

# A GRAMMAR OF THE KHASI LANGUAGE

Rev. H Roberts



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During the last century when the then British Govt. of India took up the administration of the newly acquired Frontier Districts of Khasi and Jaintia Hills of Assam, they faced the language difficulty because they had no practical knowledge of the native languages.

To overcome the difficulty of understanding the language of the Khasis, who were by far the most numerous and powerful of the North-East frontier tribes, the author of this Volume wrote over hundred years ago, **Grammar of the Khasi Language** as the guide *par excellence* for those who had to come everyday into personal contact of the tribal people during their administrative duties. It is indeed the product of his persevering and painstaking research.

According to the author, the Khasis have no written language of their own, and therefore no literature of any kind. The Khasi language is a member of that heterogeneous group, sometimes called the '**Sub-Himalayan**' of which so little is known. The race affinity of the Khasis to the surrounding Hill tribes—Garos, Kookies, Nagas, Looshais, Manipuris etc. and even to the remoter Chinese is unmistakable.

(continued on flap II)

*(continued from flap I)*

Grammar is the science which teaches how to speak and write a language correctly. The present book is the Grammar of Khasi language. It has two prominent features : (i) Complete paradigms for the conjugation of all Verbs based on native usage (ii) A detailed treatment of the Article-subjects in regard to which the Khasi language possesses features altogether of its own, as compared with the other members of the Sub-Himalayan group.

This book of grammar was originally written for Khasi students attending the hills schools which enabled them to acquire not only the knowledge of their own language but also mastering corresponding forms in English. It continues to be as useful or even more useful today not only for tribal students eager to learn Khasi language but also for all those who are entrusted with the administration of these remote frontier areas.

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**A GRAMMAR OF  
THE KHASI LANGUAGE**

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# A GRAMMAR OF THE KHASI LANGUAGE

FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS, NATIVE STUDENTS,  
OFFICERS AND ENGLISH RESIDENTS.

BY THE

REV. H. ROBERTS,

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Anglo-Khasi Dictionary, and other Elementary Vernacular Books.*



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**DEDICATED**

TO ALL MY OLD STUDENTS AND PUPILS

IN THE

**KHASSI AND JAINTIA HILLS,**

IN MEMORY OF THE PAST, AND AS A TOKEN OF MY CONCERN

FOR THEIR FUTURE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL

ADVANCEMENT;

ALL, IN SHORT, THAT IS CONVEYED IN THAT BEAUTIFUL,

SUBLIME, AND COMPREHENSIVE WORD,

**KHUBLEI!**

**THE AUTHOR.**

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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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THE importance which the Khasi and Jaintia Hills have of late years acquired, both as a frontier district and a centre of administration, will, I trust, amply justify the appearance of a complete and somewhat exhaustive Grammar of the language of by far the most numerous and powerful of the north-east frontier tribes. To those who, in the daily discharge of their official duties, come into personal contact with the natives, a practical knowledge of their language is indispensable. For it is *the guide par excellence* to a just appreciation of their character and habits. The numerous visitors from the extensive tea estates, to the salubrious and charming climate of the hill sanitarium at Shillong, now so easy of access from all parts, will also find in the Grammar a useful companion.

We would particularly call attention to two prominent features of the work:—1st, Complete paradigms for the conjugation of all Verbs, based on native usage, the *usus loquendi*, properly so called, have been supplied; 2nd, A detailed treatment of the Article;—subjects in regard to which the Khasi Language possesses features altogether its own, as compared with the other members of the Sub-Himalayan group.

By this means the Khasi youths (attending the Hill Schools), numbering some thousands, may be stimulated to greater diligence not only in acquiring a more systematic knowledge of their own language, but also in mastering the corresponding forms in English; as their prospects of obtaining more remunerative posts in the various Government departments, will mainly depend on their success in this last direction. The time is not far distant, no doubt, when a regular system of Competitive Examinations will be introduced into the Hills.

The Khasis and Taintias occupy a strip of mountain district between 70 and 90 miles in breadth, running east and west, having the Assam Valley for its northern boundary, and the Plain of Bengal, or Soormah Valley, for its southern. It is situate in the very centre of the Province of Assam—westward, as now constituted under a Chief Commissioner. The number of people speaking the language, under various modified forms, may be roughly estimated at 250,000.

In this work, the dialect of Cherrapoonjee is taken as the standard, because it is the purest, as universally acknowledged by the natives, besides being more amenable to systematical arrangement than the *patois* of the smaller villages. Such ugly barbarisms as *sngew* for *sngow*; *miew* for *miáw*; *sngoi* for *sngi*; *massoi* for *massi*; *kong* for *jing*; *lom* for *lúm*; *loi* for *leit*; *liar* for *l'ér*; *iam* for *ém*; *be* for *ém*; *pi lui* for *khie leit*; *how hai læu* for *khie leit*; *kynang* for *tynga*; *loi-ar-keh*

and *lëar ke* for *leit-kái*; *ham klam* and *ri shiur thu* for *wat kren*, and many others, should be avoided.

The principle of word-building, or agglutination, enters so largely and unavoidably into every section throughout the etymological portion of the Grammar, that a separate chapter on that subject is deemed unnecessary. A list of *foreign* importations from the Bengali and Hindustani, and *through* them from the Persian and Arabic, may not be without interest to a certain class; and would suggest a new method of mental training for the natives. Such a list, to be complete, would also contain a number of roots beyond all doubt identical in *form* with Hebrew roots bearing identical meanings. However strange this may at first appear, and without forgetting the usual caution of philologists, such erratic instances of distant affinity are not wanting; instances which the presence of Arabic words at second-hand will not always explain. Thus, صدق (*saduk*) is the Hebrew צֶדֶק (*tzedek*), and the Khassi *shida*, 'straight,' 'upright'; نَأْكَ (*nág*) connects *naga*, 'a serpent,' with the Hebrew נָחָשׁ (*nakhash*). But no such connecting link is found for שֶׁקֶר (*sheker*) and the Khassi *shukor*, 'to deceive'; or between the Hebrew שֶׁרֵץ (*shere*) and the Khassi *shér*, 'a small fish,' or 'a fry of small fish'; or between נֶכֶר (*nekar*) and *dykar* or *nykar* in *ki nykar*, 'strangers or foreigners.' The short time that is necessary to master the principles of this language will amply pay for the trouble.

The Khassis have no written language of their own,

and therefore no literature of any kind. There are no materials, so far as we know, from which to connect their present with the past, or to trace out a history for them. Although the country is studded with monolithic and cromlechan monuments, of immense size, reminding us of the Druidical remains of Stonehenge, Wales and Brittany, none of these bear inscriptions. Tradition, such as it is, connects them *politically* with the Burmese, to whose king, under the title of "Burm," they were up to a comparatively recent date rendering homage, by sending him an annual tribute in the shape of an axe, or *dáv*, as an emblem merely of submission.

Another tradition points out the north as the direction from which they migrated, and Sylhet as the *terminus* of their wanderings, from which they were ultimately driven back into their present hill fastnesses, by a great flood, after a more or less permanent and peaceful occupation of that district. The peculiarities of Sylhet Bengali, known as *The Sylheti*, so different from the more classical Bengali of Dacca and Calcutta, are attributable to this occupation; and the peculiar structure of the *Sylheti* lends some probability to the tradition. This entire absence of native literature, however, suggests a long period of isolation from the more civilized races; and to a certain class of thinkers it suggests a great deal more.

The Khasi Language is a member of that heterogeneous group, sometimes called the Sub-Himalayan, of

which so little is known ; too little to enable philologists to assign it any well-defined status in the large catalogue of languages which go to make up the Turanian family. The term Sub-Himalayan savours too much of the Great Adelung's long since abandoned system of classifying languages geographically. But whatever difficulties may still attend the attempt at a linguistic classification pure and simple, the *race* affinity of the Khassis to the surrounding Hill Tribes—Garos, Kookies, Nagas, Looshais, Munipoories &c., and even to the remoter Chinese, is unmistakable. The Mongol physique in all its permanent features is established beyond doubt. While the racial affinity is evident, it is important however to state here, that the percentage of WORDS COMMON to the Khassi and the rest of these mountain dialects is extremely small ; so small as to guarantee on *that* score no belief in their racial affinity. Equally great also is the dissimilarity in many other points of grammatical detail.)

This apparent conflict between ethnology and language, so much insisted on now-a-days by a certain school of theorists, is nevertheless highly suggestive, and bespeaks a long period of isolation (of the Khassis) not only from some as yet unknown (perhaps undefinable) parent stock, but also from those tribes even which have for many centuries occupied districts contiguous to them.

What stage in *linguistic development* should we assign to the Khassi Language? We answer, that it is not so absolutely monosyllabic, like the Chinese on the one hand,

as to be devoid of genuine agglutinations. On the other hand, it is too far removed from the so-called *inflexional stage* to be classed under the agglutinate family in the sense of *terminational*; for its agglutinations are in no sense *terminational* or *inflexional* as those terms are understood and handled by Professor Max Müller, to whom philology is so much indebted.

If the Professor's comprehensive definition of an agglutinate (*i.e.* Turanian) language is to be accepted as a final test or basis of classification, the Khassi is neither Turanian nor agglutinate. If we understand his definition rightly, it must be greatly modified to include the Khassi, and some of the other adjacent dialects within the extensive family, which his favourite term *Turanian* is intended to embrace. According to Prof. Max Müller,\* it is a distinctive characteristic of a *Turanian* language, that it should be agglutinative, *not only* in the general sense of gluing its words, of having its words coalescing, but further, that the modifying root be *terminational*, and thus approach the higher stage of *inflexion*.

In the Khassi, however, the modifying roots even in agglutinates are *without exception* PREPOSITIVE. A very cursory perusal of the Grammar will substantiate our position. Take, e.g. *pyu* (from *púu*, 'to make'), or *pyl*, *pyd*, *pyr* in all Causative Verbs; *iu* of the Dative and Accusative; *ia* of Reciprocal Verbs; *lu*, *lu lah*, Past Auxiliaries; *yn* of the Future Tense; *jiny* ('possession') of

\* See Science of Language, vol. i. p. 323. fifth edition, 1866.

Abstract Nouns, and many other examples equally easy of comprehension ; these are all *glued* and are all PRE-POSITIVE. Here we have a language, on the north-east frontier of India, which has merged out of the purely monosyllabic stage, but which cannot be brought under the category of *terminational*, much less the *inflexional*, for it has no inflexions. Have we not here an example of an entirely new feature in the development of language? Any how, we cannot see the applicability of Prof. Max Müller's definition to the Khassi. Take, e.g., the root *lait*, 'free ;' *-pyl-lait*, 'to make free ;' *jing-pyl-lait*, 'freedom, or liberation.' The modifying roots move, as it were, backward, and not forward. Or can we detect here an *intermediate* stage between the purely monosyllabic and the terminational ; or does this fact affect the validity of Prof. Max Müller's definition of a Turanian language ?

But if we give the term *agglutinate* a less rigid acceptance, the Khassi Language could not be better described than in terms applied by a recent writer on Language to the Japanese\* :—“It is an agglutinate dialect of extremely simple structure, with no determinate flexion, the relations of case [gender], number and person are indicated by separate particles [and] auxiliary words” [only let the student of Khassi bear in mind that these particles are PRE-POSITIVE and not terminational]. “Combinations of separate root words with considerable contraction

\* Whitney's *Life and Growth of Language*, p. 241. The words in brackets are our own.

and mutilation [or obscuration] is very common." Such, generally speaking, is the Khassi Language.

Examples of that peculiarity called *Harmonic Arrangement* or *Harmonic Sequence*, so common in other primitive forms of speech, are wanting; nor are there any duplications to form the plural; *phui-phui*, 'dust, dusty;' *phum-phum*, 'bushy;' *lat-lat*, 'rippling, in ripples, a ford;' *phàk phàk*, 'violently;' *ngur-ngur*, *ngèr-ngèr*, and many others, are onomatopœian or imitative, and intensive, rather than true plural forms.

Referring to onomatopœias, the *bow-wow* theory is strongly countenanced by the Khassi: *ksew* is 'a dog;' *kwack* is 'a duck;' *miáw* is 'a cat;' *ang* is 'to gape,' &c.

The next generation may see the Comparative Grammar, so much desired, giving an account of these numerous erratic boulders (to borrow the language of geology), and of their mutual relationship, if not of the parent stock from which they have been transported and scattered broadcast by force of events unknown. But special Grammars must first of all issue.

# KHASSI GRAMMAR.

---

## INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. GRAMMAR is the science which teaches how to speak and to write correctly in any language.

§ 2. Language (*Ka Ktín*) is composed of sentences, sentences of words, words of syllables, and syllables of letters; hence:—

§ 3. This Grammar is divided into three main parts, viz., (1) Orthography, or that which treats of the *letters* of the language; (2) Etymology, or that which treats of the various kinds of *words*, or *Parts of Speech*; and (3) Syntax (*Ka Jing-pyn-ia-ryn-tih Ktín*), or that which teaches how words should be arranged into sentences, in order to express complete thoughts (*Ki Jingmùt*).

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## CHAPTER I.

### Orthography.

§ 4. OF THE LETTERS.—The Khassi Alphabet consists of twenty-one letters only, viz.

A B K D E G NG H I J L M N  
O P R S T U W Y

These letters are divided into three classes (*Lái jaid*), (1) *Vowels*, (2) *Semirowels*, and (3) *Consonants*.

§ 5. OF THE VOWELS (*Ki Dák Jur*).—The vowels are six in number, viz. *A, a; E, e; I, i; O, o; Y, y; U, u.*\*

These six vowels represent twelve simple sounds, five long and seven short; *two* are semivowels, and when combined form thirteen proper diphthongs.

§ 6. The twelve simple vowel-sounds may be thus exemplified:—

<i>a</i> short	like <i>a</i> in man;	as,	<i>tam</i> , too much;	<i>pat</i> , again.
<i>á</i> long	„ <i>a</i> „ far;	„	<i>bám</i> , to eat;	<i>dá</i> , to protect.
<i>e</i> short	„ <i>e</i> „ set;	„	<i>pep</i> , to fail;	<i>en</i> , to be quiet.
<i>é</i> long	„ <i>e</i> „ were;	„	<i>hér</i> , to fly;	<i>kér</i> , to enclose.
<i>i</i> short	„ <i>i</i> „ pit;	„	<i>tip</i> , to know;	<i>sim</i> , a bird.
<i>í</i> long	„ <i>ee</i> „ steep;	„	<i>ing</i> , a house;	<i>sím</i> , a king.
<i>o</i> short	„ <i>o</i> „ pot;	„	<i>lop</i> , to prune;	<i>sop</i> , to cover.
<i>ó</i> long	„ <i>o</i> „ go;	„	<i>óh</i> , to hew;	<i>ór</i> , to split.
<i>u</i> short	„ <i>u</i> „ put;	„	<i>lum</i> , to gather;	<i>sum</i> , to bathe.
<i>ú</i> long	„ <i>ao</i> „ boot;	„	<i>lúm</i> , a hill;	<i>súm</i> , to pierce.
<i>y</i> short	„ <i>u</i> „ fun;	„	<i>bynta</i> , a part;	<i>yn</i> , will.
<i>y</i> short	„ <i>y</i> „ Fr. <i>une</i> ;	„	<i>synduk</i> , a box;	<i>shym</i> , not.

§ 7. The semivowels are:—

*i*, like *y* in ‘yard;’ as *iár*, ‘to spread;’ *iaid*, ‘to walk;’ or the *य* in क़रिय़ा (*kariyá*); as *iaip*, ‘to die;’ *iuh*, ‘to tread.’

*w*, like *w* in ‘war;’ as *wád*, ‘to search;’ *wán*, ‘to come;’ or *व* in जाव़ा (*jáwá*);—

---

\* The anomaly of including the *w* among the vowels should be done away with.

*wir*, 'astray;' *wang*, 'widely:' or *l*, in *پروانہ* (*parwána*): or *oi* in Fr. *avoir* (*av-uár*).

§ 8. The diphthongs are compound vowel-sounds, and may be exemplified thus:—

*ai* (short), like our vulgar 'ay;' as *pait*, 'to break:' or *কাই* in *ডাকাইত* (*dakait*); as *kait*, 'a plaintain.'

*ái* (long), like *আষ* in *কাষ্য* (*káirja*); as *kái*, 'for pleasure:' or *اِي* in *نَايب* (*náib*); as *·láí*, 'three;' *'sái*, 'a thread.'

*aw* (short), like *äoo* in Fr. *aoûter*; as *law*, 'to take off:' or *যাওয়* in *যাওয়া* (*jawá*); as *kaw*, 'noisy:' or *او* in *نواب* (*nawáb*).

*áw* (long), like *আওয়* in *পাওয়া* (*páwá*); as *dáw*, 'a cause:' or Welsh *lláw*, 'hand;'—no English equivalent.

*ei*, like *ey* in 'they;' as *leit*, 'to go;' *peit*, 'to wake up;' *ngeit*, 'to believe;' not like *i* in 'thine,' as some foreigners pronounce it; but like *এয়* in *জৈয়* (*jey*).

*ew*, like *এও* in *দেওয়ানী* (*dewaní*) or Welsh *tew*, 'fat'—no ex. in E—as *thew*, 'to measure;' *khew*, 'wheat.'

*iw* (short), like the 'u' when simply pronounced, or *يو* in *ديوانی* (*díwaní*); as *síw*, 'to pay;' *syntiw*, 'a flower.'

*íw* (long), like *eu* in 'feud,' or *u* in 'tune;' as *kíw*, 'to ascend.'

*ie*,—the nearest approach to a true digraph, but the sound of the *e* is perceptible; like the *e muet* in Fr., having a short guttural sound after the *i*;\* as *ieh*, ‘to let alone.’

*oi* (short), like *oi* in ‘voice,’ or *oy* in *گۆ* *goyá*; as *soi*, ‘to shave with an adze.’

*ói* (long), like *oy* in ‘joy,’ or *অয়* in *ভয়* *bhoy*; as *rói*, ‘to increase.’

*ui* (short), like *oo+i*, or *ui* in Fr. *bruit*, and S. Wales *llwyd*, ‘pale;’ as *bùit*, ‘skill.’

*úi* (long), like *ou-i* in Fr. *fouille*; as *túid*, ‘to flow.’

§ 9. THE CONSONANTS.—The fourteen simple consonants present no difficulty. None of the intricacies of Oriental alphabets encounter the student here. The natives having no literature of any kind, a phonetic alphabet has been formed for them, and it meets all the requirements of the language.

The letter *g*, however, calls for a remark. All the words containing this letter are foreign importations, from and through the Bengali and Hindústaní, such as *gadda*, ‘an ass;’ *gora*, ‘a white man;’ *godam*, ‘a store-room;’ *gormi*, ‘a kind of disease;’ *guli*, ‘a shot;’ *gúda*, ‘a swelling;’ *gali*, ‘abusive language;’ *lagam*, ‘a bridle;’ and a few others.

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\* Those versed in French will, perhaps, remember Voltaire’s remark on the *e* mute: “*Son qui subsiste encore après le mot commence, comme un clavecin qui resonance quand les doigts ne frappent plus les touches.*”—Dict. Philosophique.

§ 10. The imperceptible *h* is represented by an apostrophe ('), and somewhat similar in its power to the *h* or *h'* of Persian and Hindústaní grammars, that is the *هائي مختلفي* (*ha-i-mukh-tafi*), when it comes between two vowels and causes a hiatus, as in *بهار* (*be'ár*), as distinguished from *بهار* (*behár*). See Sir W. Jones' Persian Grammar (Works, vol. v., 8vo, 1807). The same remark applies to the final *h* when preceded by a vowel, its power is that of a slight guttural; as *rah*, 'to bear;' *pah*, 'to utter a sound;' *lah*, 'to be able.'

§ 11. *h* is never initial in Khassi before another consonant. Such combinations as *hl*, *hm*, *hn*, *ht*, *hp*, &c. are unknown, and, however barbarous a tribe may be, we doubt whether such combinations do at all represent actual sounds in any of its kindred dialects.

In the case of the Kookies, for instance, there is always an abrupt *y* sound, either preceding or intervening, the *h* serving as a kind of fulcrum. The Bengali *হ্রি* (*hri*) is no exception.

§ 12. THE ASPIRATED LETTERS.—These are *b*, *k*, *d*, *j*, *p*, *r*, *t*, *ng*, *s*. As in Bengali and Hindústaní, the *h* sound is merely *combined* or *added* to that of the preceding consonant, and not amalgamated *with* it; so differing materially from our English notion of an aspirated letter—e.g., *ph* do not make an *f*, but stand separate, as in 'up-hill,' without an hiatus.

*bh*, as *bhá*, pron. *b-há*, 'good,' = *ভা* or *بها*

*kh*, as *khá*, pron. *k-há*, 'to give birth,' = *খা* or *کها*

*dh* (ধ, ড), as *dhah*, pron. *d-hah*, = 'a drum,' ডাহা

*jh* (ঝ, জ), as *jhíh*, pron. *j-híh*, 'wet.'

*ph* (ফ, ঙ), as *phuh*, pron. *p-huh*, 'to blossom.'

*rh* (rh in *w-rhwng*), as *rhem*, pron. *r-hem*, 'warm,' 'hot.'

Neither the Bengali nor the Hindústaní supply us with an equivalent. It is the Greek  $\rho$  in  $\rho\acute{\alpha}\beta\delta\omicron\varsigma$  (*rhabdos*).

*ngh*, as in *rynghang*, pron. *ryng-hang*, 'ajar.'

*th*, as in 'beat-him' (থ, ঝ), *tháw*, pron. *t-háw*, 'to make.'

*sh* is an exception; it is like *sh* in 'shine,' as *shong*, 'to stay:' the Bengali ঞ and Hindústaní ش, in ঞ and شاه (*shah*), گوش (*gósh*).

§ 12. ORTHOGRAPHICAL SIGNS.—1. *The Accents*. (1) *The acute* (´), which marks the quantity of a vowel as long, as *dá*, 'to shield;' *bhá*, 'well.' (2) *The grave* (`), which is only occasionally employed, when the pronunciation is to be very abrupt; as *daìn*, 'to cut;' *kaìn*, 'very pointed' (to distinguish it from '*káin*, 'a fly'). (3) There is also a middle quantity which is perceptibly distinguished by the natives. These are vowels followed by *h* final; as *lah*, 'to be able;' *pah*, 'to cry;' *rih*, 'to rear.'

2. *The apostrophe* (´), to mark the suppression of one or more letters; as *´lín* for *khlín*, 'a kite;' *´ping* for *sping*, 'a handle;' *´siw* for *ksiw*, 'a grandchild;' *´riw* for *bríw*, 'a man or a human being;' *´rang* for *shinrang*, 'a male;' *´thei* for *kynthei*, 'a female;' *´ér* for *l´ér* or *lyer*, 'wind;' *´nám* for *snám*, 'blood;' *´súid* for *ksúid*, 'a demon;' &c.

*Note*.—Some of these are permanent elisions, while

most of them are *occasional*, and *euphonic*; e.g. a *dæmon* in *general* is always called '*ksúid*;' but when this is qualified by some descriptive word immediately following, to point out a particular kind of *dæmon*, the initial *k* is suppressed; as, '*súid-úm*, 'the water or fever *dæmon*.' This is an important point.

3. *The diæresis* (··), placed above one of two contiguous vowels, in order to show that they are to be pronounced separately; as, *ïeit*, 'to love;' *biëit*, 'foolish;' *rïam*, 'to ensnare;' *nïam*, 'religion;' *khaïi*, 'to trade;' *liang*, 'side;' *rüai*, 'to sing.'

*Note*.—There are no true digraphs in *Khassi*. Each vowel should have its own separate sound. All the vowel combinations are *proper* diphthongs. This is owing to the fact of its being a language composed of root words; which, with a very few exceptions, are all used as independent words.

4. *The hyphen* (-) should be extensively used in order to show the formation of compounds, which in the majority of cases, are roots placed merely in juxtaposition to express *one compound idea*.

(1) Nouns *ár-ngut*, 'two persons,' 'a couple;' *ar-tylli*, 'two things, or two;' *san-shnong*, lit. 'five villages,' = a confederacy of five villages.

*Note*.—The emphasis is equally on both or each part of the compound.

(2) Verbs followed by a personal pronoun, as *leh-ma-phi*, 'you do.' (3) Verbs followed by an adverb, as *leh-bhá*, 'to do good;' *kam-sníw*, 'to do ill.' (4) Verbs

and Adjectives followed by *eh* (Fr. *très*), 'very,' as *kren-eh*, 'to speak harshly;' *bhá-eh*, 'very well.' (5) Verbs and pronouns followed by *hí* (Fr. *même*), 'self,' 'even;' as *ma-nga-hí*, 'I myself;' *wan-hi*, 'come yourself,' or 'come even.' (6) Nouns followed by demonstrative particles for the sake of emphasis; as *u briw-une* (instead of *une u briw*), 'this man;' *ka ing-hangne*, 'this here house,' or 'the house here.'

§ 13. EMPHASIS.—In pronouncing Khasi words, the emphasis should as a rule be on the penult, in the case of dissyllables; as *pynlong*, 'to cause to be;' *shítom*, 'trouble;' *pynwan*, 'to cause to come;' *jinglong*, 'a state;' *lynnong*, 'a part;' *kynsha*, 'desolate;' *hinrei*, 'but;' *dádín*, 'behind.'

There are many exceptions to this rule: (1) of words beginning with *pyn*, having the emphasis on the last syllable; as *pynjak'*, 'to loose;' *pynher'*, 'to fly,' (a kite); *pynhun'*, 'to soothe;' *pynsal'*, 'to leave behind;' *pynháp*, 'to let fall;' *pynong'*, 'to speak for another;' *pynum'*, 'to melt;' *pynroi'*, 'to increase.' (2) With *ia*, as *iaroh'*, 'to praise;' *ialang'*, 'to gather together;' *iapom'*, 'to fight;' *iarap'*, 'to help;' *iaseng'*, 'to assemble;' in short, all words beginning with *ia* (prep.) should never have the emphasis on that prefix. In Shella and Jiwai, however, some of the natives violate this rule in some instances only, as *ia'rap*, instead of *iarap'*; but it is affected.

When a compound is made up of two or more dissyllable words, each retains its own emphasis; as *kyn'riah dádín*, 'to retire, to recede.'

When a dissyllable and a monosyllable form the com-

pound, both retain their natural accent; as *hin'riw-phew*, 'sixty,' *hin'niew-phew'*, 'seventy;' *kyn'ruh-ktin'*, 'to rinse the mouth.'

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**Etymology.**

§ 14. In the following eleven chapters we shall treat of the *Parts of Speech* in their usual order—*Article, Noun, Adjective, Pronoun, Verb, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, and Interjection.*

We should here remark that the Khassi Language is absolutely devoid of *inflection*, according to the strict sense of that word (see *Prefat. Remarks*). Some of the demonstrative pronouns, and a few adverbs of place, do express different degrees of distance by a mere change of termination; as, *une, uno, uta, utai, uto.*—Dem. Pronouns., which see. *shane, shano, shata, shatai, shato.*—Adverbs, which see

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CHAPTER II.

**The Article.**

§ 15. There are four Articles in Khassi;—three in the singular, as *u* (masc.), *ka* (fem.), and *i* (dim. of both genders), and one in the plural for both genders, as *ki*.

<i>u</i> (masc.)	} <i>ki</i> , the plural of all.
<i>ka</i> (fem.) for the singular, and	
<i>i</i> (com.)	



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