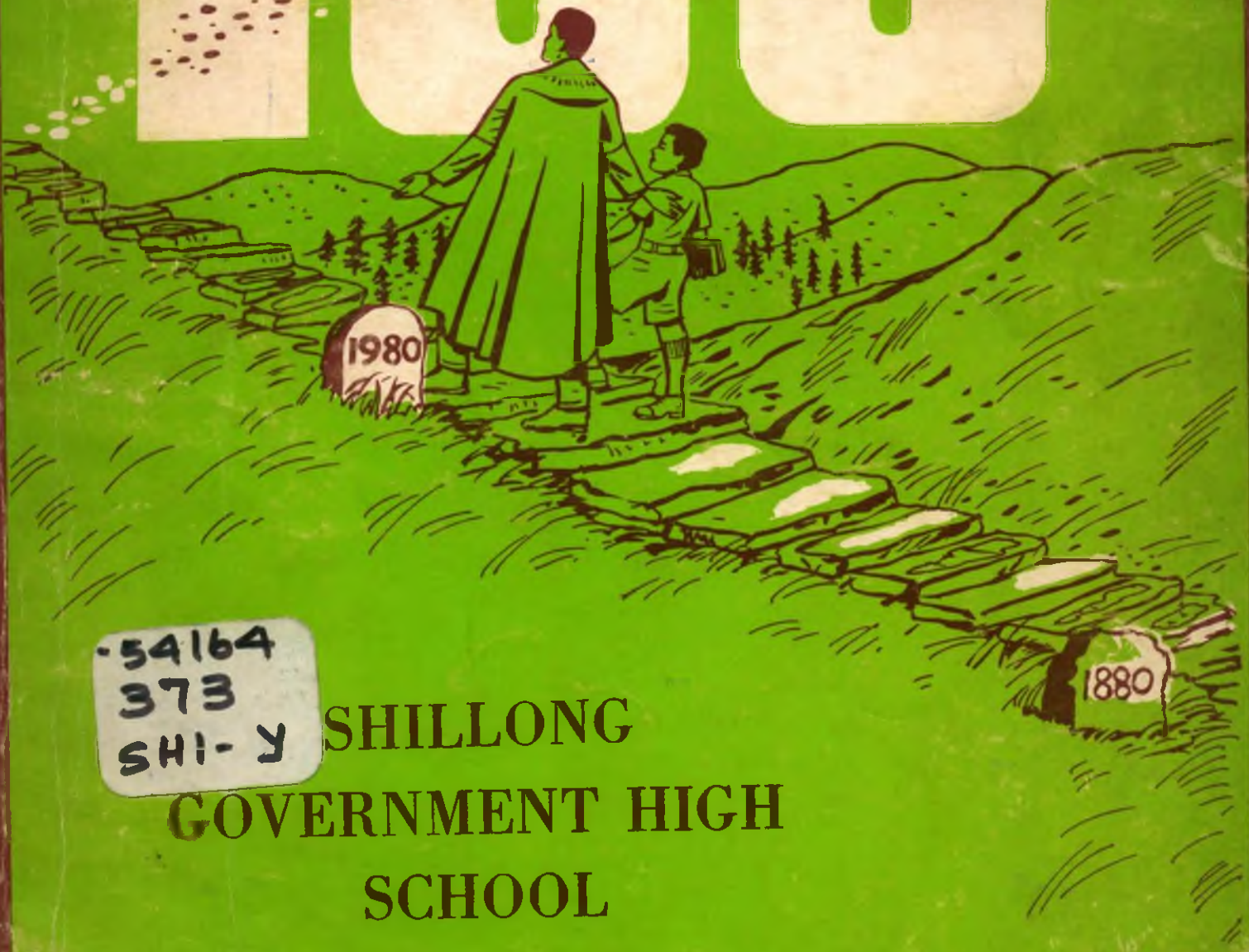


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Press Secretary to the President



No.F.2-M/80

*President's Secretariat
Rashtrapati Bhavan
New Delhi-110004*

August 28, 1980.

M E S S A G E

Dear Dr. Lyngdoh,

Please refer to your letter of the 19th August, 1980. The President of India desires me to convey his best wishes on the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations of the Shillong Government High School.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'K. Suryanarayana'.

(K. Suryanarayana)

Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh,
Shillong Government High School.
Secretariat Building,
Shillong-793001.



VICE-PRESIDENT
INDIA
NEW DELHI

August 5, 1980.

M E S S A G E

I send my best wishes for the success of the Centenary Celebration of the Government High School, Shillong, to be held towards the end of this year.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Hidayatullah'.

(M. Hidayatullah)



PRIME MINISTER
INDIA.

No.1376-PMO/80

New Delhi.
August 11, 1980.

Dear Dr. Lyngdoh,

A centenary is an important occasion. What an important role the Shillong Government High School has played in training the young people of Meghalaya.

My good wishes for your celebrations,

Yours sincerely,

(Indira Gandhi)

Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh
Chairman
Souvenir Sub-Committee
Pasteur Institute Hill
Shillong-793001
Meghalaya.

GOVERNOR



MEGHALAYA



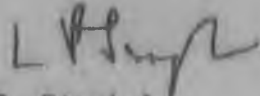
RAJ BHAVAN
SHILLONG

September 25, 1980.

M E S S A G E

I am happy to learn that the Shillong Government High School is celebrating its centenary in December this year. Having been founded in 1878 by the late U Jeebon Roy, a pioneer in the field of education, the Shillong Government High School is almost as old as Shillong itself. Over the decades it has made a major contribution towards meeting the educational needs of Shillong, and indeed, of large parts of the North-Eastern Region. The institution has been a meeting ground for numerous ethnic and cultural streams of the region, and has thus been promoting mutual understanding and good-will, and sending out its pupils with a broad outlook. Many of its products have made their mark in various fields of activity, and this should be a matter for legitimate pride to the institution.

On the occasion of its centenary celebrations, I wish the Shillong Government High School many more years of useful service to the community and to the country.


(L.P. Singh)



B. B. I. YNGDOH
Chief Minister, Meghalaya
MAWLAI MAWDATBAKI
SHILLONG-793008

Phone -- (O) 4282
(R) 4571

The 17th September, 1980

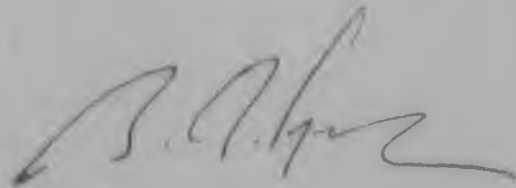
M E S S A G E

Modern Education is a new comer to our North-Eastern Region but time flies swiftly and I am glad to learn that this year the Shillong Government High School will be completing 100 years of service to the people of North-East India. On this occasion, I understand that the Centenary Celebration Committee is bringing out a publication entitled "100 years of Shillong Government High School" to project among other things, the history and the contribution which the School and its past pupils have made to the North-Eastern Region and the country, as well as the great changes which the School has undergone throughout its long existence.

The list of past pupils who have received their education in this Light-House of learning in our capital city of Shillong reads like a "Who's Who" for the North-Eastern Region and the alumni who have come out of this Alma Mater have made signal contributions in practically every field of life. I believe it would be true to say that the Shillong Government High School has in a unique way transcended the normal function of an educational institution and has become a centre of Cultural Synthesis and National Integration in this part of the country. Considering its record during the last century, we could expect that this institution will continue to play an even bigger role in future, and make even more contributions to building up Shillong as the Academic Capital of the North-Eastern Region.

On this auspicious occasion, I would also like to pay tribute to the memory of the late Rai Bahadur Jeebon Roy whose spirit of service and dedication made the establishment of this School possible in 1880 in spite of tremendous odds. Successive generations both in the past and in future have reason to remember him and his colleagues in this Noble Venture with undying gratitude and affection.

On this happy occasion, I would like to wish the Centenary Celebration all success.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'B. A. Roy', written in a cursive style.



R. K. DORENDRA SINGH
CHIEF MINISTER
MANIPUR

M E S S A G E

I am glad to know that the Shillong Government High School is celebrating its centenary this year. It is heartening to note that a Souvenir to highlight the achievements and contributions of the School during the last one hundred years is being published on this occasion. I hope the school will continue to progress and contribute towards development of North-Eastern India.

I wish the publication all success.

(R. K. Dorendra Singh)



CHIEF MINISTER
MIZORAM
AIZAWL

M E S S A G E

I am glad to know that the Shillong Government High School completes its centenary this year. It is in the fitness of things and according to the ancient Indian tradition of remembrance that we reminisce on the founders who, a hundred years ago, found it necessary to establish this school. Hardly could they imagine then that they had unconsciously bequeathed to posterity an institution which in later years was to become the alma mater of North Eastern India.

The Shillong Government High School, apart from being an educational institution in a narrower perspective, has provided a meeting ground for numerous ethnic and cultural streams in its territorial georama and has, in the process, also contributed to a cultural synthesis which is outstandingly cosmopolitan, thus transcending its primary role of imparting instruction to the youths of the land.

I am also glad that the Centenary Celebration Committee has brought out this publication "100 Years of Shillong Government High School" projecting among other things the history, the contribution that the school has made for the region and the country, the changes and transformation the school has undergone through its long existence, now history, and the dramatis personae who happened to be part of this history.

In this centennial year of the school, I wish to express my appreciation of all those who had a part in building up this school to be what it has become today.

BRIG. T. SAILO



CHIEF MINISTER
ARUNACHAL PRADESH

D. O. No.CM(AP)-19/80
ITANAGAR
PIN No. 791111

Dear Dr. Lyngdoh,

I am glad to know that the Shillong Government High School is going to complete its century this year and a strong Centenary Celebration Committee has been constituted for a week-long celebration. It is a matter of natural joy to witness an institution growing from its inception to full bloom. It is well-known that this School has set up a unique reputation in bringing about a cultural synthesis between the youth who belong to different ethnic backgrounds

It is in the fitness of things that the organizers of this Centenary Celebration propose to bring out an account of the alumni of this institution who have contributed notably for the good of the society. It is an established fact that a school is not merely a house of a "brick and mortar". An educational institution is, nevertheless, a powerful conservator and generator of ideas which ultimately shape the character and personality of the future citizens. I am sure, that the proposed publication will be a source of emulation for the youth of India.

I wish all success to the Centenary Celebration of your institution.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(Gegong Apang)

Dr. R. S. Lyngdoh, M.A, Ph D.,
Chairman, Souvenir Sub-Committee,
Pasteur Institute Hill, Shillong-793001,
Meghalaya.



Dr. B. PAKEM
Minister, Revenue, Education
Youth and Sports Meghalaya
Shillong

Phone :
Office PABX 397
SH 6351
Residence SH 6844

M E S S A G E

It pleases me much to know that a Centenary Celebration has been planned to mark the 100 years of existence of Shillong Government High School. It is in the fitness of things that the intention is to remember the founders of this famous institution and the contributions made by its past pupils. It is a measure of the School's excellence and the dedication of its Teachers that the majority of our past and present public leaders, administrators, poets, authors, technologists, teachers and other outstanding men in other varied fields had all received their initial education in Shillong Government High School. Many of these eminent citizens from all over the North-Eastern Region are still alive today and I know that the hearts of all such persons will be warmed and deeply touched by the knowledge that they will be reverently remembered this year. All our people owe a debt of gratitude to such illustrious persons, but in our adulations and praise of their singular achievements, let us remember with pride the Institution that brought forth into this land of ours such praise-worthy men and citizens of our great country.

The Shillong Government High School does not have Ivy covered walls or marble statues and extensive lawns because it grew and developed in the midst of and in the hearts of our people ; and because of this it has acquired its own distinction and uniqueness. So let it be, and may God in His infinite wisdom continue to guide this remarkable School and lead it ever forward into the future with glory and honour.

B. Pakem

(B. Pakem)



Prof. F. MALSAWMA
Minister,
Education, Industries, etc.
Mizoram.

Dated Aizawl,
The 29th August, 1980.

M E S S A G E

It gives me great pleasure to learn that the Shillong Government High School is celebrating the centenary of its establishment. This school has been one of its pioneering educational institutions in the north-east which has produced so many prominent citizens throughout this region. I am sure that it will uphold the glorious tradition stretching a span of hundred years.

This celebration has a personal significance to me since it was my privilege to have been a student of this institution more than a decade and half ago.

On this occasion please accept my heartiest felicitations and I wish the centennial celebration of the school a great success.

F
24/8/80

(F. MALSAWMA)



Mr. T. TANG
Minister, Education, Supply & Transport, etc.
Arunachal Pradesh.

I am in receipt of your letter No.SGHS 1339-45, dated 17th May, 1980 with thanks. I am glad to know that your School will be complete its 100th anniversary this year for which you are trying to commemorate this great occasion in a grand and befitting manner. Really, we are also proud to learn that the Shillong Government High School has successfully passed through a hundred long years braving all human odds and withstanding the test of time, bringing with it a number of pupils with flying colours in their life long careers in different spheres of activities.

2. On this auspicious occasion, I in advance convey my heartiest blessings to make the occasion a Grand Success and may the School do continue in its endeavour to shine further in serving the people and the whole Nation to educate and bring up bright and shining sons and daughters to glitter and beautify the face of our Motherland in all times to come.

3. I have no objection to my being included as one of the Patrons of the School Centenary Celebration.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

T. TANG

Mr. H. A. D. Sawian,
Convener Souvenir Sub-Committee,
Government High School
Centenary Celebration Committee.

A WORD OR TWO

Production of a Souvenir has become inextricably connected with any form of celebration, serious or otherwise. The Centenary of the Shillong Government High School would have missed an important aspect without a Souvenir. The preparations for bringing out this Souvenir have been taken well in time. However, the results of these efforts might not satisfy a number of many an appraiser. In this context, the biographical sketches on the past Headmasters have left out many, whose bio-data could not be obtained notwithstanding the strenuous efforts made. We owe an apology to one and all. For that matter, we wish a pride of place should have been given to, a few of the prominent teachers of the School, who have left indelible marks in its history.

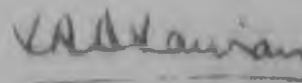
There are snippets which the past students of the Government High School might have known and are eager to repeat them. One of which happened in 1951, is worth mentioning. We were in Class IX (C), a class room next to the main road. The teacher on that particular day, which happened to be a "lewduh", had not turned up in time. A lady with a basket (shang) passed that way to lewduh while we were all like chatter boxes absorbed in our boyish talks. One of the boys shouted at the lady, "Ko kiaw wat leit klet thied kait ho" (Oh mother-in-law, do not forget to buy bananas). The lady turned round and could not see anyone. The classes proceeded as usual. After a while, the lady walked into the class room with a basket full to the brim and a bunch of banana in her hand, when Late Mr. P. Gatphoh was taking the class. Mr. Gatphoh looked surprised at the lady and so did we. In the most polite manner, Mr. Gatphoh asked what he could do for the lady and if she was looking for her son. The lady looked bemusingly and said, "No. I am not looking for my son, but for my son-in-law". Mr. Gatphoh looked around and asked the boys if any one was the son-in-law of the lady. Except for muffled laughs, all the boys put up the most angelic expressions. Mr. Gatphoh looked to the lady and told her that he could not see her son-in-law in the class room. The lady left the class, but kept the bunch of banana on the table. Mr. Gatphoh was sporting enough to, also leave the banana on his table after he finished the lessons. The bunch of banana was wiped clean in the most expeditious manner. Many other such anecdotes are still current stories and perhaps an effort in this direction is called for.

In bringing out this Souvenir we are most indebted to those ex-students, who have contributed these articles by giving their time and labour. But for such provoking ideas, penned out, the Souvenir would have just been one collection of advertisements. To the Advertisers we are grateful for this tremendous support and we assure them that the investments made in this Souvenir are worth the price, for this Souvenir would be avidly read, at least, up to the year 2080 A. D.

The Souvenir in its present shape has come out from the Government Press under the able guidance of Mr. Ardhendu Chaudhuri, Assistant Superintendent, who with his devoted workers of the Press worked day and night to bring it out in time.

The design in this cover is done by Mr. R. N. Bagchi, Artist, Arunachal Pradesh, whose artistic bent of mind could readily interpret the idea mooted out by the Convener of the Souvenir Committee. Perhaps, the design of the cover has blended well with the Centenary Celebration, the Articles and the Motto of the School, "Persevere Never Yield."

We are also thankful to Mr. Kellington Pariat, who has ungrudgingly spared his private collection of old photographs, the Don Bosco Press for printing the covers, despite heavy pressure of work, in the shortest possible time. Due to various difficulties which are beyond our control, some of the articles received could not be printed. We profoundly regret failure on our part.



(H. A. D. SAWIAN I.A.S.)
Convener, Souvenir Sub-Committee

WE FONDLY REMEMBER



U BABU JEEBON ROY

Born on 1838

Died on 1903

Glimpses of the History of the Shillong Government High School

By Dr. R.S. Lyngdoh
M. A., Ph. D.

To write a history of any institution which has completed only one hundred years of its existence is not an easy task. It is easier to do so only, if that institution maintains proper record. On this eventful centennial year of the Shillong Government High School, it is strongly felt to construct a coherent history of its continuous existence. But this is a difficult task. The difficulty arises of two reasons. First, no scholar would dare to claim that he can write a complete history of this institution unless he has put up at least two years of intensive and extensive research work. Secondly, most of the records and materials which concern this School especially those which relate to the first forty years of its existence are shrouded in obscurity or in mystery. Hence, the purpose of this article is mostly to encourage other Scholars to build up its complete history at some future date.

The early beginning : There is no denying of the fact that primary education, in the modern sense, in the areas known as East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills was born under the shadow of the Welsh Methodist Calvinistic Presbyterian Mission. Elsewhere in this Souvenir, some Scholars have dealt with this subject at some length. Hence repetition of the same will not be in good taste.

After 1866 when Shillong became the District Headquarters, the Welsh Mission began to shift their Centre of activities from Sohra to Shillong. Simultaneously, the Missionaries had to multiply the number of minor schools (M. E. Schools) wherever the number of pupils fulfilled the requirement to start such a school. By the time Shillong became the Headquarters of Assam in 1874, there was a necessity to have at least one High School in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. This necessity was recognised by a few Khasi elites but they did not have the resources to materialise such an expensive enterprise (expensive under the imperialist regime). This neces-

sity was not welcomed by the Missionaries who were stationed at Shillong, and this requirement was not appreciated and was rather ignored by the Provincial Government of the day.

Bah Jeebon Roy's role : When the number of pupils who passed out of the different Minor Schools reached the requisite requirements that one of the Minor Schools in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills should be proceeded to a High School, some leading Khasi intellectuals became unrest. They started a movement that a High School should be started by any agency. This movement was initiated by Babu Jeebon Roy Maitom. As early as 1875, he started to have correspondence with the Provincial Government urging upon the necessity to have a Government High School in Shillong. But on some clumsy grounds the Government stated that as Shillong had just suffered from the great plague, it was not possible for the Government to spend money for the sake of a High School. Jeebon Roy was for a time disillusioned but not disappointed. He had to turn his mind to some other agencies. But the only agency which could be expected to perform this noble cause was the Welsh Methodist Calvinistic Presbyterian Mission.

After his eldest son, Sib Charan Roy passed out the Minor Examination in 1876, Jeebon Roy began to have correspondence with Rev. T. Jarman Jones who was then stationed at Shillong to encourage him to convert the Minor School which he had started into a High School. From the evidences tendered by late Rash Mohon Roy, Rai Sahip Hormu Rai Diengdoh, Sib Charan Roy and some others, the idea was not entertained by Rev. Thomas Jarman Jones on the ground that the Khasi boys and girls were not fit for higher education. This assertion has not been challenged from any quarter till 1932. Jeebon Roy and some educationists from Calcutta once again urged upon Rev. Jarman Jones to proceed his Minor School into a Proceeding

High School. But the reply that Jeebon Roy received from Rev Jarman Jones was brief but revealing. His concluding sentence in his letter was as follows: "We have come for religion and not for education". Thereupon, Jeebon Roy and his fellow educationists from Calcutta approached the Assam Government to start an Entrance School with an assurance that they would bear all the deficit, if such occasion would arise. Since the Assam Government also lent a deaf ear, Jeebon Roy decided to start a High School in Shillong in 1876. To start with, he donated Rs.900 from his own pocket. The School building was constructed at the site which is now occupied by the Telegraph and Telephone Exchange Section of the Ministry of Communication, Shillong. After the completion of the building, a High School known as the Shillong Zillah High School was inaugurated on 2nd September, 1878 with 50 pupils. The first Headmaster of this High School was Mr. Rain Mohan Mitra. Due to his ill health, Mr. Mitra had to relinquish his Office early in 1879 and he was succeeded by Mr. Sachidhar Barkagati, who, after a short time was succeeded by Mr Joy Chandra Mitra.

Another High School: After seeing that the Shillong Zillah High School registered a good number of pupils, Rev. T. Jarman Jones came to his senses. He decided that from the next academic session, the Mission Minor School at Mawkhar should be converted into a Proceeding High School. Therefore, early in 1879, a Class VII was started in that School. Further, Rev. T Jarman Jones urged upon the Government to amalgamate the two Entrance School and that liberal Government grants should be extended to it. This idea was welcomed by Jeebon Roy. Hence, in 1880, the two Schools were amalgamated and hence the Shillong Government High School was born. Among the first Khasi who passed out the Entrance Examination from that School in 1881 was 306 Charan Roy, the eldest son of Jeebon Roy.

A new split: One of the terms of agreement of the amalgamation of the two Schools was that the Welsh Mission was to spare one Missionary who was an educationist to be a Headmaster of the School. The Government insisted that, if Missionaries of the qualification of Rev. John Roberts would become Headmaster, it

would be most fortunate for the School. But the Mission could not spare Rev. John Roberts because he was busy in the translation work of the Bible and also because he was heavily busy in his work as Principal of the Normal Training School. Hence, the Government retained Mr. Joy Chandra Mitra as Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School. He was succeeded by six other persons in quick succession. Since the Government refused to accept any other Missionary except Rev. John Roberts as Headmaster of the Government High School, the Mission decided to restart its own Mission High School.

A new approach: Since most of the pupils reading in High Schools were Christians, those who were reading in Government High Schools, on emotional ground more than anything else got themselves transferred to a Mission High School. It was at this point that Babu Jeebon Roy, as an educationist had to play his role. He had large number of correspondence with the Government that the final solution should be to have only one High School. The number of pupils reading in both the High Schools did not justify the existence of two High Schools. The year 1887 was a turning point in this aspect. In that year, the theological college was started at Cherrapunjee with Rev. John Roberts as its Principal. Another Missionary, Rev. J. C. Evans who had just arrived was appointed Principal of the Normal Training School. With the arrival of Rev. J. Ceredig Evans, the turn of events took a concrete shape. His attitude was quite different from that of Rev. T. Jarman Jones. In his correspondence with Babu Jeebon Roy and also with the Government, Rev. Evans demonstrated his qualities as an educationist. His conversations with Jeebon Roy were free and frank. As a result of all these useful exercise, it was finally agreed that the two High Schools should be reunited and that the Normal Training School should be transferred to Shillong. Eventually, in 1891, the Government notified that: (a) the two Entrance Schools should be finally amalgamated and that the Normal Training School should be transferred to Shillong and that it should be brought under one single control. (b) That the Shillong Government High School should be run under strict Government rules and regulations. (c) That the

Welsh Mission should provide one of its educationists to be Headmaster of this High School. Acting upon this broad based agreement, the Government appointed Rev. J. Ceregig Evans as Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School and also of the Normal Training School.

From the above, we can conclude without fear of contradiction that Babu Jeebon Roy was the real founder of the Shillong Government High School.

The School under Rev. J. C. Evans :—Rev. J. C. Evans served as Headmaster of the School for twenty five long years except for few months when he had to go home for a holiday in 1900. During that period Rev. R. Jones officiated for the post. The period of his Headmastership was a memorable period. A statistical survey of the period of a quarter of a century shows that the Shillong Government High School was the embodiment of the cultural heritage of North East India. From the very beginning, pupils of different communities flocked into this alumnater. It was a privilege for any family to have a son admitted into this School. Further, during this period, on the average, not less than 75 per cent of the pupils who were sent out for the Entrance Examination came out successful. But what was most creditable, 40 per cent of those successful candidates came out in the First Division; and that also in the stiff examinations of the Calcutta University of its glorious years when it was considered among the best ten Universities in the British Empire.

It will be wrong, if we do not reproduce select portion of the speech of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Sir Archdale Earle when he spoke at the Annual Prize Distribution Ceremony which was held on 6th January, 1914. In the course of his speech, Sir Archdale Earle said "I am glad that the School authorities have given me this opportunity of presiding at their Annual Prize Distribution. I inspected the School shortly after my arrival last year, and I am very glad of the present occasion for being brought into contact again. I have been very interested in reading a note which has been prepared for me about this School by the Hon. Mr. Cunningham. From his note I gather that the Shillong High School has existed since the year 1891, when it was formed by the amalgamation of a small Mission School and a small Government High

School existing in wasteful rivalry in Shillong, and the old Government Normal School at Cherrapunjee. The Hon. Mr. Cunningham informs me that for all the twenty-two years since the amalgamation the Education Department has had no reason for anything but satisfaction with the working of the arrangement. This, he tells me, in a large part due to the agreement that the joint institution should be under the control of a Headmaster, who should be a member of the Welsh Mission. The Rev. J. C. Evans has been in-charge since the amalgamation, and his sensible and capable management has secured the success of the scheme and earned for him the confidence and gratitude of the Government and the public."

In the course of his speech, he made a passing reference to the Khasis thus: "It gives me great pleasure to hear from the Director that the Khasis are doing so well at this School, and that the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District from an educational point is in advance of many of the most advanced districts of the whole of India. As regards this province, it has a much larger percentage of its children at School than any other District. In point of female education, it has no rivals in the Provinces sending, as it does, about five times as large a proportion of its girls to School as the most advanced plains District in the Province. I have listened with great pleasure to Miss Francis report on the Girls' High School, and I am sure that everyone here present will agree with me in thinking that we are very much indebted to Miss Thomas for the excellent work which she has done in connection with this School".

Further, the Chief Commissioner added thus: "I am glad to see that progress has been made as regards getting the Matriculation course modified. This course, as at present devised, is quite unsuitable for the Hill peoples, requiring as it does of them the mastery of three languages, namely, English a recognised vernacular, and a classical language. Upto the present time the language of no Hill people has been listed by the University as a 'recognised Vernacular'. We have asked that the Khasi language should be recognised, and we are expecting a favourable reply from the University. We have also asked,

with regard to all the Hill races that the necessity for professing a Classical language should be done away with and that the Matriculation Course should be revised to meet the requirements. We have had no reply as yet from the University, but we hope for a favourable one. Both these are subjects in which I take a particular interest, and I shall spare no pains in arriving at a satisfactory solution."

Rev. J. C. Evans retired from the School in 1916 after putting up 25 years of useful and commendable service to the youths of North-East India. He had his satisfaction to see with his own eyes that his old pupils had distinguished themselves in whatever career they had embarked upon.

Rev. J. C. Evans was succeeded by Rev. D. J. Davies who served the School only for two years. During his tenure of office, the Industrial School was opened up in which he was made its Headmaster. Till that time, the Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School was also the Headmaster of three other Schools, *viz.*, (1) The Mission Middle English School, (2) The Normal Training School and (3) The Industrial School. Besides, he was made responsible for various Missionary works. On 26th August 1918, Mr. David Thomson, officiating Inspector of Schools, Surma Valley and Hill District, in his inspection report urged upon the concerned authorities to see that the Headmaster should devote his whole time to the High School only as per agreement between the Mission and the Government.

The inspection report of David Thomson was an important milestone in the history of the School inasmuch as it attracted the attention of the Government about the actual state of affairs. The Government then had to write to the Mission to depute a person who was academically biased and who was educationally trained to be Headmaster of the School. Responding to this request, the Mission was successful to persuade Rev. Oliver Thomas to come to Shillong and to serve as Headmaster of the School. Early in 1919, Rev. Oliver Thomas joined the Shillong Government High School as its

Headmaster. This arrangement enabled Rev. D. J. Davies to devote himself to religious and missionary works.

The new approach—The first thing that Rev. Oliver Thomas did was to acquaint the Government about the inadequacy of the School building for housing the Classrooms. On April 3, 1919 he met the Inspector of Schools to discuss about this important matter. After many correspondence Mr. J. R. Cunningham, Director of Public Instruction in his turn assured Rev. Thomas that he would study the matter thoroughly and that the case of this School should be studied with understanding sympathy. In later years, Rev. Thomas request was responded to by the Government in a great Measure. On 29th June 1919, an important official of the Government recorded: "I visited Shillong High School on 10th June and examined all the classes. The teaching is excellent and the boys intelligent. The diversity of races and religions is most striking." Another important official who visited the School on 17th June, 1919 recorded thus: "At Mr. Thomas's invitation I visited the School on the 17th June and was shown all over it. I was particularly impressed by the tidiness and good order and general air of discipline." In so many words, he concluded thus: "I did not attempt to question the boys, but the splendid success obtained at the recent Matriculation Examination bears testimony to the excellence of the teaching."

On 10th July, 1919 Mr. David Thomson who in his earlier inspection report was critical about the general conditions in the hostels had to register a different note. He was full of praises about the manner how Babu Soso Tham ran the Earle Hostel and also about the manner how Babu Harrison Roy ran the old Hostel. He also appreciated the manner in which how a librarian Babu Edrenel Chyne prepared a new catalogue of books in the library,—the work which had not been done before. In his observation, he said that there was general improvement in the general academic advancement in the School. Finally, Mr Thomson recorded thus:

"The School is fortunate in having secured the services as Headmaster of the Rev. Oliver Thomas, M.A. Mr. Thomas is an educationist of great and varied experience and the author of a booklet on educational methods published by the Student Christian Movement.

The results of the last Matriculation Examination will be hard to beat and are extremely creditable to all concerned. 40 students were sent up: 35 passed, 29 in the First Division and 6 in the Second Division. 7 Scholarships were secured. This is a great improvement on the results for 1918 when 29 students passed out of 39 sent up, only 22 being in the First Division." (How does the present generation feel about this performance. *Ed.*)

In 1921, Rev. Oliver Thomas went on leave to U.K. to undergo a course in the Dalton method of teaching. During his short absence, Rev. Sydney Evans was officiating as Headmaster of the School. On 12th September, 1921 A. Majid, officiating Inspector of Schools recorded thus: "This is probably the most interesting of all the Schools I have hitherto visited and probably the most neglected. It is a pity that such an useful institution in the headquarter of the Province should have received such scanty attention in the matter of accommodation, probably because the funds were not forthcoming. It has an enrolment of 495 Scholars consisting of 12 tribes speaking as many as 18 languages and dialects"

Rev. Oliver Thomas resumed his duties early in 1923 as soon as he returned from the United Kingdom. Immediately, he decided to introduce the Dalton Method of teaching which he thought would be better than the traditional system of direct method. He personally tried to train every teacher to have a proper understanding of an approach to the new method. This method was being questioned elsewhere, but the new system seemed to be successful at this School. This system seemed to have brought good results. The Inspector of Schools who inspected this School from 17th to 20th April, 1923 recorded thus: "It makes it necessary for the boys to think for themselves, and work independently and puts an

end to the pernicious system of lecturing that is followed by almost all our teachers." Rev. Thomas admitted that there was as 25 per cent improvement in the examination results. Writing on 30th April 1925, Sir Syed M. Saadulla, Education Minister, in his note concluded thus: "Mr. Thomas is of opinion that the teacher is hardest worked during the period of teaching, according to the Dalton plan. I am glad that Mr. Thomas is extremely enthusiastic and confident of the immense good to be derived by teaching under this plan. With such confidence, I am sure, success is bound to come." Writing an inspection report on 7th November, 1925, the Inspector of Schools also corroborated to the above statement by recording thus: "The working of the Dalton Plan has proved successful beyond doubt in Shillong and it is now superfluous to advance arguments in its favour. I am glad to learn that at the last guardians' gathering on the occasion of which the headmaster organised an educational exhibition and explained the benefits of the new system, a good deal of prejudice against the Dalton method was removed from the minds of the public and the guardians left with a feeling of security and satisfaction with the work of this High School." A merit of this system was more amplified in another inspection report of the Inspector who inspected the School from 17th to 19th November 1926. In his concluding remarks, he wrote thus: "During my stay in Shillong, a Bengali gentleman sought an interview and handed over to me in course of the interview granted to him a lengthy note detailing a list of defects in the Dalton Plan and the system of teaching prevailing in the Shillong Government High School. A perusal of the note was sufficient to convince me that it was more or less an academic dissertation on the so-called evils of the new system of education, without much foundation on facts. The results of the Shillong Government High School at the successive Matriculation Examinations of the Calcutta University belie the charges made in the note. I shall not be surprised if the movement for a Bengali High School in Shillong springs from such uninformed quarters."

Late in 1927, Rev. Oliver Thomas went on leave and Rev. J. C. Evans was made responsible to be in-charge of the School as Superintendent. The Assistant Headmaster, Babu Sasadhar Majumdar was made to act as Headmaster, while Ondromuny was appointed as Assistant Headmaster. In the meantime, due to unavoidable circumstances, Rev. Oliver Thomas informed the two concerned authorities, *viz.*, the Government and the Mission that his services could no longer be available for the School. Hence, the Mission was trying to get another educationist-cum academician to fill up the post. Due to old age, Rev. J. C. Evans could no longer look after the School. Hence, in 1929, Rev. E. H. Williams was appointed Superintendent of the School. The Government then had to insist that the Mission should depute an educationist Missionary to man the School. In his inspection note the Inspector of Schools, writing on 27th April, 1929 concluded as follows: "I record with a word of thankfulness to the Headmaster Babu Sasadhar Majumdar and to the Assistant Headmaster, Mr. U. Ondromuny for the facilities offered to me during my inspection of the School. Sasadhar Babu is working in the footsteps of Rev. Mr. Thomas and in his hands the traditions of this School situated in the Provincial Capital are well maintained. Mr. Majumdar was not imported from outside but may be said to have risen from the ranks of the School itself. He thus possesses experience of the gradual growth of the institution which will enable him to outline progress without breaking continuity."

Another two glorious decades: The Shillong Government High School enjoyed another two decades of glorious years under the Stewardship of Rev. T. E. Pugh. Rev. Pugh joined his post as Headmaster towards the end of 1930 and continued to serve in that capacity till he retired in 1951. When ever he went on leave to go to U. K. Rev. T. B. Philips used to officiate as headmaster. The achievements of this school during this period were creditable. It will be a useless exercise if we were to narrate only a few of these if we cannot give a full account of all of them. Hence, it is not necessary to give a full account in this paper. Suffice it to say that this generation owes much to

the School. The School has provided the correct type of leadership in nearly all walks of life to North-East India.

Besides his interest in the academic advancement Rev. T. E. Pugh did much towards the development of Sports and Games. In the past, the pupils were divided into three sections for the sake of Sports, *viz.*, Mawkhar, Laban and Jail Road. But Rev. Pugh introduced inter class competition in football by donating the Pugh running Shield. It is gratifying to learn that the Football and Hockey matches with the local teams succeeded not only in diverting the mind of the boys from political field but also in creating the *esprit de corps* and promoting good fellowship among the various races.

Rev. T. E. Pugh has left a legacy which has become the property of the various communities living in North-East India. His contribution can be better imagine than explained.

Students of History and Jurisprudence fail to understand why the Government made an *ex parte* decision in the matter of appointment of a Headmaster to succeed Rev. T. E. Pugh. Without consulting the Mission, the Government decided that the post should be held by a person from the Assam School Service. This decision was arbitrary. But since it was not challenged, the issue has become a thing of the past. Hence, after the retirement of Rev. T. E. Pugh, the Government appointed Mr. D. D. Goswami as Headmaster of the School. He held his post till he retired in 1954 when he was succeeded by Mr. Harinath Sarma who retired in 1965. Mr. Sarma was succeeded by Rev. W. Manners who served as Headmaster till 1959. Thereafter, the following teachers served as Headmaster:—

Mr. Hestingwell Kharkongor—(1960-1968).

Mr. K. R. Deb—(1968-1970).

Mr. T. Goswami—(for few months in 1970).

Mr. Lohit Ch. Choudhury—(1971-1972).

Mr. A. Hannan—(1972-1974).

Mr. S. A. M. Lyngdoh—(1974-1978).

From September 1978, Mr. A. W. Khonglam has been Headmaster of the School.

A brief Survey of the Matriculation (afterwards known as H. S. L. C.) Examination of the School is depressing. As years rolled on, results have been on the decline especially in quantitative terms. Is there any explanation to this basic question? I am not the authority to pass any judgement on this issue. I can only surmise by presumptions. Perhaps, the School had to undergo a great psychological change due to the change of management. During the past 60 memorable years, the School was under the supervision of Missionary Headmasters who spent their lives for the School with a spirit of devotion and missionary zeal. Ordinarily, any person who is a careerist does not exert his heart and mind for the cause. This might be true in this case also. Secondly, none of the Headmasters after 1951 has had the chance to serve for long years. How can we expect something spectacular or even important contribution from any person if he were to serve in any capacity for a short term of a year or two. Thirdly, before independence, teaching profession was considered as a Sacred Profession and their payscale was made commensurate with that ideal. But after independence there have been a number of avenues for careerists. Even the most brilliant graduates would join the School with a view that such a service would serve him as a springboard for better career. Fourthly, after independence, career in education service is no longer attractive for brilliant graduates. Fifthly, there has been no definite policy on the part of the Government

to substitute the old adage "Spare the rod and spoil the child" in the matter of maintaining discipline in the school. Sixthly, the elites, parents and guardians have lost interest in the School because they know that there are other private Schools which are better managed. Seventhly, since many well managed private schools have been opened up, the elite of the Society has become complacent even to ask "How is Shillong Government High School performing?" After Meghalaya came into existence, nobody took interest in the affairs of the School. None of the high-ups (if we may call so) would like to send their boys to the School. Why should they adopt this attitude? -It is only because of the fact that there are other Schools. Is this the correct answer? I am convinced, it is not. Then where lies the answer? Nobody can conjecture though the answer is obvious. The answer lies only if Government have the courage to say that "let us have our own man who is an educationist to head the Directorate of Education." Are we short of such persons? Let the future reply. Till to-day we have no rules for the Meghalaya Education Service of any grade. We are still in a confused state of affairs.

If tomorrow is more important than to-day, we hope that all concerned must take a vow that we have to remind ourselves to rededicate for the cause for which the School has always played during the last 100 years.

Shillong Government High School

—Khasi Society and its Literature

By W. R. LAITFLANG

The spurt of literary writing among the Khasis came about the later half of the nineteenth century and made a very slow progress. No doubt considering literacy support of its literature, even this small progress can be classed as significant.

The purpose in writing this article, is to attempt to telescope the ideas to that period preceding the above and the dealing with those literacy tit-bits which may be considered as seeds germinating the growth of Khasi literature at a later date.

Robert Lindsay, who arrived in Dacca since 1775, remarked in the Book, "The lives of the Lindsays" that till 1783, there were writings in the Persian and Bengali languages. It is not known to the Author, if at any point of time the Khasis ever made correspondence in Persian, but records clearly show that they used the Bengali language which continued till it was replaced by English and Khasi.

While dealing about the background of Khasi literature, readers should not forget that it was Dr. William Carey that great Missionary and linguist who made the first attempt to introduce a written literature among the Khasis.

Krishna Chandra Pal, the Bengali Evangelist who was baptised by William Carey in 1800, came to Hat Pandua a trade centre (a place near Majal under the Syiem of Cherra) on 7th April, 1813 and baptised seven persons including two Khasis in the crystal steam known as Diebolishore (Dhuvuleshwuree) in the foot-hills, in the presence of eight Syiems and Sirdars and about six hundred Khasis (sic).

This episode must have placed its part in the field of literary activities of these converts and must have picked up the art of reading and writing.

Dr. William Carey started the work of translation some portion of the Bible from Bengali into Khasi in the year 1813 and some copies were printed about the year 1816 or 1817 in the Bengali script. The Khasi new testament was published in 1831 in the Bengali script. According to the earliest Welsh Missionaries, Dr. Carey was assisted in his translation work by a Bengali Ayah who served with some British Officers, but according to Dr. Hamlet Barch, Dr. Carey was assisted by a Khasi. Not by way of criticising the work of Dr. Carey, literary experts considered that the work was done by a person not conversant with the languages concerned. However, the few copies of the translated New Testament done by Dr. Carey will remain as literary monoliths in the history of Khasi Literature and remind us of the man who created them. At that time, Bengali language was commonly used by the visitors to the Hills until it was replaced by English and Khasi.

After this great work of Dr. William Carey, there was practically no follow up for some years. Krishna Pal stayed at Pandua only for about eight months. However, the Khasi Hills were no longer kept in isolation and unknown to the outside world.

The Khasi and Jaintia Hills, which the Khasis call, "Ka Ri Laiphew Syiem—Khadar Doloi" was perhaps known to the Ferengis. Ferengies might have been the corrupt form of the word French in the same way as the word Engregies of the word English. According to the letter of 8th February, 1774 from Richard Barwell to Mr. William Makepeace Thackeray, grandfather of Thackeray, the novelist.

The next important landmark was the arrival at Cherra of a British youngman, Alexander B. Lish about the year 1832. He opened three schools at Cherra, Mawmai and Mawmuh.

The Cherra School had about 36 students. In 1833, Lish took some Khasis with him to Calcutta for giving them further training. These Khasis were present in the congregation when Alexander Lish was ordained as a Padre on 26th December, 1833. There was no clear record to show that the Khasis who accompanied Lish had embraced the Christian Faith. However, it is on record that they along with Mr. Lish were invited by Sir Charles Metcalfe the then Governor of Bengal. It was stated that those Khasi youngmen showed great courage and confidence in answering to the questions put to them by Sir Charles Metcalfe. The exposures of those Khasi youngmen to the outside world must have contributed much to what may be called, the opening of the eyes. Alexander Lish was perhaps among the earliest Europeans to learn the Khasi Language. He translated some books into Khasi, revised the Gospel of Mathew which was printed in 1834 in the Roman script. He left Cherra in 1838 and died in 1852 when he was only about 38 years (sic).

The next mile stone in the development of Khasi literature was marked by the arrival of Rev. Thomas Jones in Cherra on 22nd June, 1841. "It was the idea of Rev. Thomas Jones that it would not be meaningful to preach the Gospel unless the people could study it in their mother tongue" Rev. Thomas Jones learnt the Khasi Language within a remarkably short time and it was he, who introduced the Roman script which laid the foundation of the literature as it is today. Approximately by June or July, 1843, Rev. Thomas Jones had translated some portion of the New Testament into Khasi. He was ably assisted by U Duwan Rai, U Jhumkha and others who had picked up the English language from Mr. Lish. The result of his wonderful efforts saw the first publication of the Gospel of Mathew in Khasi printed in Calcutta in 1846 and brought to Cherra in February, 1847. It may be mentioned that Thomas Jones had already written some books in 1846 including the First Khasi Hymn. If one is to place on record about the earliest Khasi poem composed by a Khasi, it was the song known as "Ka jingrwai Ka tnga U Monbhut", believed to have been composed by the wife of U Monbhut between the years 1830-1834, at the time when Monbhut was to lead his men to the battlefield". (From a speech delivered by the Author on 29th March, 1969 at the Khasi National Durbar Hall).

It may be noted that though the Khasi Language was introduced in the schools, its use was mostly confined to Christian literature and Bengali was very much in use in the official matters. The Will of U Syiem Jidor Sing was written in Bengali in 1851. The Deed executed by U Ramsai Kala Raja of Maharam with C. K. Hudson, Principal Political Commissioner, on 21st September, 1859 at Cherrapunjee corresponding to 6th Avini, 1266 B.S. was also written in Bengali. The year 1860 may be considered to be the year of significance in the history of Khasi literature for round about that time, the Khasi language came to be used in writing petitions to the Courts. From records available, it appears that court petition in Khasi started only after 1860. One of such petitions was submitted by U Jom Kha and others to the Deputy Commissioner, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, in 1865. Coming back to the literary activities in the church, the earliest known Khasi Hymn credited to have been composed by a Khasi, was the one by U Larsing Khongwir, sometime between 1855-1863. The first Khasi Hymns by Thomas Jones, I were published in 1846, followed by the Khasi Hymn Book in 1853 by Rev. William Lewis, augmented edition of 75 hymns issued in 1860 and 1866 by Rev. Thomas Jones II. Then a much large Hymn Book was published in 1876 edited by Rev. Hugh Roberts.

As mentioned earlier, the attempt in this short article is to take the minds of the readers to that period when the Khasi society was still in its original form not much influenced by modernism.

"The expression 'Ka Thoh Ka Tar' which is commonly used in Khasi to mean 'Literature', was a term originally used in religious practices. 'Thoh' means marked or a mark, and 'Tar' means a cut or scratch. Both these signs are considered as inauspicious omens, when they appear in the entrails of a sacrificed animal. Nowadays, some people use the expressions 'Ka Thoh Ka Pule' or 'Ka Pule ka Dang' or 'Ka Pule-Puthi' to mean Literature". (From a paper "ka Niam bad ka Thoh ka Pule" read by the Author in Seng Jingtup Hall in 1968).

Generally speaking till the time when Cherrapunjee was the Capital, the Khasis were not in favour of sending their children to school particularly girls. It was stated that divination with

cast egg on the issue whether girls should also receive education, the omens revealed by this process were that girls were not meant for education, otherwise untold miseries would befall them and they would forever remain barren.

Upto 1880, there appears to be no serious attempt made by the Khasis to contribute anything towards Khasi literature. By 1880 there were already few educated Khasis, but since the number of literates was limited and probably due to economic reasons, secular literary ventures were very much restrained. It was after 1880 that some Khasi Poems appeared such as 'Ka Myntoi' or 'Ka Kot Boit' by Sheik Amjad Ali in 1888 followed by 'Ka Rynkap' of Rev. Morkha Joseph. It appears that Rev. Modkha Joseph had already written a book 'Ka Kitab Nynghong' since 1883.

About the time when High School was started in Shillong, Mawkhar was considered next to Laban in importance. It was then considered to be a part of the Bhoi Country. "Most of the Khasis coming to Jowduh area were not in favour of spending the nights on the Northern side of the Umshyrpi stream, which according to them was a part of the Bhoi area, that is the lowlying area across the North of the District where fever was prevalent" (From an article by the Author in the Souvenir on Shillong Centenary Celebration). There were fatal cases of children suffering from whooping cough in 1876. Mawkhar was severely hit by the cholera epidemic which swept Shillong and its suburbs in the Summer of 1879. According to eye witnesses, 'Ka Khlam', i.e., epidemic disease, or 'Ka Iap-Them' meaning Cholera took a heavy toll of lives in the area. The dead were removed and carried in the Bullock Carts. Such was the fear in the minds of the people that even dying persons were hurriedly carried along with the dead and removed to the outskirts of the town. There was an instance where a person left among the dead yet survived to tell of that horrible experience. According to official record, the number of the dead was shown as 144 in Mawkhar alone, but the local people believed that the actual figure was much on the higher side. To the knowledge of the Author, the calamity did not result in any literary writing except in official records. Old timers also talked about the great fire of Mawkhar which gutted down as many as seventeen

houses. The fire started from Mission Compound and spread till it reached the Stable of U Kpa U Sib where it was believed to have been miraculously checked by casting an egg, a practice common in those days for preventing the spread of fire. The intention in referring to such calamities was to indicate the trying circumstances which people had to undergo during the time when the Government High School was set up.

The Government High School earlier known as the Shillong Zillah School was opened up to Entrance standard of the Calcutta University on 2nd September, 1878 with fifty pupils. The Author was informed that there was already a school in the area where the Telegraph Office stands and that might be the one set up by Jeebon Roy. According to late Mr Jisnot Chyne, in the beginning, no Khasi was qualified to serve as a master in the High School because only graduates were eligible for the post. U Harrison Roy, was the first Khasi to have been appointed as Latin Master due to his proficiency in that Language though he was not a graduate. Other earliest Khasi teachers were U Kisor Swet and U Nisor Sing.

The establishment of the Government High School in Shillong during the last quarter of the last century has brought about a tremendous impact not only upon the Khasi literature but also upon the literatures of other tribal people of the earthen province of Assam. It was an institution where the cultures of the Plain Hill people met and mingled together and therefore, to a great extent, contributed towards germinating the seed of cosmopolitan outlook among the different communities in the town. The opening of the School upto the entrance standard really provided immense facilities for the students to enter into the higher portals of education. But most educated and well-to-do Khasi were not in favour of imparting higher education to women. To them, education for girls upto High School standard was considered more than sufficient and that was the reason why no lady passed the Entrance Examination in the Nineteenth Century.

Perhaps any writing about the Shillong Government High School will remain incomplete without mentioning the name of Jeebon Roy.

who had made valuable contribution towards the establishment of the School. He may indeed be described as one of the great Khasis of the nineteenth century. Perhaps personalities like Jeebon Roy, may be compared to the Eucalyptus tree of the Government High School, a tree immortalised by the Poet U Soso Tham in his famous Poem "U Dieng Bilat High School."

The period covering the last part of the last century and the early part of the present one, saw the flowering of the Khasi literature both in the domain of prose and Poetry. Most of the distinguished Khasi writers of this period did not receive much by way of formal education, but they were men of courage and determination full of patriotic spirit and, therefore, their works influenced and inspired the writers of the later period.

In conclusion, perhaps it will be relevant to mention the names of some writers and their works and Scholars during the period after the establishment of the Shillong Government High School, 1880-1905.

1880 Sib Charan Roy, passed the Entrance Examination followed by U Hari Charran Roy, Kupal Donsing, Raimohon Diengdoh, Harrison Roy and many others, that by 1902, there were **32 Khasis who passed the Entrance Examination.**

1883—'Ka Kitab Nyngkong' by Rev. Morkha Joseph.

1887—Opening of the Theological Institution at Cherra with Dr. John Roberts as its Principal.

1888 Sheik Amjad Ali, wrote some **Khasi Poems** in a book entitled 'Ka Myntoi' or 'Ka Boit'.

1889 Rev. William Williams **published the first Khasi journal** 'U Nongkit Khuhor'.

1890—'Katto katne ki jingdwai by Fr. Otto Hopfennuller.

1891—Final **translation** and publication of the whole Bible in Khasi in four volumes.

1895 Perhaps U Solomon Blah and U Harrison Roy, were among the earliest Khasis to have passed the **first Arts** of the Calcutta University till that year.

1896—**Ri Khasi Press** was set up and U Sib Charran Roy, published a journal 'U Khasi Mynta'.

1897—

Publication of the Khasi Bible in one volume. 'Ka Khasi Mental Arithmetic' by U Burnabas and U Nisor Sing.

1897-1900—Between these years Babu Jeebon Roy, **published** as many as eleven books.

1898—Two Khasis, namely U Solomon Blah and U Dhory Ropmay, passed the B. A., from the Calcutta University.

1899—Ka Seng Khasi was founded.

1902 : Dr. John Roberts and Rev. J.C. Pvan, published 'U Nongjalam Kristian'.

Ten Khasis passed the First Arts till that year. Ka Anaman Tham was the first Khasi girl to pass the Entrance Examination.

1903 : Nisor Singh, started the work of writing the Khasi English Dictionary.

Third Reader Khasi, was prescribed as Text Book in the Lower Primary Examination.

Mr. Homiwel Lyngdoh, obtained the degree of licentiate in Medicine and Surgery of the Calcutta University.

"Ki Jingsneng Tynmen" by Radhon Sing Berry.

1904 : Ka Anamon Tham, passed the First Arts in the First Division, and Joy Mohon, passed the B. A.

1905 : U Overland Gatphoh, became Sub-Deputy Collector, but died soon after U Oniwel, passed the Final Examination from the Medical School, Dibrugarh.

Five Khasis passed the Entrance Examination including Ka Gloriasamon. U Josing Rynjah passed in the First Division.

HEADMASTERS, FROM 1878 to 1980

1. Mr. Rain Mohan Mitra (1878-1879)
2. Mr. Sashidhar Barkagati (1879-1880)
3. Mr. Joy Chandra Mitra (1880-1882)
4. Mr. Jaya Chandra Sanyal (1882-1885)
(Mr. Kali Kumar Chakrabarti—Officiating—
1885-1886).
5. Krishna Nath Maitra (1886-1887)
(Mr. Makhanlal Chatterjee—Officiating—
1887).
6. Mr. Dwigendra Nath Neogi (1887-1889)
7. Mr. Mahadeb Chowdhury (1889-1890)
8. Mr. Azad Aly (1890)
9. Mr. Prasana Chandra Mukharjee (1890-1891)
10. Rev. J. C. Evans (1891-1914)
(Rev. R. Jones—Officiating—1893 & 1901).
11. Rev. D. J. Davies (1914-1919)
12. Rev. Oliver Thomas (1919-1928)
(Rev. S. Evans—Officiating 1920-1921 &
1921-1922).
13. Mr. Shashadhar Majumdar (1928-1930)
14. Rev. T. E. Pugh (1930-1951)
(Rev. T. B. Phillips—Officiating—1934-1936 ;
1945-1948 & 1949).
(Rev. D. W. Davies—Officiating 1940-1941 &
1949)
- (Mr. D. D. Goswami—Officiating—1951-1952)
15. Mr. M. C. Dutta (1952-1954)
16. Mr. Harinath Sarma (1954-1956)
17. Mr. Nishinath Chakrabarty (1956-1957)
18. Rev. W. Manners (1957-1959)
19. Mr. Kamini Kumar Bardhan (1959-1960)
20. Mr. Hestingwell Kharkongor (1960-1968)
21. Mr. Ketaki Ranjan Deb (1968-1970)
22. Mr. Panchanan Goswami (1970- December)
23. Mr. Lohit Ch. Choudhury (1971-1972)
24. Mr. A. Hannan (1972-1974)
25. Mr. S. A. M. Lyngdoh (1974-1978)
26. Mr. A. W. Khonglam (September, 1978)

HEADMASTERS—

SOME BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES



Rev. John Ceredig Evans 1891-1914

In 1891, when the Cherra Normal School, the Government School for Boys, Shillong, and the Welsh Mission School for Hill Boys were amalgamated to establish the new Government High School for Boys, Shillong, Reverend John Ceredig Evans was appointed Headmaster of the new School. Mr Evans was born in 1855, and was a native of New Quay, Cardiganshire, South Wales. As a young lad he served some years as a Sailor.

He returned to Grammar School when he was about twenty years of age and passed the entrance examination to the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, where he completed an Arts Course. He then went on to study Theology in Glasgow. He was ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Wales in Llanelly in 1885; and accepted a call to Gilead English Presbyterian Church, Nantymoel, Glamorgan-shire.

He was accepted as an overseas missionary in 1887, and was posted to take charge of the Normal School, Cherrapunji.

As Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School he became profoundly

interested in the welfare of the whole community and for some years was a non official member of the Legislative Council for Assam.

When on furlough in Wales in 1922 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. He retired from the School in 1914, to become field Treasurer of the Welsh Mission in North-East India.

Rev. D. J. Davies, B.A. 1914-1919

The Rev. D. J. Davies was the son of the Rev. R. R. Davies, and was also a native of Cardiganshire. He was a graduate of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, and studied Theology in the United Theological College Aberystwyth. He was mainly interested in the academic aspects of Education; and after completing one period of five years did not return to the School partly on account of the poor health of his wife, and partly because he wished to pursue his academic interests. He retired from the School and the Mission in 1919.



Rev. Oliver Thomas, B.A. 1919-1928

The Rev. Oliver Thomas who succeeded Mr. Davies was a native of Llanelly, Carmarthenshire, South Wales. He was educated

in Llanelly County School, the University College of South Wales, Cardiff, where he graduated in Arts and in the United Theological College, Aberystwyth, where he studied Theology. He was ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. He was accepted as an overseas missionary and posted to Sylhet in 1918. In Sylhet he was especially concerned with welfare work among College students. He was appointed Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School in 1919, and held the post until he retired from the field in 1928. His period of headmaster coincided with the development of the Dalton Plan of Secondary Education and he experimented with this method in the Shillong Government High School.

The Rev. Oliver Thomas retired from the School and from India in 1928 on account of the serious and continuous ill health of his wife. He however retained his keen interest in the school, and did all he could to help it, when later he became General Secretary of the Overseas Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. He died in 1950.



Rev. Sidney Evans, B.A. 1920-1921

The Rev. Sidney Evans, who deputized for the Rev. Oliver Thomas during his furlough in session 1920-21 was a native of Glamorganshire. As a lad he had considerable business and commercial experience; but following a profound religious experience, he began to preach the Gospel and took an

active part in the Welsh Revival of 1904-05. He was a friend and fellow student of the Revivalist Mr. Evan Roberts. Mr. Evans was educated in the local school in Gorseinon, in the academy in New Castle Emlyn, in the University College of Wales, Cardiff, and the United Theological College, Aberystwyth. He was ordained a Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Wales. He married a sister of Mr. Evan Roberts, the Welsh Evangelist. They were appointed as overseas missionaries to India in 1920.

After leaving the Shillong Government High School Mr. Evans became Principal of the Cherra Theological College, Cherrapunji. He retired from the College and from India in 1945 owing to failing health and passed away in 1960.



*Rev. Thomas Edwin Pugh, M.A. (Oxon)
1930-1951*

The Rev. Thomas Edwin Pugh was a native of Talgarth, Breconshire, South Wales. He was born on November 4th 1888, and was educated in Brecon County School, the University College of Wales, Cardiff, where he graduated with Honours in English Language and Literature in 1911 and gained the University Certificate for competence in the Theory and Practice of Secondary and Elementary Education in 1912. He joined the Honours School of English Language and Literature as a student of Jesus College, Oxford and became M.A. in 1914.

He joined the Army in September 1914 and was posted to Aden. He saw active service during the First World War in Aden, Mesopotamia and Ind.a.

He retired from the Army in 1919 and was appointed to the staff of the English Department of Cardiff Boys High School, where he served with conspicuous success in all branches of the school's activity for ten years.

He accepted a call to become Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School towards the end of 1929 and joined the school in February 1930. Thereafter he gave without stint of his wide knowledge and rich experience as an educationist in all branches of the art of teaching—in Subject Teaching, Administration, Sports, personal guidance and hostel work.

As headmaster he gave personal attention and care for each and every student and member of staff. He retired from the school on April 30, 1951 on account of failing health. He suffered a heart attack at the close of his farewell meeting on the 10th May and passed away on June 23, 1951 in the Welsh Mission Hospital, Shillong. His mortal remains lie buried in the European Cemetery, Kench's Trace Shillong, where he was buried on Sunday June 24, 1951. At his funeral the generous heart of India paid one of the most amazing tributes any teacher could ever receive.

During his years of service the Rev. T. E. Pugh was relieved for three periods of furlough.

Rev. David William Davies, B.A. 1940-1941

The Rev. D. W. Davies was a native of Carnarvonshire. He was a graduate of the University College of North Wales, Bangor, where he graduated with Honours in Hebrew and Semitic Languages. He studied Theology in the United Theological College, Aberystwyth. Before coming to the Shillong Government High School he had served as a Missionary in Sylhet, Karimganj and Mawphlang. He left India owing to ill health in 1943; and passed away in 1965.



Rev. Thomas Bevan Phillips, B.A., B.D.

(December 1934—March 1936)

(October 1945—March 1948)

The Rev. T. B. Phillips is a native of Maestag, Glamorganshire. He was borne on April 11, 1898. He was educated in Maestag Higher Elementary School, Trefeca College, the University College of Wales, Cardiff, where he graduated with Honours in Philosophy, from the United Theological College, Aberystwyth, where he graduated in Theology, and Kingsmead College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, where he obtained a certificate of Proficiency in the Theory and Practice of Elementary and Secondary Education.

He was ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Wales in Aberystwyth in 1934. He was accepted for Overseas Missionary Service and posted temporarily to the Shillong Government High School.

On the return of the Rev. T. E. Pugh from furlough he went to the Theological College, Cherrapunji, where he served as Superintendent of the Cherra Teachers Training Centre and later as Principal. He retired from the College in 1961 to become field Treasurer for the Welsh Mission in North East India.

He retired from India in 1969. He was privileged to return to India and meet old friends and colleagues, when as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales he attended the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Khasi Hills Presbyterian Hospital in 1972.

On behalf of his fellow missionaries past and present he sends greetings to the Shillong Government High School staff and students and thanks for many happy years of work and fellowship together.



Rev. W. Manners. B. A., B. D.

Rev. W. Manners took over as Headmaster in 1957 and continued until 1959, when he retired. Born in 1904, Rev. W. Manners passed his Matriculation Examination in 1922 from the Shillong Government High School in the First Division with distinction in Mathematics and Additional Mathematics. He joined the M. C. College, Sylhet and Graduated in 1926. He took his B.D. Degree from the Sree Ranpore University, West Bengal, in 1929. He joined the Shillong Government High School in 1937 as an Assistant Teacher.

After his retirement, Rev. Manners fully devoted himself and his time to the Presbyterian Church. He went to U.K. in 1966 to attend the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Wales; to Singapore in 1968 to attend the Asia South Pacific Congress on Evangelism; to Malaysia in 1970 to attend the Ethnic Consultation in Sibu Sarawak. In 1965 along with Mr. B. M. Pugh he was invited to Delhi for consultation for establishing the North Eastern Hill University. At present, he is the Pastor of the Mawkhar Presbyterian Church.



Mr. H. Kharkongor, B. A., B. I.

Mr. H. Kharkongor took over as Headmaster in October, 1960 and retired on 31st October, 1968. He was born on the 1st of March, 1913. He was a student of the School from 1927 to 1930. He joined the Assam School Service in an officiating capacity in 1937 and was appointed, substantively, in July, 1940. He passed the B. I. Examination in 1937 and the Geography training from Calcutta in 1940. He went on loan to the Supply Department (Textile Branch) of the Assam Government, as Textile Inspector, in May 1944. He was promoted to the post of the Superintendent in 1946 and he was deputed to Calcutta in connection with procurement and movement of textile goods to Assam. In 1949 he ran the office of the Assam Government as its Procurement Officer and organised the distribution of textile goods to different destinations in Assam.

After the decontrol of textile goods he rejoined the Shillong Government High School in March 1953. He was a member of the Board of Secondary Education of Assam from 1962 till his retirement from the School. He wrote a Khasi Geography book which was, for many years, prescribed the Text Book for the Middle English Schools in K. and J Hills. He was awarded a Certificate of Merit as a Teacher, on District level in 1965. At present, he is the Honorary Secretary of the Association for Social Health in India, Meghalaya Branch. He was very keen in sports and games and led the Assam School Teams for participation in the sports and games organised by the Federation of School Games and Sports of India at Imphal and Cuttack.



Mr. K. R. Deb, B. A. (Hons), B. T.

Mr. K. R. Deb took over as Headmaster with effect from 1st November, 1968 and retired on 31st January, 1970. Son of a teacher, Mr. Kotaki Ranjan Deb was born on 1st February, 1915 in Putijuri, Sylhet. He entered the Holo-ganj Government High School and passed his Matriculation in 1933 standing first in Assam and third in the Calcutta University. He Graduated from the Sylhet Murari Chand College with Honours in English in 1937.

He was a First Grade General Scholarship holder of the Provincial Government upto his Degree career. He was the winner of the Kirti Chand Mackenzie Gold Medal of the Calcutta University in Mathematics and of the Nalini Sundari Silver Medal of Assam in Sanskrit. He passed an Examination in Panini in the East Bengal Saraswat Samaj, standing third in that Examination. He joined the Assam School Service in 1939 and served in the Government High Schools at Silchar and Sylhet.

After the partition, he opted for service in Assam and joined the Shillong Government High School, which he served from October, 1947 to January, 1970, except for a brief period in 1960 when he was transferred to the Barpeta Higher Secondary School. During this period, he took his B. T. Degree from the Gauhati University in 1951 and underwent a course of training in Educational and Vocational Guidance in the C. I. E., Delhi, in 1955. He submitted a paper to the Department on the subject of Guidance. He was brought back to the office of the D.P.I., Assam, Shillong to prepare the first Write-Up on the History of Education in Post-Independence

Assam. Towards the end of 1960 he was appointed as the Assistant Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School.

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He was also a member of many Examination and Syllabus Committees of the Department and of the Board of Assam. He became a member of the Meghalaya Board of School Education.

On retirement, he served as Headmaster in the two local Aided High Schools at Jail Road upto 1975 and the Buddha Vidyaniketan upto 1979. The later School earned the recognition within his tenure. Mr. Deb now lives a quiet life at home at KHELAGHAR, Laitumkhrak, Shillong. He is full of appreciation for his colleagues and gratitude to all those he happened to work with. The sweet memory of his pupils now spread over India and Bangladesh, nay, over many lands, is a source of joy to him these days.



Mr. A. Hannan, B. A., B. T.

Mr. A. Hannan was the Headmaster of the Shillong Government High School from 1972-74. He was born on 23rd February, 1927. He studied at the Shillong Government High School from 1940 to 1944. He graduated in 1948 from St. Edmunds College. He joined the Shillong Government High School as a teacher in 1949 and remained till 1974. During this time he passed his Bachelor in Teaching from the Gauhati University in 1961. In 1974, he was promoted as Assistant Inspector of Schools, United Khasi and Jaintia Hills. In 1976 he was promoted as Inspector of Schools, East and West Khasi Hills Districts, which post he continues to hold till date.



Mr. D. D. Goswami
(1951—1952)



Mr. H. N. Sarmah
(1954—56)



Mr. A. W. Khonglam
Present Headmaster

INTER HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT, 1936
VENUE:—SYLHET



Front Row :—Mr. Goverdhan Chettri, Mr. Evanton Reade, Mr. Gilbert Tariang.

Middle Row :—Dr. Barlow, Mr. Nohksang Ao, Mr. Owenton, Mr. Earnest W. Jyrwa, Mr. Nando E. Wankhar, Rev. T. E. Pugh.

Last Row :—Mr. Rema Ao, Mr. Kellington Pariat, Mr. Primrose Gatphoh.

THE CRADLE WHERE DIVERSE CULTURES MET AND MINGLED

By R. T. Rymbai, I.A.S. (Retd.).

I had the good fortune to enter the portals of Shillong Government High School at the time that it was on the threshold of half its present age of one hundred years of faithful and fruitful service in the noble cause of the education of the boys of all communities of this great Country of ours in general and of those of its north-east region in particular. If my memory serves me right the School had then as many as ten Vernacular and Language teachers teaching Khasi, Bengali Assamese, Hindi, Nepali, Arabic, Persian, Pali and Sanskrit. There would have been more if the Garo boys, the Naga boys, the Mizo boys (the last were then generally known as the Lushai boys), the Karbi Anglong (they were then known as the Mikir boys) and the Dimasa Kachari boys had had their own respective vernacular subjects. But their languages were then not recognised as yet by the Calcutta University for the Matriculation Examination. They had to take Alternative English instead. Some of the Mikir boys took Khasi and some of the Dimasa Kachari boys took Bengali. We had some boys from the South also: the sons of some Government servants. But though the South Indian languages have their rich literatures the boys were too few to be entitled to have Vernacular teachers for their languages. They had, therefore, to prepare their vernacular subjects on their own in their own homes. Indeed the number of Vernacular and Language teachers would have been a stupendous array if the number of boys speaking different languages of the South had been large enough. But I think the ten that we had was quite unparalleled, and there never was a High School then, nor is there one now, anywhere in the Country which could boast of that number. The medium of instruction was in English for all subjects other than the Vernacular. Though we had three sections in each class the boys were generally grouped together irrespective of their communities. They

were separated only when they attended their respective Vernacular classes. So we had the golden opportunity to mix together and we got on excellently well with one another through English.

Shillong Government High School was then the only High School serving the educational needs of the boys of all the hill districts and areas forming then part of Assam; namely, the Lushai Hills District (now a Union Territory by the name of Mizoram), the Naga Hills District (now a State by the name of Nagaland), the North Cachar Hills Subdivision then part of the District of Cachar and now an autonomous district of Assam), the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District and the Garo Hills District (both having been constituted into a State by the name of Meghalaya). The areas now known as Block I and Block II of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous District of Assam were then part and parcel of the Jowai Subdivision of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District. The present Union Territory of Arunachal was then known as the North-East Frontier Agency loosely tagged to Assam. But it was a hidden land for all that we knew because it was the close preserve of the British. The British officers of the I.P.S. cadre ran its civil administration. The Assam Rifles manned mostly by the Gorkhas with the British military officers in command did the police and para-military duties. There was then no separate Boys' High School in Shillong even for the Bengalis who had quite a sizeable population as almost all the Government Offices State and Central were manned by them with the Assamese, a distant second. Assam itself was then administratively divided into three distinct divisions: (i) the Assam Valley Division comprising of the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the Assamese majority areas; the Surma Valley Division comprising of Sylhet

District (now part of Bangladesh) and of the plains areas of Cachar District—the Bengali majority areas; and the Hills Division comprising of the districts of the Lushai Hills, the Naga Hills, the Garo Hills, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the Sub-division of North Cachar Hills where the hill people known after the names of their own respective districts live. There were High Schools in Assam Valley and Surma Valley for the Assamese and Bengali boys. The Assamese and the Bengali boys of the Shillong Government High School were therefore mostly the sons of fathers who were in Government employ. The Nepali boys were mostly the sons of retired Army personnel who had established themselves in Shillong where Gurkha regiments were invariably stationed. The Marwari boys were the sons of fathers in business. Only the hill boys whose parents were determined that their sons should proceed to High Schools had willy nilly to come to Shillong for two reasons. One was that which I had already mentioned that there was no High School at all in the other hill districts and areas of the then composite State of Assam except the Government High School at Shillong. The other was a most compelling one. The few Middle Schools, two or three in each district were the Middle English Schools run by the Christian Missions. There was not a single government M. E. School. The Mission Schools, whether those of the Welsh Presbyterian Church, of the American Baptist Church, of the London Baptist Church or of the Roman Catholic Church, were all using the Roman alphabets and there was no arrangement whatsoever for the use of any Indian script or the teaching of any Indian language. Naturally the hill boys of those days could not attend a High School in either of the Valleys. Of course in Khasi Hills the Bengali script was used when the art of writing and reading was first introduced in 1824 by the Missionaries of the Free Church Mission from Soanapore. The use of Bengali script was discontinued from 1841 by Rev. Thomas Jones, a Missionary of the Welsh Presbyterian Mission. He had it replaced by the Roman alphabets.

In those days excepting the Shillong boys and the boys whose villages were on the

Shillong-Cherra Road (33 miles), the Shillong Mawphlang Road (15 miles) and the Shillong-Gaubati Road (63 miles) all the other boys had to travel on foot from their villages to the nearest roadhead to enable them to come to Shillong to stay in hostels to prosecute their studies in the Government High School. Some of the boys from the interior of Khasi and Jaintia Hills stayed with their relatives or friends of their parents in Shillong. The physical hardships which the boys from Lushai Hills, Naga Hills, Garo Hills, North Cachar Hills and N. E. F. A. had to undergo to reach Shillong could better be imagined than described for they had to walk for days together before they reached the roadhead. They had to pass through thick forests infested with elephants and other wild animals. There were no roads but narrow footpaths and jungle tracks and not unoften, they had to spend the night in the open. Boys like me from Jowai were more fortunate as we had the advantage of a bridle path and could cover the distance of 33 miles in a hard day's march.

The first High School in Shillong was in fact founded by U. Babu Jeebon Roy Jaid Mairom. It was then called an Entrance School. The Welsh Presbyterian Mission followed with one of its own not long after. The good people of the day thought it unwise to have two such schools in the small provincial town of Shillong as it was then. It would lead to an unhealthy competition. They prevailed upon the Government to take over both the schools to combine them into one. And so came the establishment of the Shillong Government High School the centenary of which we celebrate this year of grace 1980 to commemorate that historic event of 1880. But the Welsh Presbyterian Mission surrendered its school only on the condition that the Headmaster should always be a Missionary of its own. If somehow the Mission could not readily provide one then any one holding the office should be a stop-gap only making room for the Missionary as soon as one was available. In our time we were most fortunate to have as our Headmaster a Missionary of rare virtues and qualities in Rev. T. E. Pugh. He was the product of the University

of Oxford holding the degree of the Master of Arts in English Literature. He was also a Captain of the First World War turned Missionary. We were a heterogeneous crowd in the school representing as we did almost all the communities in the Country. But he kept us all under strict discipline like the military officer of the British Army that he was. And yet it was accomplished with the love and care of the man of God that he had chosen to be after he had gone through the cruelties and horrors of the War.

Speaking of Rev. F. E. Pugh I feel it incumbent upon me to mention here one admirable part of his nature which, in my humble opinion, made him for us students a missionary of education in truest sense of the term, more than he was a missionary in the cause of his religion. I say this from a unique experience of my own in proof of this wonderful trait of his. I stayed in the Earle Hostel within a stone's throw of his residence. One day he called me to tea. It was during the winter vacation when almost all the boys had left for their homes. Only a few who prepared for the Matriculation Examination like me remained in the hostel. The party consisted of Rev. Pugh his wife, their little daughter, Enid and myself only. It was a terrible blow to them when their daughter died in England in the flower of her youth. While we were having tea Mrs. Pugh, herself a Missionary, turned to me and said, "Tokin Boy, why don't you become a Christian?" I was at a loss what to say. Rev. Pugh saw my confusion. He gave me no chance to reply even if I could frame an answer. Of course I could not for the life of me. He looked at his wife and said almost in sorrow, "Look, Mrs. Pugh, we called Tokin Boy to tea not to make a convert of him. We should be happy if we find our boys conscious of their duties and truthful, if we know them to be of good conduct and character and if we never hear that they are ungodly. If we start making converts of them to satisfy ourselves that we have been able to bring them to our fold without giving a thought that they are steadfast in their own faith and are as good as you could wish any one

to be we shall be doing them harm instead". Mrs. Pugh, bless her soul, meekly and gracefully bowed down to her husband's words: words which stirred the depths of my young soul swelling it with pride in my own heritage of which I had somewhat become bashful because, in those days, I had been hearing time and time again the loud attacks on it by many a churchman as the belief of the uneducated, the unenlightened and the superstitious. It is proof of our progress towards better understanding that this sort of ranting is now seldom heard. Only the less thoughtful ones are still the slaves of it.

The tale of woe heard everywhere these days is that of parents and guardians lamenting the lack of discipline or, worse, the prevalence of indiscipline reigning over their children and wards in the educational institutions of the Country all over. It is therefore befitting that we should call to mind with a deep sense of gratitude the silent services of such teachers like Rev. F. E. Pugh who dedicated themselves to their sacred task, not only to teach the boys book knowledge but to form their character, to instill in them a spirit of discipline and to guide them in their conduct and behaviour. And so they welded them into one family of boys who felt akin to one another sinking their differences of caste, creed or community. The remembrance of this spirit of belonging ruling supreme amongst the boys is a balm to the troubled minds of to day when the Country is passing through phases of communal strife and hatred threatening its very existence. The danger is so real and great that the Government at the Centre has constituted the National Integration Council composed of the top leaders of the land having its good most deeply entrenched in their hearts to devise ways and means to combat this evil and bring about emotional and national integration amongst all sections of the people. It is best to sow this good seed amongst the youth of the land in the formative years of their lives. And the youth of the land are its students. This celebration of the first centenary of the Shillong Government High School comes like the enlivening breath of a fresh morning air

in times like this when the Country is passing through a dangerous decade of fissiparous tendencies raising their ugly heads all over at one time or the other. The Shillong Government High School has been the home of perfect communal harmony in the hey-day of its existence as the lone Alma Mater of the hill boys of the entire North-East Region of the Country with the boys of all other communities rubbing shoulders with them like brothers.

It has been the shining example of unity in diversity with the boys merging themselves into one big brotherhood without losing their respective distinct identities. Mahatma Gandhi said, "My hope for my Motherland lies in her youth". Let us on this auspicious occasion invoke the spirit of brotherhood of the Shillong Government High School to kindle in the breasts of all the young ones of the land.

ASSAM INTER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT,
1937
(SURMA VALLEY & HILL DISTRICTS TEAM)



Names of all persons are not known except (From Right to Left—
Front Row—Mr. Nohksang Ao, Mr. Kellington Pariat, Mr. J. Ahmed,
Secretary, I.V.H.S. Tournament Committee, Mr. S. Gupta, Inspector of
Schools, Surma Valley & Hill Districts.

The Role of the School in the Spread of Education in the Region

By I. M. SIMON, M.A., M. Phil.

At the farewell meeting held in his honour on the eve of his retirement as the last Missionary Headmaster of the Snillong Government High School, the Reverend T. E. Pugh, reminded the students and the staff of the school that the business of education comprehended much more than book-learning. He quoted an observation made by a headmaster of a school in Wales that "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one learned at school". The implication that Education in the real sense involves character-building is strong. The average person spends perhaps a total of 15 years of his life at academic institutions—just a part of his life, but an important part nonetheless, because it is during these years that he must accumulate as much knowledge and wisdom as he can—mental sustenance to last him his lifetime.

Each in his own way, the headmasters of the school, particularly in the earlier decades before attitudes to life and to moral and social values began to deteriorate throughout the country and the world, sought to uphold a high standard in the field of education, and to a large extent succeeded.

The task was never an easy one. The school did not, or perhaps more correctly, would not seek the freedom that many institutions today enjoy as of right, to pick and choose the students they want. It catered for the masses, and so in its rolls we find students from different strata of society and of every conceivable intellectual calibre—the good, the bad and the indifferent. A perusal of the old records will reveal that through its portals ultimately passed out frequent repeaters,

students who were given chance after chance to justify the many years of serious plodding. And many of them did.

Of course, the reputation of a school has always depended more on its brilliant students, and of these the Shillong Government High School during the century and more that it had existed has had a great number who in later years came to occupy exalted positions in society and made a name for themselves in almost every walk of life.

Inevitably, the majority of students in the beginning were boys of the Khasi and the Bengali communities, though other communities were also represented. By 1916, students from other hill districts—Garos, "Lushais" and Nagas—had arrived in strength, to be followed around 1916 by a few students from Manipur. By then, probably every important community of at least northern India had been represented in the roll of the School. Rather uniquely, we find among the students sent up for the Matriculation Examination in 1929 the name of one Tamik Dabing, "the only Abor student" (in the words of the then Headmaster, Revd. E. H. Williams) "who has reached this stage". Although it would appear that the Khasi-Jaintia Presbyterian Girls' High School had been functioning in Shillong since 1887, we find girls appearing as private candidates at the Entrance and the Matriculation Examinations of the Calcutta University through the Shillong Government High School well into the 1930's. According to Miss A. W. Thomas who was Headmistress of the girls' school for several years, the staff of the Shillong Government High School assisted in the teaching of the girl students till 1891 when

Miss Bessie Williams arrived from Wales to take over the responsibility of organizing the academic function of the school.

Thousands of students have passed through the gates of the School since it was established. Perhaps the majority have not done anything outstanding; in this respect, they have not been different from the majority in any educational institution anywhere. The Shillong Government High School can, however, justifiably be proud of the few who have made good—the luminaries who lived up to the ideals of the School's founders and in doing so not only earned very high honours for themselves but also honoured their own people and their own land.

There were others who unfortunately did not live long enough to show the full fruition of their early promise. The scholastic records set up by Priston Blah has never been equalled. At the Selection Test held in 1926, he achieved an unprecedented average of 90.5 per cent; to be precise 634 marks out of 700. A break-up of the marks obtained by him in each subject will be of interest:—

English I	86 per cent.
English II	78 per cent.
Mathematics	
(Compulsory)	98 per cent.
Vernacular	91 per cent.
Mathematics	
(Addl.)	99 per cent.
History	92 per cent.
Geography	90 per cent.

To what honours might he have obtained had he not died tragically while yet a young man at the threshold of a promising career!

1. "Ka Centenary History ka Balang Presbyterian", Ch.III (Edn. 1975).
2. *Ibid*, Ch II

I hope I will not be judged harshly if in the concluding paragraphs of this article I appear to harp more on the achievements of the older generation of students. I have not done so in disparagement of the Present but in the knowledge that there is much in the contributions of others in this Souvenir that more than fills the gap. This apart, it is not always easy to do justice to the present because we are too close to it to be able to be truly objective. There is this further to be added, that many of the latter-day students of the School who are at this very moment in the process of fulfilling their destiny. Much has yet to be written about them, and so to the future we must leave them. The older generation have run their race. Their life-work is there to be seen and praised.

Even so, it will hardly be possible within the scope of a short article to name all of them. All that can be said here is that the School has, over the years, produced many outstanding citizens—surely not a mean achievement considering the material upon whom the devotion and skills of the teachers have wrought. We cannot forget U Sib Charan Roy, one of the first students of the School to pass the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University, whose contribution to Khasi thought has been considerable. For the rest, a quick run-through of the roll of old students may have to do—persons who with different vocations have achieved fame as writers, like Dr. H Lyngdoh, public figures like J. J. M. Nichols-Roy, Lowell Gatphoh, Harrison Momin, Dr. S. C. Deb; scholars like R. B. Thomas and Dr. S. K. Bhuyan; educationists like Wilson Reade, Mondon Bareh, B. M. Pugh. Owen Rowie and many others; administrators like Dohori Ropmay, David Roy, Hari Blah, J. Rynjah, S. J. Duncan, Kevichusa and Uma Sharma; businessmen like Abdul Goffur, Moula Baksh.

There is much indeed in the School's Roll of Honour to rouse our respect and admiration as well as to inspire.

This article started with a reference to Rev. T. E. Pugh, undoubtedly one of the School's most outstanding Headmasters. It will be pertinent perhaps to draw attention to another aspect of his personality, to his wholehearted belief that the ideal of a mind in a sound body was one to be encouraged and nurtured in his students. Students with an athletic bent were always received

gladly, and during his time the School time and again achieved distinction in sports and games.

The past has been a glorious one. Surely, it is not too much to expect that the future will bring forth its own share of illustrious men whose impact and influence on society will be just as great as those of the men who have gone before them. In this task, the devoted work of teachers and the honest pursuit after truth of students have a vital role to play. The promise is there.

INTER HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT, 1937
VENUE.—SILCHAR



- 1st Row :—Mr. Comoral, Mr. Gilbert Tariang.
 2nd Row :—Mr. Dukhini, Rev. Sidney Evans, Rev. T. E. Pugh,
 Mr. Ondromoney Dkhar, Mr. Primrose Gatphoh.
 3rd Row :—Mr. Nohksang Ao, Mr. Owenton, Mr. Earnest W. Jyawa,
 Mr. Evanton Reade, Mr. Kellington Pariat, Mr. Wirshon
 Rynjah, Mr. Welperhamton Phanwar, Mr. Nando E. Wankhar.
 Last Row :—Mr. Hamlet S. Pariat, Mr. Hill Rane, Mr. Lorinton Reade,
 Mr. Alfonsus.

The role of School in the Intellectual Development in Khasi and Jaintia Hills

By H. SYIEMLEH,
Principal,
Synod College, Jaiaw, Shillong.
(an old student of Government High
School, Shillong).

One hundred years have passed since a High school had been sent up at Shillong. If one can understand what Shillong was like in those days, he will be able to guess how remarkable it was to have such an institution. The credit goes to the Missionaries. The first missionary who came to Cherrapunjee was one Alexander B. Lish sent by the Free Church Mission Serampore. This missionary opened three schools towards the end of 1832, one at Sohra (Cherra), one at Mawmluh and one at Mawsmal. It was reported that at Sohra there were 36 pupils daily. But the school had to be closed when Mr. Lish left Cherrapunjee and never returned. It was in 1842 that schools were again reopened by another Missionary, the Rev. Thomas Jones I, sent by the Calvinistic Methodists' Foreign Missionary Society from Wales, who reached Cherrapunjee on the 22nd June, 1841. Since then the schools continue to serve the people and more schools were opened in other areas. It was reported that after six months or so already there were some Khasis who had been able to become teachers. It is indeed a rare ability. The names that should never be forgotten in the history of school education of Khasi and Jaintia Hills, are those of U Lurshai, U Nising and U Jom. They were the Khasi teachers in the schools. Later on many Khasi became teachers. Half a year they were in school to learn for themselves and another half of the year would go to teach in different schools. There were night schools also for those who could not attend school in the day or morning. Primary schools were opened in different

places, at Mawnai in 1853, at Jowai in 1854, at Nongrmai, Mairang, Laitdom and Nongthymmai in 1857, at Mawdein in 1863. In 1851 it was reported that there were five schools and pupils varied from 150 to 200. But by 1866 there were 65 schools with about 2,000 pupils spread all over Khasi and Jaintia Hills; as far as Mawnai in Khadsawphra, Mustoh in Ri War and Nongbah, Shangpung and Nongtalang in Jaintia Hills. Year after year a record of progress was made everywhere. Primary schools led to Middle English Schools and gradually, 40 years after the schools were set up by Thomas Jones, Khasi and Jaintia Hills saw a new light in the coming into being a High School in Shillong.

The need for a High School was felt by the educated elite of those days, like Jeebon Roy, Rabon Singh and others. The Government also appreciated this feeling, but the response from the Missionaries was not very encouraging. In a letter to the Editor of the "Bengalee", Calcutta and published also in "U Khasi Mynta", in the month of October, 1902, a passage runs like this, "It appears that our influential Welsh Missionaries in Khasi Hills had no intention or were too slow to give a higher education to the Khasi. But in the face of all discouragement and hindrances our Babu Jeebon Roy, retired Extra Assistant Commissioner, a self-educated Khasi, fought courageously and persistently for opening the Government High School at Shillong for educating his Khasi boys". This passage tells us that since before the setting up of the High School at Shillong our people had already

realised the importance of such an institution. This spirit had been an important force in influencing the Government as well as the Missionaries. The School, at last, was in its sure footing only when the amalgamation of the Mission High School and the Government High School took place. We do not know when were the High Schools started, but we find from the same letter quoted above that Mr. S. b Charan Roy, Mr. Jeebon Roy's son, passed his Entrance Examination (now H. S. L. C.) from Government High School in the year 1880. He must be the first Khasi to have reached that level in education. Then with the starting of the Mission High School by Rev. T. J. Jones, an understanding between Babu Jeebon Roy and the Missionaries was reached and Babu Jeebon Roy had his second son transferred to the Mission High School. Hari Charan Roy, Jeebon Roy's second son, passed his Entrance Examination from the Mission High School. Again a mis-understanding made Mr. Jeebon Roy and his supporters to take away all their children from the Mission High School and made them joined the Government High School. So the Government High School was revived. One Khasi boy by the name U Kupaldonsing, passed the Entrance Examination from the High School. But after this we find only those who passed from the Mission High School like U Raimohon Diengdoh, Harrison Roy, and others. No sooner had the High School started at Shillong than Khasi distinguished themselves in the field of higher education. Entrance Examination led to Degree Examination. Men and women climbed the ladder of knowledge one after another. The year 1898 is a memorable year in the History of Khasi intellectual development; it was in that year that for the first time two Khasi youngmen obtained their degree from Calcutta University. They were Mr. Solom Blah and Mr. Dohoy Ropmay. Mr. Dohoy Ropmay obtained the degree with honours in English.

In the Centenary celebration souvenir of U Mondon Barih it was reported that during the five years he was in Shillong Government High School, he always stood first in the examinations he had in every class. A rare jewel, but he would have wasted his sweetness in the desert air had it not been for the schools which had been set up at that time. In August 1902 "U Nongialam Khristan" reported that the Chief Commissioner of Assam had been pleased to grant scholarship to Ka Anamon Tham at the rate of Rs 25 (Rupees twenty five) per month for her further study in Calcutta. She was the first Khasi lady to have achieved such a distinction. She was in Bethume College, Calcutta. But due to ill health she could not appear the degree examination. One Miss Enola Khain was the first Khasi lady who obtained B. A. Degree in 1918. In the same News papers referred to above, that in the Free Church College were the following students:— U Alexander, U David Roy and U Sisorai from Shillong and U Joy Mohon from Shella. In Bishop College were:— U Overland and U Lowell Gatphoh from Jowai. In Calcutta Medical College U Homiwell from Shillong was there, and in Campbell Medical College, Miss Flora Mohon Roy. At Dibrugarh Medical School were U Oniwell and U Sorti Mohon from Cherrapunjee. According to this report by 1902 the progress in higher education among the Khasis had been quite rapid. But in the years that followed there seemed to be slow progress. In the Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church of Khasi and Jaintia Hills, 1940, the statistics of those who have obtained higher education was as follows—

- 150 passed the Calcutta Matriculation Examination.
- 21 passed the B. A. Examination.
- 1 passed the B. Sc. Examination
- 32 passed Sub-Assistant Surgeon Diploma and 2 obtained the M B Degree

In the same book mention was made of Mr. Rajen Roy Thomas who was the first Khasi to obtain the M. A. Degree. He passed his Matriculation Examination in 1908 from Shillong Government High School. He passed the B. A. Examination with Honours in Philosophy in first class and topped the list. He was awarded a Gold Medal for his outstanding merit. Then he passed his M. A. in 1914 and was placed in first class second. He became a Professor and Principal and was the only person from the whole of Assam to secure the famous Premchand Roy Scholarship. With him, the Khasi intellectual development reached the top. A tiny and backward community, yet ranked even with the most advanced communities. His brother J. J. M. Nichol Roy who passed the B. A. Examination before him, had distinguished himself as a statesman by becoming even a member of the Constituent Assembly of India. He had contributed a lot to the politics of the North East. He was a Minister in the Assam Government for many years. Many had also obtained Law Degree, and among them was a lady, Mavis Dunn who was the first Khasi Lady to become a Minister.

In "U Khasi Mynta", August 1, 1896, a passage goes like this, "Just think, now it is only ten or twelve years since the Entrance School had been opened; yet what tremendous progress the Khasis have made. How much more it would be had the School been opened 30 or 35 years ago. "This speaks of the rapid progress that the Khasis have made in the field of higher education. This is true as already mentioned above, men and women equally distinguished themselves in every field. A wilderness that it was, had become a shining spot in the North East of India. It became known to all because of her sons and daughters who have entered the book of the University

with distinction and Honours. Among the ladies in particular, none in the whole of the North East could, in those days, be compared with the Khasis. Besides general education many had obtained degree and diploma in Medical Science, both men and women.

If Shillong Government High School has served as a portal through which youngmen have entered and distinguished themselves, the Welsh Presbyterian Girls' High School (now Presbyterian Girls' High School) started in 1887, has played no less a role. Both the Schools stand to this day as "mile stones" in the field of intellectual development of the region. They had served the entire North-Eastern Region. Later on many schools were set up at Shillong and other places. But it may be said that with the setting up of schools in the remote interior in recent years, more of the rare jewels of the land have got the chance to shine.

Colleges started by the Catholic Mission have been an added opportunity for men and women to develop their hidden talents. If these opportunities had not been here many would not have been able to get higher education. The rapid progress achieved so far is due to these facilities open to us. We hope that more of the educational facilities be made available to our people in future.

Now, there are not only degree holders in different lines but doctoral degree holders as well. In Medical Science there are many Khasi specialists, some have obtained degrees of highest rank even from foreign Universities. Besides Doctors, there are Engineers, Professors, Principals and Scientists in different fields serving inside the country as well as outside the country. Most of the top positions in the

in the State Government are now occupied by local people. Khasis have also represented the country in a number of international Conferences and led delegations to foreign countries. More than this now there are two Khasi Ambassadors sent by our country to two countries. It is, indeed a remarkable progress, in just one hundred years of literacy, Khasis have already

reached a level which proves that they are no less, compared to people of other parts of the country, in their intellectual capacity. With the North-Eastern Hill University having set up here, more of the local talents will come up to shine and make their contribution for the benefit of the country and the world at large.

INTER HIGH SCHOOL TOURNAMENT, SHILLONG, 1958



REMINISCENCES

By S. J. DUNCAN

Sixty-nine years ago every morning, except holidays and Sundays, two or three boys from different sectors of Laban could be seen trudging along on their way to school. They were all dressed in the same way, a short coat ("sna kul" in Khasi) over a bleached or unbleached white shirt, a pair of long or knee length pants and a cloth cap or woollen skull cap on their heads. The coats and pants were varied in colour, and so were the caps. It was not a school uniform, we never had one, but the ordinary outfit worn by the young boys of that era. One of those boys was myself. We were "Government" school boys.

The name "Government" in our time meant the Shillong Government High School; even though we might not have known that it was then, and for some more years to come, the one and only High School in Shillong and in the whole District.

The distance from Laban to the school was roughly one mile. The school building was the same three sided rectangular structure with the front side facing the main road. The classroom were spacious enough to accommodate 40 students. One noticeable feature in the classroom was the number of initials of students carved out with a penknife on the desks, particularly those farther away from the class teacher's podium. The desire to be remembered is inherent in human nature, and I am confident that many of those who decorated the desk tops with their boyish initials will long be remembered by future generations.

Our journey to and from school was on foot. Buses and taxis were unknown luxuries in those times. We generally left our homes earlier than usual to give ourselves time for a quick game of marbles or top-spinning according to the season. Our playfield was the open space now entirely occupied by the Lady Kerr Welfare Centre. Our tops were home made and were much heavier and bigger than the ones made in Calcutta. Top-spinning was a serious business with us, and a boy whose top was split in half or damaged felt like an unhorsed knight in the days of Chivalry.

On days when the mornings were cold and there was a frosty bite in the air, we would make a ball out of pages torn out of our exercise books, and for the purpose of exercise, we would toss the ball at each other across the road and keep ourselves warm by running and trying to catch the tossed paper ball. On rainy days we would take shelter under the trees lining the road but there were days when we would intentionally get ourselves wet so that the teacher could send us home because of our drenched clothes. We would shiver and wear "poker" faces, but the chattering of teeth and the innocent looks would disappear the moment we were out of sight of the teacher. Those were the days, my Friend.

Inside our classrooms we were not angels, not all of us. We would not be boys, if we had wings on our shoulders, and not a single one of us knew how to play a harp. We enjoyed our boyhood pranks, but on the whole we were well behaved, disciplined and respectful towards our teachers. Our undivided attention to our studies may not have been the same but was, on the average, fairly good. This may have been due to the fact that we had to study Latin. We found it to be a difficult language, but we managed to scrape through in our examinations. The only Latin I remember is Caesar's Thrasonic brag—"Veni, Vidi, Vici". I also remember the the occasion when the Inspector of Schools inspected our class. We were studying Latin declensions at the time. The inspector picked up the Latin book, turned a few pages and then asked a boy to decline "BLACK" in Latin. The selected students stood up dutifully and respectfully, and without hesitation answered, "Blackes, Blacku, Balckum". The Inspector of Schools burst into loud and prolonged laughter. The teacher looked discomfited. Some of us chuckled and giggled into our cupped hands.

When we were in Class IX and X our Latin teacher was one Mr. Steinherr, a German. He was an excellent teacher, but when displeased by a student's wrong answer he would go up to the student and hiss one word in the trembling boy's face "Schaffskoff", which in German

meant "Sheep's Head". Somehow Mr. Steinherr always seemed pleased that he had so many sheep in his class.

Our other teachers at that time were, as far as I can remember, Mr. Sashit(?) Mazumdar who taught us English, and a gentleman we all called Ramini Babu who skillfully steered us through the waves, islets and pitfalls of Geography and Mathematics. Ramini Babu had a religious bent of mind, and many times having assigned us the class work he would sit and stare beyond us. Only his lips moved as if in prayer. With the type of student he had to deal I cannot blame him for praying. Then there was Mr. Harrison Laifang, who taught us Latin in Class VII and VIII, and U Soso Thiam who taught us Khast. Babu Harrison was a soft spoken man who knew his subjects well, but he also had a sarcastic sense of humour. Babu Soso was, of course, always full of fun and life. I shall always remember his well trimmed moustache, his smiling face and his sparkling eyes. He and Babu Harrison enjoyed a good humoured banter whenever they happened to meet on the verandah. Babu Harrison would say, "Thiam e re re ha laitdienglieng", and he would look at us students and point at Babu Soso. The latter would retort with a "Thyllah borkapor, khyn-

nah khlemakor", and he would point at Babu Harrison.

It is impossible to recall our schooldays without the use of the well worn phrase, "The Good Old Days". Yes, they were good days, and I know that students of the '70s and '80s will one day remember their good old days in Shillong Government High School. I for one am proud and happy that my "good old days" were spent as a student of this great institution. I am personally convinced that it is the dedication and sense of duty of the teachers and not the magnificent halls of learning that make a great institution. It is the love of the teacher for his students and not the marbled courtyards that build character. How fortunate we were that we had teachers who were so very understanding and sympathetic towards our many shortcomings. The teachers of old have all passed away, but may their spirit of dedication and sacrifice continue to guide future generations who shall pass through the hallowed halls of Shillong Government High School. When I think of the past and remember our teachers and the good old days, I am reminded of Churchill's tribute to the Royal Air Force when he said, "Never have so many owed so much to so few". So let it be with the teachers and staff of Shillong Government High School.

INTER HIGH SCHOOL TOURNAMENT, SHILLONG, 1958



SOMETHING FROM THE PAST

By J. SWER, I.F.S., (Retd)

In the early part of 1853, Mr. A. J. M. Mills, officiating Judge of the Sadar Court (Calcutta) visited these hills, to report on questions of administration. His visit led to important results especially in the matter of Khasi education. In his official report Mr. Mills wrote as follows:—

There is no government school in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills but endeavours have been made and not without some success by the missionaries to enlighten the tribes. The Rev. Mr. Lewis has now three schools, and every person on the hills bears testimony to the steady, persevering and unostentatious efforts he is making to dispel the darkness and superstition of the people. Though he has not received any encouragement from the Authorities, he has done much good in his calling. He has formed a grammar in the Roman character; he has fixed the orthography of the language; he has translated portions of the Scripture and other useful books and is now engaged in the translation of the New Testament. The accompanying letter from him shows the number of schools which are now established and the number of pupils and converts and explains the difficulty he has to contend with. The Khasis are without the individious distinction of caste, and without, I may say, religion. It appears to me that Government should give an impulse to the well sustained exertions of the missionaries by establishing a vernacular school.... "

In his observation upon the above report which went to him through the Commissioner, Bengal, Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India wrote that he "regarded with great satisfaction the testimony borne to the earnest zeal of the Rev. Mr. Lewis, and the encouraging though as yet moderate success which has attended his labours..... The absence of religious prejudice and almost of religion, among the Khasis,

and other hill tribes in that direction, removes the objection that might be taken to the promotion of secular instruction by the Government in other parts of India through the means of missionary aid...."

Lord Northbrook visited Shillong in 1874. The favourable impression created on his mind by the labours of the missionaries, was evidenced by a handsome gift of 50 Pounds towards the newly erected church in Shillong besides a further gift of 10 Pounds for rewarding the school children.

The above encouraging and helpful gesture of the Government of India was obviously conducive to the polarisation of the schools in Shillong into one single unit when at the beginning of 1891 the Normal School at Cherra (run by the Mission) was removed to Shillong and amalgamated with the Government School and Mission High Schools, forming one Institution under the principalship of a missionary, The Rev. J. Ceredig Evans.

From then on the progress of educational work in the hills became more and more apparent, especially in the large number of men who occupied positions of usefulness and influence, in government offices and other places of responsibility. One such student of the school was Babu Mohunroy, who was appointed a Stipendiary Magistrate—a post which he filled with great approval and honour. After his death a young Khasi Christian, Babu Dohory Ropmay was appointed as his successor. To Babu Dohory and his friend U Solomon, belongs the distinction of being the first among the Khasis to become graduates of the Calcutta University— Babu Dohory taking the B.A. degree with honours in English. Their example has been followed by others in subsequent years; while year after year a good number of high school students pass the matriculation and other examinations of the University.

The Four Glorious Years

By
WEBSTER DAVIES JYRWA
STATION DIRECTOR, AIR, SHILLONG

It was in 1939 when I joined the Shillong Government High School, at the age of fourteen, I remember I was put in Class VII 'C' of the old School building, now occupied by the Mawkhar Christian High School.

Our Class Master was Shri Nomiwell Rynjah, a man of integrity with a good personality. I studied at the Government High School for four years from 1939 to 1942 and passed the Matriculation from this School in 1943. Those four years were the glorious years where I had the best education from the learned teachers who were serving the school with their heads and their hearts, few of whom I can still remember like the late Primrose Gatphoh, the late Sabu Roy, the late Frieddie War, the late Hawthorne Hill, the late Soben Marbaniang the then Headmaster was the late Rev. T. E. Pugh.

I can mention some of the various activities of the school in those days. The Shillong Government High School in those years had earned a name in sports and games and the school had produced many outstanding players who, I do not dare to mention, less I omit some of them and land myself into embarrassment. All this went to the credit of the late Headmaster, Rev. T. E. Pugh who himself spared no pain in training the boys in the field every morning and evening.

The School team was loved by the whole people of Shillong and everybody, especially children, would even refrain from taking food when the school team was defeated. It gives me pleasure to

remember that I had played in the Senior Football Tournaments of the Shillong Sports Association from this school since I was reading in Class VIII at the age of fifteen only. I had also been given a chance to play from the school team in Football and Hockey in the Inter High School Competition of Assam at Sylhet Assam at that time comprised of plains and hills districts, viz., the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District, the Garo Hills District, the Mizo Hills District, the Naga Hills District and the North Cachar and Mikir Hills District.

I remember when we were in Class VII 'C' in 1939, we bagged out the Pugh Running Shield in football that year by defeating the Senior Teams with Senior players. Two of the best players from our team were Arthur Davies (my brother) who played Centre forward and Wedar Wrenng who played Full back, both are no longer in this world. The credit of this success all went to our class master, Shri Nomiwell Rynjah, who not only gave us coaching and training but himself played as the Centre half of the team, giving all encouragement like the Captain in the battle fields of old days.

Shri Lamphrang Tham, another School teacher was also a very good player and he used to play from the school team. The other class master who used to play with us in hockey at the tournaments of the Shillong Sports Association at Polo ground and who was a very good player was Shri Sangliana.

The other happy occasion I can recall now was the special Award given to me by the School for Proficiency in Drawing when I was reading in Class VIII.

During my high School days, I took part in all the social activities of the School. In these years, Shillong Government High School had seen the glory of Scout services. The School had produced the best scouts who, in later years, had excelled

themselves in the services like the Army and Navy and also in Civil Services. It was during those years that the Scout house at Umtyngar was constructed, the foundation of which was built by the scouts themselves. I remember that we stayed there at Umtyngar for many days, putting a stone over a stone. At night we used to have grand bonfires where we sang the country songs and cracked jokes. The then D. P. I. was Shri G. A. Small and I consider myself very fortunate to have joined scouting then. I remember the occasion when so many scouts with their flags lined the Bungalow of the D. P. I. near the Crinoline Falls for the test which was very hard but yet we all got through. All of us scouts in those days had merited not less than one dozen of badges for proficiency in swimming, first aid, map reading, cooking, bee keeping, axemanship, music, etc. Swimming test was the most difficult for us in those days. Every Saturday we used to go to Sohdienglong, a deep pool formed by the Umkhrak river which is no longer there. One of our Scout Masters, late Fredrik Shylla, used to throw us to the deep pool and left us there to fight with hands and feet to keep ourselves above the water for sometime. When we were about to get drowned, the scout master himself or some of the Senior scouts, who were watching nearby, would rescue us. After many months of training, we had to undergo the test by swimming about one furlong or so. Then a certificate was given and we were allowed to wear a badge for proficiency in swimming.

Another difficult test was map reading. After we had learned the theory, we were put to practical test. We were asked to go to Shillong peak which, during those days, the forests were very thick and there was no road except bridle path. The scouts who had gone before us left some signs, marks and tracts and by reading these we

had to reach a particular place. Like this, there were so many tests for proficiency in cooking, axemanship and music taken by another Scout Master Shri S. G. Nalle who was also well versed in music and had composed many songs for the scouts. Those of us who took interest and pain merited so many badges which we wore with pride on some special occasions. These trainings had very much helped me in my life, when I had been posted in many difficult areas and had to look after myself.

It was the scouts of the Shillong Government High School under the patronage of late Shri Primrose Gatphoh, the then Scout Master who put up the grand show at Dibrang Hall to entertain the troops of the Allies who had flooded Shillong during the Second World War. I still remember the small play "Sandy and Ruby", which made most of the stone hearted soldiers to melt with tears. I was in that play, taking the part of Sandy and my best friend Hubert Shullai who died as a Lt. Commander of the Indian Navy, a few years back, played the part of Ruby.

Many of the Scouts knew how to play all kinds of musical instruments. Shri Kynsat Nalle's name may be mentioned as one of the best player of Hawaiian guitar.

When we were in Class X, many of us were very enthusiastic in joining War Services and few of my school mates really got into the services.

The year 1943 had produced the best students and scholars in the final Matriculation Examination and all this went to the credit of the teachers, most of them who are no longer in this world.

Viva—Shillong Government High School.

K H U R L E I

Teacher-Pupil Relationship

—Then and Now—

By

Sri K. R. Deb, B.A (Hons.) B.T
Retd. Headmaster

AJNANATIMIRANDHASYA JNANAJANA-
SHALAKAYA TATPADANG DAR-
SHITANG YENA TASMAI SHREEGURA-
WEY NAMAH

In those good old days a pupil in India used to bow before his Guru-Teacher—by chanting the above words of grateful salutation. The Pupil remembered how he stood blinded by ignorance and one single ray of light—knowledge—received from the Master opened up before him the panorama of truth.

Prayerfully the teacher and the taught used to crave for favourable environments. SHANNOMITAH—May the Sun be congenial to us—they used to say. Even the gentle breeze that played about them was welcomed by them as the messenger of the truth they were after. Yes, 'one impulse from a Vernal wood' or 'Let nature be your teacher' is not a mere poetical effusion. The Himalayan caves, the BO tree shade, the mount Sinai and the mount Hera had been intimately related to the enlightenment of the respective Masters who have shed so much light on the world.

The teacher and the taught sat together with a fund of good will—sincere and deep. They prayed:

SAHA NABABATU, SAHA NAU
BHUNAKTU,
SAHA BIRYANG KARABABAHAI.
TEJASWI NABADHITAMASTU,
MA RIDWISHABAHAI.
SHANTIH, SHANTIH, SHANTIH.

May God protect us both simultaneously, may He make available and assimilable to us the fruit of Knowledge. May we together make the exertion for the knowledge. May the knowledge be pure, evident, dynamic and fruitful. May we be free from all forms of malevalence. May there be peace and profundity free from all obstacles—personal, natural and supernatural!

With such a sublime attitude the teacher and the taught embarked on the contemplative Quest, having made up their mind—ANIRAKARANAMASTU—may there be no rejection—and having made the prayer—ANIRAKARANANG MEWASTU—may the knowledge not reject me!

Thus it was a comprehensive education lovingly given and reverentially taken, the beneficiary remaining ever so grateful for the enlightenment

This tradition has been in operation from generation to generation irrespective of of countries and climes wherever there has been, and still is, in existence a correct process of proper education.

From the Gurukul System to the present day Institutional Education is a far cry and unlike the course of a river the stream of tradition, say value-sense, has been flowing feebler and feebler. The teacher-pupil relation has thus fallen a victim to that "crisis of morality". The gracious

relationship subsisting between the teacher and the taught and sustaining the whole process of education has been, at times, yielding place to an operation gherao! The result: bad education, indifferent education or no education.

Hence the anxiety among the affected who are many. A few are surely happy. They are the sound pillars on whom the structure stands. All is not yet lost and may not be lost either. Herein lies the hope.

The currents and the cross currents of life are so brisk and erratic, so many and varied. Life appears to have been cut off from its mooring and is possibly heading towards chaos through all kind of tumults. All forms of human relationships and social bonds are, in most cases, severely strained, if not already snapped with the result that unhappiness has become the stamp of the society in general.

The accusing finger is towards the Institutions and not, possibly, wrongly! The parents and guardians who send out their children and wards to educational Institutions do hope for some results. But many of them suddenly face disappointments. The disappointment, very often, can honestly be traced to the absence of some healthy influences and the presence of some unhealthy pulls on the children concerned.

Of the few healthy influences, the Institution, and for that matter the teacher, is just one and that also covering a fraction of each working day of the pupil. If the Institution or the teacher happens to be indifferent or uninspiring in a situation of the type, the whole business of education proves naturally irrelevant, if not, in some. The teacher-pupil relation in such a case is bound to get weaker and weaker. Educational inspiration starts evaporating as soon as the Institution turns into a bureau for extra-educational activities, the

teachers metamorphose into political barrels and the pupils into political ammunition. The result: the teaching staff gets cracked into various factions and pupils get divided into groups at daggers drawn—all for purposes other than education. Politics, ironically, has been one of the most active agents of erosion at the base of education. Teachers who choose to flow in the channels of politics do so in the hope of profits, power and glamour but hardly with an ideal of better service to the cause of education. Such 'teacher politicians' have been undermining the educational activities in general and playing with the future of their pupils in particular that happen to dance to their tune. The pupils themselves have learnt to draw up charters of demands on extraneous issues and agitate on them rather than think out points on an Academic topic and elaborate them in a worthwhile exercise. The pupils, it appears, have chosen to mimic through their Institutional Unions the clamours of adult life in the society at large. This attitude has been making a mess of education these days.

Let there be no pessimism! Given dedication of the teachers to their calling and non-involvement of the pupils in extra-Academic activities of adult life, the educational atmosphere will surely be congenial and fruitful to more and more of the people concerned. In such an eventuality the pupils will again find their friends, philosophers and guides in their parents and teachers. Law in that case will be a welcome condition of liberty and not a hateful anti-thesis of it.

Modern Institutions would surely breathe the idyllic tradition of the Upanishadas and hopefully, it does work in some nooks and corners to furnish the elan vital to the whole organism of Education. Pupils may, sooner than later, retrieve their own identity from the witches' cauldron that is boiling around them.

Teacher-Pupil Relationship

By

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1980 is a year to be always remembered by posterity, for in this year the Shillong Government High School completes its one hundredth year and celebrates its Centenary. It is, indeed, a great and memorable event in the annal of the school. This shining outpost is one of the oldest High Schools in this far flung corner of the country and the oldest in Meghalaya. It has, in times past, catered to the educational needs of practically the entire region of North East India. It is so to say, the first educational institution in this region where multi-racial and ethnological groups belonging to different castes and creeds converged and mingled freely living in peace and harmony. And this is not far from the truth. In course of a century, through thick and thin, the school has been able to produce men of stature and enlightenment. These enlightened ones have become not only the messengers of their Alma Mater but also the leaven of the society and the torch bearers among their people encouraging and inspiring others to climb higher and higher to new heights. Through the rolling years of the century the school has witnessed, with pride and satisfaction, the fulfilment of the dreams and aspirations of the peoples and tribes who, for long, were the victims of ignorance groping in the dark. Much has been done, but there is still much more to be done. Years have come and years have gone, but the school confidently is marching on.

This memorable year is a fitting occasion to recall the past, particularly, the relationship that existed then between the teachers and the pupils which sweet relationship has left its impressions in the sand of the century. But to understand the secrets of success of this Teacher Pupil relationship in its true perspective one should first have a clear picture of the Parent Children relationship which relationship can make

or mar a child or children. A close similarity exists between a home and a school. The legitimate inmates of the former are the parents and the children and that of the latter are the teachers and the pupils. As there is a close bond between parents and children so is the case between teachers and pupils. The duties and responsibilities of teachers towards their pupils, who are the rightful occupants of the school occupying the focus of the limelight of educational administration, are similar to those of parents towards their children. Theirs is not simply to teach but to educate. In their efforts to make the Man out of the Child, teachers are to see to their pupils' all round wholesome development – physical, mental, intellectual, moral as well as spiritual – so that they may, in days to come, live a fuller and richer life. But this is not an easy thing to achieve for ;

- (a) Pupils, immature as they are are not 'things' but 'persons' possessing innate powers of growth and development.
- (b) Pupils are different from one another in aptitude and intelligence as each is inborn with his or her peculiar characteristics or personal traits individual to him or her.
- (c) In a class, not to say of a school, are found pupils coming from various strata of society having different family background or social standing
- (d) There is a period of strain and stress, particularly during the period of adolescence, in the life of every child.

All this makes the task more difficult for a teacher or teachers who have no idea or prior knowledge of the nature and background of each and every individual child. So teachers as educators are placed not in a static but in a dynamic and complicated setting.

In the educational process, the basic components of the school, *viz.*, the pupils and the teachers, operate together irrespective of time and space. This joint operation which links or binds the two together must be harmoniously balanced and kept in tact. Lack of harmony gives rise to serious problems which lead to imbalances. Maintenance of a balance is essential, and this can be achieved if both the pupils and the teachers work together with a clear understanding of the changes which occur due to forces acting from within and from without. Imposition of authority in any form or any sort of equation formation or underestimation of any of the components will certainly disturb the equilibrium. A disturbed order must be regulated without, however, disturbing the dynamic equilibrium. To achieve this, conditions for a healthy and integrated relation among or between the components should be created and this falls, primarily, on the teachers. Correct and proper understanding of the pupils and their problems by the teachers with motivation as a driving force fueled by love, sympathy and patience, is the key to success.

This is precisely what our teachers in the past did. Under their care and stewardship the school has become not only a place for imparting instructions but a home—a pleasant home where love, trust and mutual understanding reign. By taking the pupils into confidence they have saved many an erring child considered incorrigible or doomed to destruction. There were occasions when a pupil, for one reason or another, left school out of season. But, somehow or other, after a brief spell of his sojournment away from its sheltering roof the wayward child returned, like the repentant prodigal son of the Bible, to the bosom of his school to be welcome back there with great rejoicings. How come this! Perhaps,

sweet memories of the pupil-teacher relationship induced him to turn back and retrace his weary steps school-ward. From what we have learnt and seen our past teachers did really laboured, and their labour did not go in vain. No wonder, these revered and dedicated teachers of yester years have won the praises, love and affection of all those who were once under their care.

Can we, the teachers of the present day, emulate the shining examples set before us by our illustrious and esteemed predecessors? Are teachers of today as fatherly and pupils as obedient as those of the by-gone days? With all their human weaknesses, all good and well intentioned teachers and pupils are striving, to the best of their ability, to maintain the golden chain of Teacher-Pupil relationship. The teachers are trying to know and understand the hearts and minds of our youth, and to read the signs of the time. But teachers of today, it must be remembered, are faced with varied, peculiar and vexatious problems which were unknown in the past. In their efforts to create a cordial relationship with the pupils, they have to deal with new forces—forces which usher both good and evil. Evil, because it has eroded the Teacher-Pupil relationship and vitiated or polluted the atmosphere of the school campus by the air of indiscipline leading to the lowering down in the standard or quality of education.

The 'spirit of the age' breathes forth two latent but conflicting forces which may be termed as 'positive' and 'negative'. Positively, it means progression—the age is traversing the new frontiers of knowledge, progress and development. Negatively on the other hand, it means regression—a downward trend towards decay. It has been observed that the spirit of the age, in its negative aspect, tends towards a departure from the ethical, moral and social order and a serious danger to society. It seems we are living in an age of permissiveness. For examples, a good number of mass media which have a tremendous influence on our youth are being manipulated for selfish motives and material gains by throwing

away all norms of life to the four winds. There are forces operating to make sober people inebriate, sane people mental, healthy people sick, peace-loving citizens disorderly, the criminal-minded more dangerous criminals. These forces are in the nature of a sinister conspiracy to debase the people, to impair their brain and mind to debilitate their physique, to shorten the span of their life and to lay siege to their character. The world seems to have misunderstood the distinction between 'freedom' and 'licence' and branded the two as one. Moral decay is noticeable even in the sacred fold of those whom we called the 'student community'. This is very unfortunate indeed. The philosophy of the age forbidding the 'rod' at home and in the school and never suppress or curb the 'natural inclinations of the child' is still very puzzling. Man by nature is good but the evil influences around him often stir his passions, blind his reason and general evil tendencies to debase him. Unless a timely and tactful check is imposed on these unhealthy tendencies or inclinations the man, created 'in the image of God' will turn into a brute if not a devil. Moreover, with the explosion of population; and education of the masses and 'equalisation of educational opportunity' are not only the slogans of the day, but also the aim and object of democratic India. The question is, 'can equality and quality co-exist? Add to this, there is, unknown in the past, what is called a 'generation gap' which has created confusion, suspicion and division between the old and the young. How to reconcile the two extremities and how to link the gap with the bridge of mutual understanding is the crux of the problem.

The wind of change is everywhere and the current of changes is swiftly sweeping.

The question that poses before the teachers and the society of today is, are we going to swim along with or against the current? Or, is there a *via-media*? These are the problems that vex and stare us at our face. They are a challenge for all those who dare. Whether one likes it or not, it is high time to face the facts—facts which are like 'the writing on the wall'; and it would be wise to realise the grave danger that threatens the society, for what affects society also affects the student community. The problem is a global and colossal one confining not only to the student community but embracing the entire social structure.

The new changes whether for good or evil, brought about by uncontrollable forces, have disturbed the Teacher/Pupil relationship and touched the fringe, if not the core, of the sensitiveness of the dynamic equilibrium of the educational process. Leaving to teachers and pupils alone to find a solution to the problem is very unfair. Everybody, one and all, must lend a hand and take it his or her duty and responsibility, to ponder dispassionately, to diagnose the symptoms, to prescribe the remedy and to act accordingly. Only a united effort and a concerted action can save the situation.

Committed teachers of today, with all their shortcomings, are striving hard with the co-operation of all men of goodwill to penetrate deep into the heart of the matter. Hopefully and optimistically they labour to create the sweet and pleasant atmosphere of a healthy relationship not only between the teachers and pupils but among all people so that everyone can live in peace and harmony. If this is not fulfilled today, it will come to pass tomorrow; for if darkness comes can daylight be far behind!

Whither Education ?

By C. WOLFLANG.

The Shillong Government High School has completed hundred years of service in the field of education. The centenary celebration of this school should provoke our mind to give a new thought to education. Education, as we know, is an industry which manufactures human resources for socio-economic development of the nation. Hitherto, education which we are following in our State and for that matter, in the whole country, has not given much satisfaction to the people at large. The British system of education, popularly known as the Macaulay system of education, has been severely criticised and the Government of India, after getting independence have set up commissions after commissions to provide a new system of education so that this industry would be meaningful to supply useful citizens for the country. Going through the various commissions, we have found that recommendations after recommendations have come up and new structures have been proposed like the 10+1+3 and the 10+2+3. They have discarded the 10+2+2. But the question arises—how far these new systems would be workable to meet the aspirations and the desires of the nation? There is a strong apprehension that the system will ultimately produce the same graduates whether Arts or Science or Commerce, reading the same Akbar, Humayun, Newton's Law or Avogadro's Hypothesis, manufacturing the same B.As and the same B.Sc.s and ultimately the result will not be different from what we have had. If this is true, even the new pattern is nothing but simply re-numbering of years which may be termed as an Academic Numerology only.

We have observed that the present system of education stresses too much on the academic quality but has very little to do with the relevance of education. The stress on academic quality has resulted in certain

defects in the operation of education. One of such glaring defects is that teaching is subordinate to examinations. The teachers and the students together aim at getting high marks and getting better division or class. The examination system prevailing today is also stereotyped whether you call it external or internal, semester or no semester. The students prepare only the important topics or rather important questions that would be set in the examinations. The teachers also teach only the important topics that would likely come in the examinations, saying this is important and that is not important. Can we deny that this treatment would not lead to selective readings? There was an incident in one University in which 'Heat' was not set in the examination for one year. In the following year no question was also set from 'Heat'. The students stopped reading 'Heat'. In the next following year, the same thing happened. The teacher also stopped teaching the topic. What could the result be? The students got the degree with incomplete knowledge. Can we then justify that the present examination system and the classroom treatment would really provide the concept to the students? This is the tragedy of concentration in academic quality.

If education should not concentrate in the academic quality only then education should proceed further and aim at other qualities like the retention of quality and the social quality. The modern education has failed to retain the qualities which are internal to man. This can be clearly seen when one goes to the rural areas and finds that the illiterate boys and girls have certain basic qualities. I have seen with my own eyes that in the rural areas they draw drinking water through bamboo pipes but these bamboo pipes would remain on the spot till they are themselves rotten and replaced. The young boys and girls will not disturb them nor destroy them because they are of social value. Give education to these people and bring them to the towns and cities, they will even break the iron pipes and destroy the iron water taps. The

qualities which are inborn to them are completely destroyed because of education. Can we call this a frustration? It may or may not be true.

What about the social quality? Social quality is that quality in which the educated contributes productively and usefully towards the society. But education today is a mass production and is highly individualistic. We have not been able to contribute socially useful and productive services to the society.

Let us pause awhile and think of this important industry. I mean, the industry of education which manufactures human resources. In every nation of the world there are only two main resources, the human resources and the non human resources. The human resources includes skilled and unskilled labour. The non human resources includes agricultural and allied resources including pastoral and horticulture, the industrial resources, mineral resources and the power resources. No nation in the world will be able to prosper if concentration is given to the non human resources only. Every nation wants to develop. India wants to develop. Five Year Development Plans were introduced and the development programmes were formulated on the regional approach based on block development projects under the charge of the Block Development Officers. But what about the human resources? We do not have Block Education Officers. Let us ask a simple question? Shall we develop the land to develop the people or shall we develop the people to develop the land? If we say that we should develop the land first to develop the people the approach is wrong. Naturally, we have to develop the people first so that they can in turn, develop agriculture and other sectors. We should not forget that the wheels of planning shall not be able to rotate by themselves without the soul behind them and that soul is man which education is handling and which we have forgotten.

The literacy in Meghalaya is 29.45 per cent. We concentrate in formal education giving them the knowledge of the three R's

till they acquire the degree and ultimately become the liabilities of the State. They will not be able to contribute productively towards the development of the nation but would rather lengthen the lines of Employment Exchange waiting for job opportunities in the tertiary sectors.

It should be noted that in every nation of the world there are only three main sectors which the people can get employment. These sectors are the agricultural sector, the industrial sector and the tertiary sector. The tertiary sector is that sector which produces no commodities but are working on papers only. The people working in offices are the best examples of the tertiary sectors. According to the statistics available, we need only 15 per cent of man power in the tertiary sector. But the tragedy is, almost cent per cent of our people concentrate in the tertiary sector. This is because the industry of education has not developed properly to meet the requirement, the desire and the aspiration of the nation. There is no diversion of human resources to fit in for other sectors.

The crisis of education, therefore, is apprehended to be in three directions—the crisis of relevance, the crisis of numbers and the crisis of finance. The crisis of relevance arises because we have not been able to give them the relevant education. The crisis of numbers arises because the universities throw out millions and millions of new graduates. The crisis of finance is because investment in education is far too less than the requirements. In India itself or in Meghalaya, 70 per cent of the people are illiterate and these people are left out without any relevant education. Though illiterate they are not ignorant and unintelligent. They carry with them the cup of experience and wisdom for years together and they are the important groups of the society quietly working in the fields to feed us—the educated in the towns. What type of education shall we give them so that they can improve the productivity? Can we afford to forget them? Or shall we give them education till they ultimately leave out their profession and become the liability

of the nation? Shall we not find a relevant education for them? The task is really challenging. It is the common experience that when once the people get education, they are abhorrent to manual labour. This is also because of the wrong notion that education provides to the students that the bread earned by manual labour is less dignified than the bread earned by mental labour.

We have not been able to embrace the comprehensiveness of education. This is a herculean task because the philosophy of

education is too comprehensive, as comprehensive as the philosophy of life itself. That is why our formal education cannot meet the needs and desires of the society, and that till today formal education has no direct co-relation with the real life achievement of the society. It is high time to think of a new approach, the approach which will not only cater to the needs of the intellectual few but also to cater to the needs of the masses at large. We long to have that types of education and we need to think now for a new approach of education.

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SILCHAR, 1959



2nd Row:—Mr. S. A. M. Lyngdoh, Mr. Dhiral Thangkhiew, Mr. O. Mawrie, Mr. W. Manners, Mr. H. Kharkongor, Mr. S. M. Syiem and Mr. Reade.

The Role of the Shillong Government High School in the Development of Khasi Literature

(By Shri D. S. Khongdup)

Not once in the past did I ever think of the influence, if any, which the Shillong Government High School might have had on the Khasi authors. But even if I did, I would, perhaps, have surely asked myself whether this institution has really played any role at all in the sphere of development of Khasi literature. Now, when I was asked to write on this subject, a doubt has naturally crept in my mind whether, in the light of my ignorance of the history of Khasi literature, I was in a position to say anything worth saying in this regard. Ignorance of this very important subject of Khasi literary history makes me obviously unfit to write anything remotely resembling the course of development of either the Khasi language or Khasi literature. When such ignorance holds sway over the mind of man, there is usually a cloud of uncertainty hovering over him beyond which imagination refuses to penetrate, and his power of analysis remains for all intents and purposes suspended. Of course, his power of reasoning may continue to function, but, devoid of analytical workshop, he is unlikely to shout *eureka* every time a problem is posed before him.

This is not to say that writing about something that you know of is a problem, or about something which you don't know is a problem, but surely writing about something of which you are ignorant is impossible, whatever Napoleon might have said about the non-existence of that word in his vocabulary. Of course, it may be said with some conviction that a problem is there to be tackled; but perhaps it may also be true to say that a solution of that problem may give birth to another set of problems, and so on *ad infinitum*.

It is, therefore, on this principle that problems exist to sharpen the mind of man that I venture to attempt writing, albeit in a few paragraphs, about the

impact which the Shillong Government High School has created on the Khasi authors. Looking back, few of us could now say with absolute certainty whether the syllabus prescribed for the study of Khasi in Classes VII to X, and which consisted of 3 to 4 small books, would ever create the urge or the desire to become authors. Then, as far as my knowledge goes, barring the teaching of Khasi strictly according to what was often called "weekly routine", no arrangements were ever made, at least not in my time, for giving special instructions to Khasi students who might have developed a certain aptitude for creative writing, on what was needed for enriching Khasi literature. It was also a matter of opinion whether any boy, whilst at school at a very young age, could actually understand the real meaning of literature, whether in Khasi or in any other language. The school library was, of course, resplendent with hundreds of attractively bound volumes on different subjects, mostly in the English language; but amidst these shining hundreds, was there a single Khasi book keeping them company? Not that I was aware of. How then could such an institution which attached so little importance to Khasi publications claim with a straight face that it has played a role in the development of the Khasi language or Khasi literature?

These were the unhappy re-collections that flashed readily to mind when I was asked to write something on the part played by the Shillong Government High School on the development of Khasi literature. Apparently, such a part was more imaginary than real. Munching over them once again, and more slowly, however, I cannot but wonder whether they, in fact, correctly reflect the position which this oldest educational institution in the State has taken *vis-a-vis* the enrichment of the Khasi language and literature, or whether they are

but blurred images of the past which fail to bring out the true picture because they are projected out of focus. A doubt of another kind inevitably lingers in the mind. Was it not a fact, I asked myself, that most of the first Khasi authors (without naming them) were the products of the Shillong Government High School? Was it also not a fact that most of the prominent Khasi authors of to day were the old students of this institution? Inevitably, answers to both these questions are in the affirmative. What was the reason? I was immediately compelled to sit down and ponder.

A child nursed and brought up in love and happy surroundings generally grows into a man who loves and trusts his fellow-men. The same man if nursed and brought up by a beast in the jungle is likely to acquire the traits and habits of animals. This is not to say, even as an analogy, that a school located in beautiful and peaceful surroundings is sure to produce better and more brilliant students than, say, a school established in a slum area. Too much of a serene atmosphere may make a man think that all's well with the world and that he is at peace with it, though we need not have to thank our stars that in spite of the most beautiful scenery, in quiet and natural surroundings, that we have in these hills, we are yet to produce a philosopher! He may forget that life is a battle and that he is required to fight it in order to survive. He may also forget that the battle of life is fought with a particular purpose: to bring peace and joy to one's self and to the society at large. A man who is conscious, or who can be made conscious, of what his purpose in life is, normally does something which an average person thinks he can do, but does not.

Mention has been made about peaceful surroundings. Such environments may be understood as absence of milling crowds, the continuous sounds of vehicles and the blowing of horn in a busy street, the intermittent clink-clang of a railway station, the frequent beatings of wives and children, or even the howling of dogs and the buzzing of mosquitoes. An educational institution situated in such surroundings helps a stu-

dent to develop the power of concentration which is very necessary for understanding his lessons better. On the other hand, to some persons, such peace and quiet are out of the ordinary; they dull the intellect rather than sharpen it. Anyway, few would deny that beautiful surroundings immediately create indefinable pictures in the mind and remain therein for as long as that mind is alive and well. But beauty is deceptive; what is attractive to one may be repulsive to another. Cement is but dust; yet lovely mansions are built out of it. Excepting probably during its first few years of its existence, the Shillong Government High School rarely experienced that absolute peace and quiet so typical of Santiniketan nor could it be said that it was located in beautiful surroundings reminiscent of Kovalam. That is probably why Khasi authors hailing from this school generally reveal traces of philosophic tendencies adorned with some gay trappings of romanticism.

Mawkhar area was generally looked upon as the enlightened locality of Shillong where the Khasi elite used to reside. To be personally known to any of them was an honour, and to have one or two of them as friends was an uncrowned privilege. Eminent Khasi leaders and well known personalities, who earned the respect of the Khasi community and other communities as well, were living in this area. Once in a while, at unexpected moments, a Khasi boy of the Shillong Government High School might have come across these respected gentlemen, greeted them, and even spoken to them. And who knew that these revered gentlemen might have greeted him in return and, true to Khasi tradition, given him a word or two of advice and encouragement which might in later days have developed into seeds of ambition? Khasi literature was still at an infant stage at the beginning of this century. Could it be that the first Khasi authors who were the products of the Shillong Government High School plunged into this most unproductive business by mere accident, or because of a realisation of an idea put into their heads by these respected men that without literature a nation is dead? I always love to think that an author is fired with certain sparks

of patriotism, and that his mind, imagination, intellect and talents are directed towards the enrichment of literature, the value of whose contribution depending not on what is seen on the covers but on what is found inside those covers.

As the one and only High School in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District for about two generations or so, both the Khasi teachers and Khasi students must have felt a certain degree of dissatisfaction at what must have been an extremely limited choice of Khasi text books. Even in my time during the Second World War, text books in Khasi were selected from four or five authors. Five books written by different authors should be more than sufficient for High School classes; but when there were no more than five books and five authors to choose from, the picture was obviously different. The same books were read from Class VII to Class X year after year. However interesting a piece might be to a new reader it could not but be stale to a teacher who read and explained the same line year in and year out. Perhaps, it was this loss of spice in the Khasi selections which one day prompted the late U Soso Thaim to exhort his students with his famous declaration "Let us do it ourselves!" which soon gave birth to his beautiful poems known to-day throughout these lovely hills as *Ka Duitara Ksiar*. This new spirit of "Let us do it ourselves" must have pervaded and inspired the imagination of many a Khasi student so far as enrichment of the Khasi language and Khasi literature was concerned. And on this first centenary of the Shillong Government High School, we look up to its students to imbibe this same do-or-die spirit which proclaims that we are a nation with an independent outlook and that given the same opportunities and facilities which developed and recognised languages enjoy, there are amongst us thinkers and writers whose thoughts and ideas are ennobling and should not fail to amaze great peoples in other parts of the globe.

It is a never dying pleasure to believe and to know that a large majority of Khasi writers of both to-day and yesterday had their career moulded in the Shillong

Government High School. It is, of course, debatable whether the shaping of that career was ever directed towards contribution in the field of Khasi literature. The scope of the present article being extremely limited, I would only like to say that we who are the products of the Shillong Government High School do feel a foot taller whenever it comes to our knowledge that one of its pupils has made a name for himself in whatever sphere of life he chose to take. And to those of us who have a specially soft corner for Khasi language and literature, we never fail to be elated when a new writer appears on the Khasi horizon. Well, if he happens to be an old pupil of the Shillong Government High School, surely we have great reasons even to be effusively vocal!

There is a stage in the course of a man's life at which he begins to see things as others see them. He enters this arena of life when he is ready to communicate with other people and exchange thoughts and ideas with them. This is probably the period when he is sure to learn and come across many things which he may never have dreamt of. It is also the period when his hopes and aspirations take root and then grow into well defined lines of ambition. Was there ever such a stage at the Shillong Government High School so far as the course of a Khasi writer's life was concerned? I believe there was, and I also believe that it was his arrival at that stage whilst he was a pupil of the Shillong Government High School which helped him to sacrifice a part of his precious time towards the enrichment of Khasi literature. Such men, of course, are rare, and that was possibly why there are more years in the age of the Shillong Government High School than there have been writers of Khasi literature. Still, there is cause for rejoicing that, in spite of what Dr. Johnson might have to say about the art and purpose of writing, there have been writers in Khasi whose sole aim is to bring Khasi literature to a higher plane.

In its early days, Shillong Government High School occupied a unique position never enjoyed by any other School in the country before or since. Boys of different

communities flocked to this School from all nooks and corners of the entire North East. It was a place where young minds of diverse cultures met and clashed, and at the same time exchanged knowledge and ideas of their respective ways of life. In this way, they would come to know gradually of the comparative richness or poverty of their respective language and literature. It was here that Khasi boys with even an average intelligence would start to learn of the status of the Khasi language *vis-a-vis* other tribal languages (which were equally undeveloped) and major Indian languages like Bengali and Assamese, particularly the former, while on top of them all, towered

the *lingua franca* of the then British Empire—English—like a veritable colossus. No doubt, they felt small, like I also felt then. But sometimes, even a midget feels like a giant; and there is nothing wrong in feeling that way so long as he does not act like a giant. There was this growing realisation in the mind of many a Khasi boy of the Shillong Government High School that unless something was done in the field of Khasi literature, he would grow smaller than a midget while others might become stronger than a giant. He tried to do something in that field. The result is there for us to see. May the tribe of such men of talents increase!

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2nd Row :—Mr. O. Mawrie, Mr. H. Kharkongor, Mr. K. R. Deb,
Mr. S. M. Syiem, Mr. S. A. M. Lyngdoh, Mr. Reade.

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We have prepared Development Plans of 4 Urban Centres provided assistance in construction of 680 housing Units.

We have just made a beginning--our goal is still far away but we are determined to reach it with the co-operation of one and all.

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- (9) Quality yarns, looms and accessories are supplied to Handloom Weavers at subsidised cost.
- (10) Necessary incentives to Sericulturists and Handloom Weavers are provided.
- (11) Marketing of Handloom fabrics and Cocoons is arranged by the Department.

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**Director of Tourism, Meghalaya
Shillong, Phone No SH 6054.**

**OR Information Officer-cum-Publicity
and In-charge, Shillong Tourist
Bungalow, Polo Ground, Shillong
Phone No PABX 337 and SH.4933.**

**Tourist Officer, Government of
Meghalaya, Meghalaya House
9-10, B Russell Street, Cal-
cutta-71, Phone No.24-1900.**

**OR Tourist Officer, Government of
Meghalaya, Meghalaya House,
9-Aurangzeb Road, New Delhi-11
Phone No 37-5394.**

**Tourist Officer, Government of
Meghalaya, Garo Hills, Tura
(Hawakhana) Phone No.263.**

**OR Tourist Officer, Government of
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- (1) District Home Guards Commandant, East and West Khasi Hills, Shillong.
- (2) District Home Guards Commandant, Garo Hills Tura.
- (3) District Home Guards Commandant, Jaintia Hills, Jowai.
- (4) Deputy Commissioner/Controller, Civil Defence, Shillong/Jowai/Tura.
- (5) For Details please contact Directorats of Civil Defence and Home Guards, Meghalaya, Shillong.

ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CIVIL DEFENCE AND COMMANDANT GENERAL OF HOME GUARDS, MEGHALAYA, SHILLONG.

For all Government Publications please contact.

Meghalaya Government Book Depot
(Secretariat Post Office Building)

IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE—

1. District Census Hand Book, 1971 (Khasi and Jaintia Hills).
2. District Census Hand Book, 1971 (Garo Hills).
3. Meghalaya Election Hand Book, 1978.
4. Report of the Land Reform Commission for Khasi Hills, Vol. I, II and III.
5. Collection of Acts upto 1978.
6. The Meghalaya Assembly Debates.
7. The Meghalaya Co-Operative Societies Rules, 1953.
8. The Meghalaya Co-Operative Societies Act, (Modified upto 30th September, 1976.)
9. The Meghalaya Civil Service Rules, 1975.
10. The Meghalaya Motor Vehicles Rules.
11. The Meghalaya Financial Rules (under printing).

Besides, Rules, Acts, Ordinances and other publications brought out by the Government from time to time are also available.

For details please contact officer-in-charge, Meghalaya Government Book Depot, Shillong.

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Issued by the:—

Agriculture Information Wing,
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Fruit's Garden, Shillong-793003.

THE U. N. WATER DECADE : MEGHALAYA 1ST APRIL 1981-31ST MARCH 1991

DURING THE DECADE THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF
THE DEPT OF MEGHALAYA

- *Coverage of 100% of the total population of the State with portable drinking water.
- *Coverage of 80% of the urban population with sewerage.
- *Coverage of 25% of the rural population under Low Cost Sanitation Programme.

PROJECT IN HAND

- *Greater Shillong Water Supply Scheme.
- *Tura Phase— II Water Supply Scheme.
- *Williamnagar, Nongpoh, Mairang Water Supply Scheme.
- *175 Nos. of Rural Water Supply Scheme.
- *Shillong Sewage Disposal Scheme.

The Department gratefully thank the public for its active participation and looks forward to its continued support in the years to come.

Issued by the Chief Public Health Engineer, Meghalaya, Shillong.

With Compliments From:

**DIRECTOR OF HEALTH SERVICES
MEGHALAYA**

Once again, the Health Department of Meghalaya, start dedicated to the people of the State by rendering a wide spectrum of services including:

***PRIMARY HEALTH CARE**

***THE INTEGRATION OF PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE SERVICE
*HEALTH EDUCATION**

***THE PROTECTION OF MOTHER AND CHILDREN, FAMILY, WELFARE**

***PREVENTIVE SERVICE**

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DISEASES, MALARIA AND GASTRO-INTESTINAL DISEASES!**

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**Issued by State Health Education Bureau
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Educate man to conserve and preserve the soil so that his life on planet earth may be secured and his prospective future ensured.

Issued by the Directorate of Soil Conservation, Meghalaya, Shillong.

Heartiest Greetings to all Meghalayans from Meghalaya Public Works Department on the occasion of the "100 Years of Shillong Government High School"

Due to the absence of other mode of communication, Road network plays a vital role in every sphere of Development Programme. This Department is manned by people with modern technical bias which has helped to uplift the Socio-Economic Progress in the earthswile undeveloped corner of the North Eastern Region, and to bring it to the national main stream and to march forward to a future promise and prosperity.

The Department has achieved a total road length of 3971 K.M. out of which surface road is 1697 K.M. and unsurface road is 2274 K.M. as on 31st March, 1980.

We are happy to write that whatever has been achieved so far by this Department is possible only with the full co-operation of the public.

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- ☆ Construction of R. C. C. DUCT and TAIL RACE TUNNEL of KHANDONG Power House at KOPILI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT GARAMPANI (N. C. Hills)
- ☆ Construction of Tail Race and Access Tunnel to Power House at CHUKHA HYDEL PROJECT, BHUTAN.
- ☆ Construction of Diversion Tunnel and Main Tunnel at LANGPI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT, JĀGI ROAD under Assam State Electricity Board.