinion of McCullock and arrangements for checking the advance of the mutineers towards his State were immediately made. Information to the above effect was also given to the Superintendent of Cachar.

On 15 June, 1858, six Manipuris, who joined hands with Narendrajit Singh, were arrested by the Superintendent of Cachar. An extensive conspiracy, involving many of the princes and most of the Manipuris in Cachar and some in Sylhet, was suspected to have been planned for an attack on Manipur.

25. Ibid.
On receipt of the information Chandrakirti Singh sent more troops to intercept their advance. Subsequently, the Manipuri troops made an encounter with Marendrajit Singh's force. A scuffle took place in which several mutineers were made prisoners. Marendrajit Singh was arrested while trying to escape to Manipur.

McCullock desired to send Marendrajit to Cachar for trial. But the prince received severe wounds in his last attempt against Manipur and, therefore, the Political Agent did not urge his immediate removal from the State. Considering the relationship in which the above prince stood to him, Chandrakirti Singh also expressed his desire of carrying the trial of the former in Manipur, and even if he was found guilty in the trial, the Raja still adhered to the opinion of keeping his cousin in confinement in Manipur. The removal of Marendrajit Singh was not at all appreciated by Chandrakirti Singh. However, when the Raja saw that a group of his nobles and a considerable section of his subjects were in favour of detaining his cousin in Manipur, he changed his mind and ordered the latter's removal to Cachar under strict military guard. Nevertheless, Chandrakirti Singh appealed to the Supreme Government to spare his cousin's life even if the latter was found guilty.

Marendrajit Singh was tried at Manipur and found guilty of joining the mutineers of the 34th Native Infantry while he was in Cachar and his property in Cachar was

27. P.C., 16 July, 1868, No.23; Stewart to Secy. Govt. of India, 8 June, 1868.
confiscated. He was sent to Cachar as a political prisoner. However, his wives and children were allowed to go everywhere they pleased and a small allowance was granted to them out of the above confiscated estate.\textsuperscript{28}.

Besides Narendrajit Singh, other princes, Khwairakpa, Kanhai Singh and Haojao Singh were also arrested in early 1858 on suspicion of their entertaining hostile designs against the British.\textsuperscript{29} The above princes managed their escape but were recaptured and sent to Alipore Jail as State prisoners.

Throughout the above proceedings the conduct of Chandrakirti Singh had been most praiseworthy. He and eight of his officers were the only men in Manipur who seemed to have a heart in what they were doing. McCullock, therefore, proposed the recognition of Chandrakirti Singh's service in the shape of a reward so that he could show it with pride to his own people. Since Gambhir Singh had been honoured with the reward of a sword and a belt in recognition of service in the Cossiah Hills, the Political Agent suggested that his son Chandrakirti Singh also should be honoured, at least, with the above rewards for the service he rendered in the last outbreak. During the Mutiny, Chandrakirti Singh evinced his good disposition by sending his troops to the Cachar-Manipur frontier and by assisting the British effectively in exterminating the mutineers. In addition to a sword and a belt, McCullock, therefore, suggested a dress of honour also to be

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., No.24.
\textsuperscript{29} P.C., 26 August, 1859, No.27.
given to the Raja. As for the eight officers, Chingakhamba Pukhramba, Chingakhamba Dewan, Nepra Selunga, Swaijamba Selunga and his brother, Khumbong Selunga, Nandabapu Lairikyengba Hunjab and Gokul Thakur, the Political Agent suggested small gifts. The Governor-General in Council concurred in the opinion of the Political Agent and presented a dress of honour, a sword and a belt to Chandrakirti Singh in 1859 for his active co-operation in the last mutiny and robes of honour to his above mentioned officers. Roma Singh, one of the two majors who actually fought against the mutineers was awarded the mutiny Medal.

The causes of the failure of the mutineers to enter Manipur were manifold in character. The Raja and the people of Manipur never understood clearly what the mutiny meant to them. The Raja was supposed to make his subjects revolt against the British; but on the other hand, he himself was always sympathetic to the British cause. He extended his help to the latter any time he was called for. Thus the combined strength of the two forces of the British and that of Manipur stood as an impenetrable barrier for the mutineers. Moreover, the object of the Manipuri Prince Narendrajit Singh who led the mutineers, was different from those of the mutineers. His intention was more to advance his personal cause to gain the throne of Manipur than to support the spirit of the mutiny. Naturally, therefore, the people of Manipur did not sympathise with the mutineers. They, on the other hand, suspected

that the mutineers were supporting the prince in his attempt to
gain the throne of Manipur. If the ruling chief of Mani-
pur had cared for the cause of the mutineers, and if Narendra-
jit Singh was motivated by unselfish designs, the course of
the mutiny in Manipur would have been otherwise.

PROBLEMS IN THE POLITICAL AGENCY:

Shortly after the Mutiny, the Civil Finance Commis-
sion under Sir Richard Temple observed, in February 1861,
that the Manipur Agency should be abolished immediately31
because of the fact that the nature of the then existing
Anglo-Burmese relations made the position of the Political
Agent at Manipur much less important 32. Moreover, the huge
amount of expenditure that was allotted to the Agency year after year
was another argument put forward for the abolition of the
Agency. If the Agency be abolished, the Commission opined
that £14,000 per annum would be saved, and as for the contin-
uation of the British relations with Manipur, the Superin-
tendent of Cachar might be instructed to watch over the in-
ternal affairs of the State33. The proposition submitted by
the Civil Finance Commission had adverse effects on Manipur.
Every British subject desired to quit the State at the ear-
liest opportunity, trade with Burma almost ceased and the
unoffending Nagas and Kukis who had been induced by former
Political Agents to come down to the valley of Manipur from
their respective hills were immediately seized and enslaved
by the authorities in Manipur34.

31. F.Polt.1'A', May, 1861, No.258; The Civil Finance Commi-
sion to Young, 26 February, 1861.
32. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
Examining the above developments in Manipur, Cullock once again, reported to the Supreme Government in favour of the retention of the Agency. He wrote: "Many a serious matter has been settled by the Agent which, had it been left to the Burmese and Manipuris themselves, would have resulted in the subversion of Manipur. To remove the Political Agent, would, I believe, be to give Manipur to the Burmese." Considering the importance of keeping a responsible British officer in Manipur, specially for bringing law and order in the Burmese frontier, Captain Stewart, the Superintendent of Cachar, also expressed his opinion in favour of the continuation of the Agency. He reported that the duties of the Political Agent were to prevent border feuds, to put down the oppressive measures of the Government of Manipur and to keep a check over the general conduct of the administration of the State. Stewart, therefore, held the view that the effect of withdrawing the Political Agent would lead to immediate anarchy in Manipur, and taking advantage of that apparent withdrawal of British protection from the State, the border tribes and other Manipuri princes, who had a dozen factions amongst themselves, would split against their Raja and try to place their own man on the throne. The Superintendent of Cachar reported that the Political Agency in Manipur should not, in any case, be withdrawn wholly from Manipur. If the

35. As quoted by Alexander Mackenzie in his book North East Frontier of Bengal, p.156.
36. F.Politl.'A', October, 1861, No.814.
Supreme Government believed that the continuation of the Agency as a costly affair, he suggested that the Agent might be reduced to the rank of an assistant under the Superintendent of Cachar. After the perusal of the reports submitted by McCulloch and Stewart, the Supreme Council at last decided to continue the Agency in Manipur. Lord Canning, the then Governor-General of India, remarked: "...... the Manipur Agency may be abolished. McCulloch reported his favour for the continuation of the Agency. The internal administration, the hill problems necessitated the continuance of the Agency."38

Thus, with the concurrence of the Supreme Government, the Political Agency in Manipur was retained and Dr. Thomas Dillon was appointed to succeed McCulloch to the Agency.39

But in October, 1863 the question of its abolition once again, arose. Dr. Dillon's highhandedness made the position of the Political Agent extremely critical. He soon became an arch enemy of Chandrakirti Singh, the ruling Chief, because he began to exercise powers and privileges originally not assigned to his office. He also began to interfere in trade and commerce of the State and kept some of the officers of the Raja's Court in confinement without the latter's consent and also tried to arrest some of the Manipuri princes. He abused the Raja and threatened his mother, his ministers and the Raja himself with punishment. He also violated the laws which had been framed and had been in force relating to the Hill tribes, particularly.

37. Ibid.
38. F.Poltl.'A', Progs., April, 1864, No.110, Notification Foreign Dept., 6 April, 1864.
the Nagas and the Kukis in Manipur. Unable to cope with Dillon, Chandrakirti Singh appealed to the Supreme Government for the latter's immediate removal from Manipur and for the appointment of a successor who would understand the sentiments of the people. The proceedings of Dillon could not but compel the authorities in Calcutta to give a second thought over the whole issue - the continuation of the Political Agency in Manipur. Since Dillon had entirely misunderstood the objects of his appointment as the Political Agent, the nature of his duties, the relation in which he stood to the Raja of Manipur and the transaction of his duties in respect to the internal administration of the State, the Supreme Council ordered him to leave immediately for Sylhet. Chandrakirti Singh was, at the same time informed that the subject of filling up the vacancy was under the consideration of the Government.

As a matter of fact the Government of India had decided to withdraw the Political Agent and Mr. H. Beveridge, the officiating Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector of Sylhet was directed to recover the records and other properties belonging to the Manipur Agency to Sylhet. After collecting the records Beveridge submitted a report wherein he strongly urged the continuation of the Agency. He reported that Chandrakirti Singh and his ministers were not in fault, that they had always shown their obligations to Gordon or McCulloch, the

40. F.Politl. 'A', November 1863, No.63; Bayley to Chandrakirti Singh, 20 November 1863.
41. Ibid., No.6, Bayley to Dillon, 6 November 1863.
42. Ibid.
43. P.Progs. April 1864, No.102, Memorandum on Manipur, Beveridge to Aitchison, 26 January 1864.
former Political Agents at Manipur from the start. The report of Beveridge brought about a revulsion of feeling in the mind of Lord Canning, the Governor-General of India. He expressed: "The people, including the Raja himself were very anxious that the Agency should be maintained. If the Agency be maintained clear and distinct instructions should be given to the Agent limiting his interference with the direct administration of the country to the preservation of the rights required by the British Government under treaty and to promoting good Government by his advice to the Raja and discouragement of the system of monopolies, forced labour and slavery."  

Thus the Political Agency in Manipur was allowed to continue and McCullock was reappointed to succeed Dillon. The combined efforts of the Raja and the Political Agent had brought about many changes in the political structure and social and economic life of Manipur. But it became a problem for the Government of India to find a suitable man for the post of the Political Agent at Manipur. The persons who filled the vacancy after retirement of McCullock were not fit for the post until 1877 when Lieutenant Colonel James Johnstone accepted the post. "Manipur," to which Colonel Johnstone

44. Ibid., No. 110, Notification, Foreign Dept., 6 April 1864.  
45. See Appendix F: List of Political Agents 1835 to 1891.
was appointed in 1877, was called by one of the Indian Secretaries the Cinderella among Political Agencies. "They'll never," he said, "get a good man to take it." "Well," was the reply, "a good man has taken it now." "

Inspite of it the proceedings of the Political Agent was looked with suspicion by the Manipur Government. Johnstone's movements were closely watched and whenever he went spies, open or secret, followed him. Though it was very disgusting Johnstone did not object to it. He went on carrying his duties, maintaining the dignity of his office. By fair dealings and free discussions, he soon became successful in disarming the suspicion of the Government of Manipur. He wrote: "In my dealings with the Durbar, I always tried to bear in mind that I was the representative of the strong dealing with the weak ....... whenever it became necessary for me to interfere, I did so with great firmness, but always tried to carry the Maharaja and his ministers with me." 

After the retirement of Johnstone, the Supreme Government never realised that great care and caution should be taken in filling the vacancy. The records of the past plainly showed that the appointment of a Political Agent was always a

47. Ibid.
48. Johnstone, Sir James, My Experiences in Manipur and the Naga Hills, p.95.
49. Ibid., p.110
delicate one, but no pains seem to have been at any time taken to find a suitable man; if one happened to be appointed it was a matter of chance. "The work may not have been of a nature requiring the very highest class of intellect, but it certainly did require a rather rare combination of qualities, together with one indispensable to make a good officer, namely a real love for the work, the country and the people." In 1888 Frank St. Clair Grimwood, a junior officer of Sylhet, who had recently arrived from England, was sent to Manipur as the Political Agent. But he had hardly remained there for about eleven months and had gained some knowledge about Manipur when he was suddenly transferred to Shillong. After the death of Mr. Heath, Grimwood was again called upon to fill the vacancy in October 1889. It did not take a long time on the part of the Government of India to feel the consequences of its thoughtless policy. Appointment of inefficient persons and frequent changes of the incumbent gave opportunity for domestic squabbles within the royal family of Manipur. The climax of this unstable policy and bungling diplomacy was the Manipur War of 1891 as will be discussed in the subsequent chapter. Had the Foreign Department of the Government of India been cautious from the very beginning, such the War of 1891 might have been easily averted and the history of the Anglo-Manipuri Relations would have been recorded otherwise.

50. Ibid., pp.273-274.
Appendix F.

List of the Political Agents from 1835 to 1891.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of the Political Agents</th>
<th>Length of Service</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Captain George Gordon</td>
<td>1835-1844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Major W. McCullock</td>
<td>1844-1862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dr. Thomas Dillon</td>
<td>1862-1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major W. McCullock</td>
<td>1863-1867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dr. L. Brown</td>
<td>1867-1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Colonel Thompson (Offg.)</td>
<td>1872-1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Dr. L. Brown</td>
<td>1872-1875</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Captain Durrand (Offg.)</td>
<td>1875-1875</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. G.H. Dantan (Offg.)</td>
<td>1875-1877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Major General Sir James Johnstone</td>
<td>1877-1886</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Major Trotter</td>
<td>April 1886-July 1887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Mr. Frank St. Clair Grimwood</td>
<td>Dec. 1887-Feb. 1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Mr. Heath</td>
<td>Feb. 1889-Sept. 1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Mr. Frank St. Clair Grimwood</td>
<td>Oct. 1889-March 1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Lieutenant Colonel H. St. P. Maxwell</td>
<td>1892-1893</td>
</tr>
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