

# WOMEN OF ASSAM

By E. ELIZABETH VICKLAND

Author of

"Through Judy's Eyes," "With Christ in Assam"

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To the  
Woman's American Baptist Foreign  
Mission Society  
and to  
My Constituency  
The Loyal Women of Our American  
Baptist Churches

## PREFACE

I HAVE written this volume to introduce to my American friends the women whom I have learned to call my friends here in Assam. I do not know all the groups of women in this wide province. I have met and known intimately only women of the upper classes, Hindu and Mohammedan, whom the contacts of eight years have made very dear to me. I have taken rich gifts from their hands, I have known real fellowship with many of them, and I trust I may have been of help to them in return. The light of their womanhood is no less bright because it is hidden. They have been terribly handicapped, brazenly maligned, shamefully betrayed, sadly cheated. Despite it all they have and are achieving freedom and progress. We must judge them—if we dare act as judges—not by what lies ahead to be accomplished, but by the distance they have already come.

The volume is not by any means an exhaustive study of Indian womanhood. Such study has already been made by those who are better qualified than I. Neither have I tried to enter into the details of their worship, the inner significances of their creeds, or the meaning of their customs. Exhaustive treatises have already been written for such as wish to go further into these matters.

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## Preface

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I am indebted to many for help in this work: To Miss Linnie Holbrook, of Tura, Assam, for the chapter on Garo women; to Mrs. R. B. Longwell, of Impur, Assam, for that on the Naga women. The story would be sadly lacking if the women of the Assam hills had been left out, for theirs is a thrilling record. I acknowledge my debt to Mrs. W. S. Urquhart, of the Scottish Mission Churches' College, Calcutta, for her review of my chapter on the Hindu woman's religion; to Rev. and Mrs. S. A. D. Boggs, for reading and criticizing the content of the manuscript as a whole; to Dr. S. K. Bhuyan, Professor in Cotton College, Gauhati, for his help with the historical backgrounds; to our matrons, Jointi Zillie—now deceased—and Hadori Gogoi, for invaluable information on many points; to Anondi Kenowar, B. A., and Annie Gogoi, for translation from the Assamese of certain materials: to Srimoti Hemoprobha Das for the use of the manuscript of the address given by her at the Jubilee of the Nowgong Girls' School; to many other Indian friends who have helped in various ways.

Further, I acknowledge my indebtedness to the women of Assam for their friendship. They have opened for me many new windows upon life, deepened my faith in the innate fineness of all womankind, and inspired me to greater achievement in my personal living. I am indebted to you, my constituents, for the

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## Preface

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opportunity of living in the "Land of the Bulbul," for the prayer and love-support that has made it possible for me to know the women of Assam.

Such debts are hard to liquidate. Perhaps if you can meet each other—women of America and Assam—in the pages of this book, and learn to love and understand each other better, I shall have done all I can in the way of getting even. You will find my Assamese friends struggling fellow women, achieving gloriously amid many difficulties and tremendously worthy of your love and friendship for the difficult days to come. You will be led to help life take wings in still another corner of the wide world, and this in itself will be your great reward and mine.

E. ELIZABETH VICKLAND.

NOWGONG, ASSAM, INDIA.

## INTRODUCTION

ASSAM is one of the little-known countries, but one of unusual interest and attraction to those who have given time to the study of its people and its natural features.

The story of missions in Assam is one of adventure and romance. We are especially grateful that our Baptist Board has taken the lead in the Christian development of Assam. The missionaries have been, in the main, of the very highest type, willing to sacrifice, to bear loneliness, to suffer ill health, long separation from home and friends. The results in the redemption of some of these savage tribes have proved again the power of God through the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ.

Baptist women who have loved Assam and its missionaries will find in this book much valuable material on every page; others who know less of the country have the opportunity to study at first hand through these chapters the real life of the women of Assam. We owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Vickland for her painstaking service and the valuable material which she has brought together in this little book.

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## Introduction

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We have read the account of the arrival of Lindbergh in Mexico after his heroic flight. There is something infinitely more daring and heroic in the lives of such women as Miss Holbrook, Mrs. Longwell, and their associates.

LUCY W. PEABODY.



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