CHAPTER VI

INTRODUCTION OF HYMNS AND TONIC SOLFA

One of the important contributions of the Christian missionaries towards the development of Mizo literature was an introduction of hymns of Western composers. They translated English and Welsh hymns into Mizo and taught the people to sing them with the same tunes.

The hymns like 'Enge sual tifai thei ang?' (What can wash away my stain?) 'Thawnthu hlui chu min hrih rawh' (Tell me the Old, Old story), 'Isu, beram vengtu angin' (Saviour, like a shepherd lead us), etc. which were found in the first hymn book in Mizo were translated from the English hymn book, 'Sacred Songs and Solos'.

Besides the translated hymns, the early missionaries also composed songs for worship which were harmonised in accordance with the Western music. For example, the tune of the first Mizo Christian song, 'Isu vanah a awm a' (Jesus lives in heaven) jointly composed by Revs. J.H. Lorrain and F.W. Savidge was taken from an English hymn, "Come, ye sinners, poor

1. Kristian Hla Byu, 1985,
   Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, pp. 150, 342 & 523.
and needy*(Sacred songs and solos No. 376). Another song 'Tlang thim chhak lam kei ka en ang' (I'll look to dark hills of the east) composed by D.E. Jones was included in the first hymn book and its tune was taken from the Welsh Tune Book No. 115.  

The songs composed or translated had been introduced and sung in all the churches. The Mizo converts were not allowed to sing the Mizo traditional songs of various kinds. They were taught to sing the new songs of worship which were set to the rhythm of tonic solfa. In course of time the Mizo Christians became interested in singing the songs of Western tunes and they changed their original tunes and tones to modern scale and notation.

6:1 Publication of hymn book in Mizo:

1. First publication:

The first hymn book, "Hla Bu" was printed and published in 1899. It consisted of 18 hymns and five hundred copies were printed at the Bureka Press, 81 Chuckerbery Road, Buligunge, Calcutta.  

The hymns were contributed by the Christian missionaries as under:

---

2. Ibid, pp. 123 & 236
3. Hla Bu (Hymn book published in 1899)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of missionaries:</th>
<th>No. of hymns contributed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Lorrain &amp; F.W. Savidge</td>
<td>7 hymns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E. Jones (Welsh missionary)</td>
<td>4 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raibhajur (Khasi evangelist)</td>
<td>7 &quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 18

Some of the hymns were translated and some were original. Of the 18 hymns, nine are incorporated in the existing hymn book published by the Synod Publication Board in 1989. When the little books of the hymns were ready for sale the people eagerly bought them.5

By nature the Mizo were fond of singing. It is said that during one of the military expeditions to Mizoram the British soldiers were encamped at a certain place having a Christmas repast accompanied by songs. The Mizo who were attacking the soldiers stopped shooting when the song began but fired upon the camp when the singing had ceased. Hymns introduced by the missionaries had been quickly spread and were known to many villages even before visited by the missionaries.6 Once while Edwin Rowlands was on tour in a strange

6. Ibid.
village, he was surprised to hear two little boys singing a hymn which he had translated. As the people were very anxious to learn the hymns, the missionaries had an opportunity for preaching among the people.

For knowledge of the position of Christianity in the year of publication of the first hymn book statistics of the Christians for the year ending December 31st, 1899 are given below:

(1) Communicants (full members) ........... 7
(2) Candidates ........... 4
(3) Children ........... 4
(4) Adults baptised ........... 4
(5) Received into communion ........... 2
(6) Children baptised ........... 1
(7) Received on trial to the church ...... 3
(8) Expelled ........... 1
(9) Total in the church: Male - 9 Female - 6 ... 15
(10) Sunday School ........... 1
(11) Sunday school teachers ........... 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sunday school Scholars</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Boys in the day school</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Girls in the day school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Collection</td>
<td>Rs 81-1-8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Preacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the statistical record of the Lushai churches maintained by D.E. Jones, the number of male christians in 1899 was 7 and that of female was 5. The native Christians were Khuma and Khara who were baptised on the 25th June, 1899.

(2) Second publication of hymn book

The missionaries, D.E. Jones and Edwin Rowlands and Khasi christians living in Mizoram were able to produce more hymns in Mizo language and most of them were translated mostly from English or Welsh hymns.

Therefore, one thousand copies of a hymn book containing 83 hymns were printed in 1902 at the Allahabad Mission Press and it was published by the North India Christian Tract and Book Society. The book as printed arrived in Mizoram in

the early part of 1903.

Many of the natives were able to know the hymns by heart within a short time. In almost every village the christian hymns were being sung alike by christians and nonchristians.

(3) Third publication of hymn book;

In 1904, the hymn book was re-printed with an addition of 42 other hymns. The number of hymns thus came to 125. The Composers or translators of the hymns numbered from 19 to 125 with numbers of hymns they contributed were as under :

No. of hymns:

1. D.E. Jones .......................... 38
2. Edwin Rowlands ...................... 38
3. Thanga (Mizo) ......................... 11
4. Dala (Mizo) .......................... 3
5. Siniboni & Raibhajur (Khasi) ....... 3
6. Simon Hynjah (Khasi) .............. 2
7. D.E. Jones & Omia Nu (Khasi) ....... 2
8. Raja Singh (Anglo Indian) ........... 2
9. D.E. Jones & Thanga ............... 1
10. Edwin Rowlands & D.E. Jones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of hymns:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Thanga &amp; Raibhajur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sahon Roy (Khasi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Umia Nu &amp; Raibhajur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. D.E.Jones &amp; Siniboni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Vanchhunga (Mizo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Phillip Roy (Khasi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the above 107 hymns, the present hymn book published in 1989 contains 71 of which 51 were contributed by the missionaries, D.E.Jones and Edwin Rowlands.  

At the beginning of the same year, i.e. in 1904, the Baptist Missionary Society working in the south Mizoram published a collection of 29 hymns which had been very much appreciated by the people.  

(4) Fourth publication of hymn book:

In 1906, as many as 70 new hymns were printed and added to the hymn book and the number thus increased to 195.  

17. Information received from Pu Lalchunga of Sihphir, Mizoram.
Out of the 70 hymns, 39 were contributed by the missionaries, D.E. Jones and Edwin Rowlands and the rest were from the Khasi and native Christians. 18

(5) Fifth publication of hymn book:

In 1908, another 78 hymns were added to the 195 hymns making a total of 273. Of the 78 hymns, 54 came from the Baptist missionaries, J.H. Lorrain and F.W. Savidge, five others were also jointly contributed by J.H. Lorrain and other friends and all the rest were from the hands of Mizo Christians. 19 The hymn book printed in Madras in 1908 was the first edition and contained 273 hymns.

As the years passed, the missionaries produced more hymns. The Mizo themselves became educated with sufficient knowledge of English to translate devotional songs into their own language. Later on, they also composed many religious songs mostly during 1920s. The book of hymns which had been in wide circulation was, therefore, revised and enlarged from time to time and was printed and published as below: 20

19. Ibid, pp. 160-161
20. Information received from Pu Lalchunga of Sihphir, Mizoram.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Printing and Publication:</th>
<th>No. of hymns:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910 - Second edition</td>
<td>1 - 322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913 - Book of new hymns (Part II)</td>
<td>323 - 401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915 - 3rd edition (Printed in Madras)</td>
<td>1 - 450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916 - Book of new hymns (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>451 - 502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919 - Book of new hymns (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>451 - 558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922 - 4th edition (Printed in Madras)</td>
<td>1 - 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928 - 5th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931 - 6th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935 - 7th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937 - 8th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 - 9th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942 - 10th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945 - 11th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947 - 12th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 - 13th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952 - 14th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953 - 15th edition (Printed in Aizawl)</td>
<td>1 - 461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 - 1st Tonic solfa edition</td>
<td>1 - 461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983 - 2nd Tonic solfa edition (Revised &amp; enlarged)</td>
<td>1 - 547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985 - 3rd Tonic solfa edition</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; 1 - 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987 - 5th Tonic solfa edition</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; 1 - 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988 - 6th Tonic solfa edition</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; 1 - 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 - 7th Tonic solfa edition</td>
<td>&quot; &quot; 1 - 537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the 4th edition printed in 1922 as many as 150 hymns which were less popular or infrequently sung were dropped out but 72 new songs were inserted. The hymns thus numbered from 1 to 480. From the 4th to the 9th editions all the hymns and their respective numbers given in the book remained the same. In the 10th edition printed in 1942 as many as 33 songs were discarded and 18 other new songs were inserted. Thus the number of hymns impressed in 1942 came to 465. In 1945, it was revised with new order of number. From the 11th to the 13th editions the hymns bore the same order of number. In 1983, the book was revised and enlarged with new order of the hymn number. A number of original compositions have also been incorporated in the hymn book. The present hymn book published in 1989 contains 537 hymns out of which 176 were contributed by the missionaries.

It is also worth-mentioning that "Naupang Hla Bu" (Children's Hymn Book) was compiled for use in the children departments of the Mizo Sunday School in 1940. The book contained simple hymns suitable for the children of Beginners, Primary, Junior and Intermediate Departments. The hymns were translated from the book of Children's Hymn.21 The children's hymn book in the Mizo language was reprinted in 1941, 1942,

1945, 1948, etc. and has been used till the present day in the children Departments of Mizo Sunday school.

6:2 Importance of hymns to development of Mizo literature:

(1) The hymns enriched the language:

In translating or composing the hymns many words which were not known to the Mizo were used for expression of new ideas and concepts which had been brought by the Gospel. The following new words appeared in the first hymn book which contained only 18 hymns:

(1) Baibul (Bible)
(2) Isua (Jesus)
(3) Jehovah (Jehovah)
(4) Vantirhkoh (angel)
(5) Kross (Cross)
(6) Setana (Setan)
(7) Krista (Christ)
(8) Lehkhabu (Book)
(9) Bethlehem (Bethlehem)

Three of these words, Isua (Jesus) lehkhabu (book) and Krista (Christ) are coined, vantirhkoh (angel) is an adapted word and the rest except Bethlehem are foreign words.

22. Hla Bu (Hymn book published in 1899)
All these words are still in use in the present hymn book.

Further, in the first hymn book some words already known to Mizo are also used with wider or more meanings in accordance with Biblical expression. A few of such words are given below:

- Tidamtu (Redeemer/Saviour)
- Tidam (To heal/save/redeem)
- Thawnthu hlui (Old story)
- Sual tifai (To wash sin away)
- Khengbèt (To crucify)
- Ram nuam (Heaven)
- Ran thlang (Manger)
- Mi fingte (The magi)
- Thisena lei (Atonment with blood)
- Chanchin Tha (Gospel)
- Tirhkohte (Apostles)
- Thlarau (Holy Spirit)

The above words have been already in existence in the Mizo language but their senses as used in the first hymn book are completely different from that of everyday conversation.

With the increase of the number of hymns, the number of coined words, foreign words and adapted words have increased.
For example, the following foreign words have been inserted in the present book of hymns:

- Uain (Wine)
- Baptis (Baptise)
- Baptistsha (Baptism)
- Gospel (Gospel)
- Kalvari (Calvary)
- Grep (Grep)
- Sakramen (Sacrament)
- Juda (Jew)
- Seraf (Seraph)
- Serafim (Seraphim)
- Kraun (Crown)
- Marter (Martyr)
- Angel (Angel)
- Halleluia (Hallelujah)
- Amen (Amen)
- Hosana (Hosanna)
- Lili (Lily)
- Pentikos (Pentecost)
- Jubili (Jubilee)
- Baibul (Bible)

Besides, some proper nouns which had been never known to Mizo have become quite familiar to them because of the hymns. Such nouns as Kanan (Canaan), Jerusalem, Eden and Zion are frequently used in the hymns to signify heavenly abode or eternal place full of joy and happiness. Appropriate adjectives or nouns are often used with them, e.g., beautiful land of Canaan; Eden, the new and pleasant city; Zion, the City of God, etc.

Further, such nouns as Gethsemane (Gethsemane), Jordan (Jordan), Zion (Zion), Galili (Galili), Gehena (Gehenna), Judai (Judea), Sumeona (Sumeon), Heroda (Herod), Davida (David), Bethlehem (Bethlehem), Nazaret (Nazareth), Mari (Mary), Ebenezar (Ebenezer), Gosen (Gosen), Krista (Christ), Jahova (Jehovah), Negro (Negro), India (India), Grinland (Greenland), Silon (Ceylon), Afrika (Africa), Evi (Eve), Adama (Adam), Pontia
Pilata (Pontia Pilate), Mosia (Moses), Daniala (Daniel), Hebrew (Hebrew), Timothea (Timothy), Lois (Lois), Euniki (Eunice), Hani (Hannah) and Samuel (Samuel) have appeared in the hymns.

Furthermore, many Mizo words are used in symbolic senses in the hymns and this enhanced the meanings of the existing words of the Mizo. Examples are as follows:—

Beram No (Lamb) means Jesus, Thlaler (desert/wilderness) means the world, Lungpui (a rock) means Christ, Rawngbawl (to cook for meal) means to serve for God, Zawlnei (to be possessed by evil spirits) means a prophet, Luipui kam (bank of a big river) means Heaven, Kohhram (to call one apart or one called apart) means the Christian church, and so on. The usual meanings in the Mizo language are bracketed. Thus the hymns have enhanced the meanings of existing words.

(2) The hymns changed the mode of thinking and imagination of the Mizo:

The hymns reveal the Biblical truths which are quite different from traditional belief of the Mizo. Their views on life after death and world of life, mode of thinking and imagination in various ways of life were completely changed in the new religion.
As already mentioned in the Introduction, the Mizo believed in the existence of an abode of the spirit of the dead. On the way to the village of the departed, the spirit of the dead had to pass through the following:

1. Rihdil (Rih lake),
2. Hringlang tlang (Hringlang mountain) from which the departed spirit looked back with longing the world of men,
3. Lungloh tui, a spring water which, after drinking, extinguished longings for the living and
4. Hawilo par, a flower that extinguished a desire to look back upon the earth when worn on the head.

These myths had permanently occupied a prominent place in the minds of the Mizo. The Christian hymns have replaced these old myths. Instead of the mythical Hringlang mountain there is Mt. Zion in the hymns and now it has become very prominent in their heart. In the hymns the word 'Zion' signifies heavenly home and is often used with adjectives, etc. as under:

Climb up the Mt. Zion, the beautiful City and march on top of Zion, the beautiful City of God. (Hymn No. 287)
Mt. Zion, the peaceful existence. (Hymn No. 421)
Mt. Zion and the beautiful heavenly star. (Hymn No. 458)
In the Zion where the Saviour reigns. (Hymn No. 454)
Sometimes the christians call themselves 'Children of Zion'.
(Hymn Nos. 327 & 458) Thus Mt. Zion is a peaceful, beautiful
and pleasant abode in their imagination.

In place of Rihdil and Lungloh tui there appears
Jordan river in the hymns. It has to be crossed to reach Ca­
naan, the heavenly abode. It has also flowed into the heart
of christians. Now they stand on the bank of the river Jordan.
(Hymn No. 436) They will meet the ransomed beyond Jordan
river. (Hymn No. 435) They will not fear the wave of Jordan.
(Hymn No. 449) and will safely cross the rolling waves of
Jordan. (Hymn No. 436)

In place of the Hawilo par (a mythical flower) a
fragrant flower of joy forever blooms. (Hymn No. 422) There
is a beautiful land where the Lily blooms. (Hymn No. 454)
They live together enjoying the blossom of Sharon. (Hymn No. 95)
There is a royal land of flowers. (Hymn No. 462) In the hymns
the flower signifies beauty, happiness, pleasure, loveliness,
etc., that exist in the eternal home.

The main concept of life after death which the
hymns have brought is that human lives on earth may come to an
end but there is heavenly abode where they have to live fore­
ver with the lord. This world is transitory full of wooiness,
troubles, groan and weeping for sorrow. Man's permanent home is in heaven where the redeemed has to meet his beloved with immense joy and happiness.

The composers of hymns greatly emphasize the greatness and pleasure of heaven, the eternal home of the believers. They often compare the heaven with the greatest possible pleasure or with the most lovely things on earth which they see or experience. Sometimes they express that the life in heavenly home is full of joy and happiness which cannot be expressed in human tongues or words and the loveliness and pleasantness is beyond comparison with that of the world. On the other hand, the mundane life is very short and is full of suffering, grief, hatred, misery, etc.

As a whole the hymns are mainly the expression of the love of God for men, sins against God, the suffering and death of Jesus for salvation of men, the works of the Holy Spirit, the christian life, the Second Coming of Christ, the life to come, the Gospel message, etc., which are based on the contents of the Bible. Under the influence of the messages of the Bible and of the hymns the Mizo completely changed their outlook on life.
(3) The hymns have brought social changes:

The hymns replaced the traditional songs of different kinds which had been composed at different times or ages and which had been sung on various occasions. The converts sang only the new religious songs giving up their own folk-songs of lilting tunes and they did not participate in the community festivals and other traditional amusements connected with folk-songs. In course of time they were greatly interested in the Western style of singing. They composed their own religious songs and other community songs to be sung in accordance with the Western tunes. Gradually the indigenous amusements which were connected with singing, feasting and drinking had been abandoned. They began to adopt the Western mode of life and sing the hymns and other songs imitating the Westerners. The new society thus came into existence under the Christianity.

The messages and words of the songs as well as musical instruments became different from that of the heathen days. Thus the time, place and way of singing, the favourite songs and the programmes of social gatherings were completely different from that of the past owing to the introduction of hymns.

The introduction of hymn-singing by the missionaries
not only increased the number of sacred songs but also developed the minds of the people with aspirations and made them skilled in composing religious or other community songs with the Western tunes. During and after 1930s the Mizo produced many beautiful love songs which had been popularly sung particularly by the youths of the society. Community songs like the songs on nature, songs of inspiration or patriotism and other songs describing traditional values, social life, loveliness of their own land, enjoyment of Christmas, etc., have come up at the same period. It is, therefore, worth-mentioning that the Mizo could compose these songs following the Western style and sing them in the Western tunes as a result of the introduction of hymns.

6:3 Difference between the hymns of the first and last editions:

The hymns of the first hymn book published in 1899 were of simple words which had been rarely used by the Mizo in composing their own songs. They expressed some of the Bible truths in common words which could be easily understood. Some words of the hymns had been altered and replaced with more suitable words in the subsequent publications of hymn books. Each of the first verse of three hymns published in 1899 and in 1989 are shown below for comparison.
(1) Hymn No. 4 as published in 1899:

Enge sual tifai thei ang?
Ka Isua thishen chaovin;
Eng min tidam leh ang?
Ka Isua thishen chaovin.

In 1989, it was as under:-

Engnge sual tifai thei ang?
Isua Krista thisen chauhvin;
Engnge min tidam leh ang?
Isua Krista thisen chauhvin.

(What can wash away my stain?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.)

The difference between the first and the modern publications of this hymn verse is that the words "Ka Isua" (My Jesus) in the second line were replaced by "Isua Krista" (Jesus Christ) in the modern publication and it was done so also in the fourth line. Moreover, the spellings of words are also different, viz. "enge" (what) became "engnge" and "chaovin" (only) became "chauhvin" in the modern publication.

(2) Hymn No. 5 as published in 1899:

Thonthu hlui min hril roh,
Van chunga chanchin thu;
Engtinngge min tidam zia,
Isua khawngai thu.

In 1989, it was as below:-

Thawnthu hlui chu min hrilh rawh,
Van chunga chanchin thu;
Engtinngge min chhandam zia,
Lal Isua khawngaih thu!
Tell me the Old, Old Story,
Of unseen things above;
Of Jesus and His glory,
Of Jesus and His love)

In the above verse the difference is that 'chu' (the) is added to the first line in the last publication and it has one more syllable. In the third line 'tidam' (to heal) was also changed to 'chhandam' (to save) in the last publication. Spellings of the words 'thonthu', 'roh' and 'khawngai' became 'thawnthu', 'rawh' and 'khawngaih' respectively.

(3) Hymn No. 7 as published in 1899:

Isua Tidama khawvela a haw,
Mi rethei angin bawng ina a om;
Ava mak em ve ! ka lawm em em e,
Keima min zong turin.

In 1989, it was as follows:-

Chhandamtu Isua leian a lo chhuk,
Mi rethei angin bawng inah a piang;
A va mak em ve, ka lawm em em e !
Kelma min zawng turin.

(Jesus, my Saviour, to Bethlehem came,
Born in a manger to sorrow and shame;
Oh, it was wonderful-blest be His name !
Seeking for me, for me !)

In the first line of this hymn the word 'Tidama' (Healer) was used and in the latter publication it was replaced by 'Chhandamtu' (Redeemer/Saviour). The literal meaning of the first line of the old publication is 'Jesus, the Healer,
went home to the world' and in the latter publication it means 'Jesus, the Saviour, came down to the earth'. In the second line the last word 'om' (to stay/remain) was replaced by 'piang' (be born) and this spelling 'om' has not been used in the modern writing. It is written as 'awm'. Similarly, the spelling of the word 'zong' has now become 'zawng'. Further, a circumflex accent is placed over the vowels to indicate the long sound in the last publication.

According to the difference in environments and experiences, the imagination or visualisation of natural beauty or objects is different from country to country. For instance, an English artist often draws a picture of a ship on the vast sea or ocean with indistinct clouds at a far place while an Indian artist living in the plain draws a picture of a pond with two or three ducks on the water and nut trees on its bank. The Mizo living in the hills usually draws a picture of hilly land with a flowing river and the rising sun may also appear on the hilly land.

Likewise, the Western hymns translated into Mizo contain some similes or figurative words which the Mizo had never used before in their songs and in course of time the Mizo, too, have used such words in composing their own religious songs. Examples are as follows:— Ocean, Sea, Snow,
Crown, Harbour, Gold, Pearl, etc.

These are well known to the English people and are well suited for use in symbolic sense or simile in the hymns. Later, the Mizo also imitated the usage of these type of words in the hymns composed by them. But it should be noted that the suitability of using these words from the viewpoint of clarity of meaning is much greater to the English writer than the Mizo. However, these words have enriched the stock of the Mizo vocabularies used in poetry. It may also be stated that the Mizo have had the new imagination or visualization as a result of the use of such words in the hymns.

6:4 Criticisms from the natives:

The natives criticised the inappropriate use of words in the hymns. In 1964, one of the best Mizo writers criticised hymns translated by Edwin Rowlands. The main criticism was that the words of hymns were not proper nor appropriate and hence, they were contrary to further progress of Mizo literature. His criticism was published in the local newspaper.

From the year 1978, some critics pointed out wrong words and false expression of the idea which they found in the Christian hymns. Some of these hymns were recently composed by the Mizo with simple conversational words and the
other hymns which faced criticism were translated by missionaries and by the Mizo as well. The criticisms were published in the "Thu leh Hla", a monthly literary journal of the Mizo Academy of Letters.

In 1980, many criticisms appeared in the monthly literary journal in different issues. The critics pointed out some words which were wrongly used in the hymns. Such words are nouns, possessive pronouns, adjectives and verbs which are inappropriately used in the hymns. The critics also showed false expression of the idea and misuse of similes in other hymns composed by the natives.

6:5 Misinterpretation of the river Jordan:

In the Christian hymns the river Jordan is often used as a symbol of death or sorrow but this seems to be incorrect on the following grounds:

(a) Jordan is a sacred river for the Christians

(b) The people of Israel led by Joshua were going to cross the river Jordan. As soon as the priests carrying the Covenant Box of the Lord stepped into the river, the water stopped flowing and piled up. The flow down stream to the Dead Sea was completely cut off and the people walked
across the river on the dry ground. (Joshua 3: 13-17)

(c) Elijah rolled up his cloak and struck the water of Jordan with it. The water divided and he and Elisha crossed to the other side on dry ground. (II Kings 2:8 )

After Elijah had been taken up to heaven Elisha also struck the water with Elijah's cloak. The water divided and he walked over to the other side. (II Kings 2: 13-14)

(d) Naaman, the Commander of the Syrian army dipped himself seven times in the river Jordan as instructed by Elijah and he was completely cured of his dreaded skin disease. (II Kings 5:1-14)

(e) John the Baptist baptised many people in the river of Jordan. Jesus also got baptism there. The Spirit of God descended like a dove upon him and a voice also came from heaven. (St. Matthew 3 : 5 - 17)

For the above reasons Jordan is a sacred river where God's miracles had appeared before the people of different ages. It is, therefore, absolutely improper to use Jordan as a symbol of death or sorrow in the hymns.

6:6 New songs of Mizo christians:

After Spiritual Revival of 1919 the Mizo began to
compose religious songs which made a striking impression on the minds of the Christians. These songs had been popularly sung and were very dear to the people. As the number of such songs was on the increase, a song book namely "Mizo Kristian Hla Thar Bu" (which means a book of new songs of Mizo Christians) containing 201 songs was published by the Welsh Mission Bookroom in November, 1930. A few of them were translated from the English hymns. Since then it was reprinted from time to time with a few changes in some years and has been in use in addition to the existing hymn book.

After the first publication in 1930 this song book went through editions in the following years.

1932 (with 212 songs), 1936, 1939, 1940 (with 221 songs), 1943, 1949 (with addition of 77 new songs), 1953 (with 261 songs), 1960, 1963, etc.

This new type of religious songs are sung with a native drum accompaniment. The drum is quickly beaten with a drum stick to support the voice and inspire the singers. In

24. Mizo Kristian Hla Thar Bu, 1930, Published by the Welsh Mission Bookroom, Aijal.

singing of this type of songs with quick beating of drum they move the heart to ecstatic fervour accompanied often by waving and clapping of hands which further arouses a great desire for dancing and they dance to the rhythm of the tune. The Mizos love these songs so much that they sing them with gusto repeating the song again and again with dancing for quite a long time. While singing, one of the singers or dancers calls out the first few words of every other line of the song and this arouses greater interest in the singing. They really enjoy singing of this kind of songs with dancing and those who never dance equally take pleasure in it.

These new songs were composed with indigenous poetical words which have smooth flow of sound when sung or recited. In nature they are rapturous, sentimental, emotional and devotional consisting of sweet words with smooth sound suitable to be sung. They became more popular and powerful than the hymns already in existence. The style, the profundity and the contents of these songs appeal to the hearts. J.H. Lorrain said, "They are the outpouring of Lushai hearts inspired by the Holy Spirit". The songs mainly express the transience earthly life, the life hereafter, the heavenly abode, the suffering of Christ, and the love of God for men. They have a new original tune

basing partly on tonic solfa but in consonant with indigenous ethos. They are almost modulated to the traditional tunes. These songs kindle greater interests in singing and they are sung with ecstatic fervour for the following reasons:

The tune has come out of the combination of tonic solfa and the traditional way of singing and this tune has become a great favourite of the Mizo. It can easily arouse sentiments when sung.

Secondly, the words of the songs are convincing, impressive, precise, expressive and easily understandable. Every line and verse are of smooth sound and rhyme with one another to a certain extent. It is, therefore, pleasant to sing such type of songs.

Thirdly, they are inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus became powerful to win the hearts of the heathens especially when a revival broke out.

Lastly, all the Mizo are not fully familiar with the English tunes which are foreign to them and therefore, the new tune could attract them easily.

Having learnt that the Mizo loved these songs and sang them with gusto, J.H.Lorrain said,
I foresee the day when English and Welsh tunes and the hymns so many thousands have sung to them since the Gospel came to these hills will be regarded as an interesting curiosity of the early Lushai church. 27

The printed hymns were mostly sung to the English and Welsh tunes throughout the land but many of them could be sung like the new type of songs with the native drum and dancing. The Mizo christians loved the new tune and felt at home in such kind of singing suitable for dancing. During 1930-'31 a revival in the Holy Spirit broke out in some places of the north and south Mizoram. The people sang the songs dancing to the rhythm of the tune. As a result, many of the heathens were converted to christianity and many more backsliders were restored. Till today, whenever there is a revival the Mizo sing the hymns in accordance with the new tune with the accompaniment of the drum and dancing.

Some of the religious songs composed by the Mizo have been inserted in the hymn book of the church since 1985. One of them which has been very frequently sung is "Tunah a thar hmangaihna eng nuamah" composed by R.L.Kamala, one of the well known composers of inspiring religious songs among the natives. The idea of the song may be translated as follows:-

27. Ibid.
The land of light and love is ever new,
The glorious home of Lord;
A fragrant flower of joy ever blooms there,
And it will never fade.

In joy we shall meet there by and by,
With all white robed angels in glory;
The earthly sorrows and groans will turn,
Into joyful singing to the Lord.

Clouds of sorrow surround me all the time,
Until my life's sun sets;
The earthly life I shall long for no more,
When I reach the home-land.

And ever nearing the heavenly home,
My worldly days decrease;
I foretaste ev'n now the heaven divine,
How great the bliss will be!

My saviour with lovely face, the wounded,
From His celestial throne;
Shall reign for endless joy of the redeemed,
Hallelujah, Amen!
Tonic solfa is a method of showing musical notes by syllables. He who knows tonic solfa can sing any song in correct tune if the tonic solfa for the song is given. F.W. Savidge, one of the pioneer missionaries, first introduced tonic solfa in Mizoram. During the pioneering days at Aizawl from 1894 to 1897 he used to teach the Mizo to sing the songs of Western tunes. 28

From the beginning the Welsh missionaries introduced tonic solfa in the Lower Primary school. In addition to the Scripture lessons all the pupils learned tonic solfa which they liked very much. 29 The solfa system of notation had been not a little taught at the Aizawl Mission school and the teachers were also expected to make some use of it in the village schools. 30

In 1905, Edwin Rowlands set a school time table which had to be followed by all the schools. In the time table roll-call, singing and learning of tonic solfa were put together

---

30. Unpublished note on Education in North Lushai Hills by Edwin Rowlands. (Manuscript)
in one column and this had to be taken every day at 12 noon. Some of the songs of worship selected for explanation and the tonic solfa were included in the school syllabus in 1907.

In 1907, F.W. Savidge went on furlough to England. He was accompanied to England by two Mizo lads, Challiana and Chuaautera. Mrs. Savidge advised Chuaautera to learn tonic solfa system. She told him that knowledge of tonic solfa system would be useful to learn singing in Mizoram. She, therefore, engaged a tutor for the Mizo boy. After having tuition in the tonic solfa system he obtained a Certificate of Proficiency in that system from England and he was appointed as a teacher. Another boy learned to play the Cornet and another the organ. As the boys had quite taken to the tonic solfa system, there was a great improvement in the singing. They also formed a choir and could render part songs and chants and sang the hymns of the regular services with beautiful effect.

31. Mizo leh Vai Chanchin Lekhabu, April, 1905, p. 1
32. Chanchin Bu, May, 1907, pp. 84-85
33. F.W. Savidge, Report for 1908
34. Anderson, Herbert, Among the Lushais, 1914, London, p. 35
J.H. Lorrain in his report for 1907 said that they had tried Mrs. Holman Bentley's "Staff Tonic" system of music in the south Mizoram and had found it so simple and effective in their singing class that they had intended to adopt the system for singing and have the whole of the Mizo hymns (273 in number) set to music in that system. However, the project was cancelled because the Welsh missionaries had already introduced the system of tonic solfa in the north Mizoram and the people of the south Mizoram were also interested in the tonic solfa system. Following the wishes of the people the missionaries of the Baptist Mission taught them that system and then they dropped the plan for adopting the "Staff Tonic" system of music for singing.

As the Mizo had a great love for singing, the learners of tonic solfa could learn it. In this connection Robert Evans, a Welsh missionary said that though the congregational singing was not perfect still it bore the stamp of a standard within a limited period of twelve years. Many of the people then under-

stood the tonic solfa system and already four or five had passed the Junior Certificate Course. 37

"Solfa Bu", a book on tonic solfa by Robert Evans was published by the Welsh Mission in 1910. 38 It was also published in 1914 and was sold for eight annas only. 39 The book was revised and reprinted in 1923 and was called "Mizo solfa bu". This book was very useful for learning the system of tonic solfa. In the same year, i.e. in 1923 "Lusei Hla bu solfa nen", a selection of christian songs with tonic solfa was published and was sold for two annas only. 40 The book was reprinted in 1926.

The Welsh Mission was able to produce several useful books of tonic solfa from time to time. In 1927 and 1928, "Hla sak zir dan" (a book of tonic solfa) was printed and published and was sold for three annas only. 41 The book was re-published and was printed at the Loch Printing Press, Aijal in 1935. A small song book "Hla leh Solfa" (Songs and solfa), a selection

37. Robert Evans, Report for 1908
38. D.E. Jones, Report for 1910
40. Kristian Tlangau, June, 1923, p. 97
41. Kristian Tlangau, September, 1927 & October, 1928
of songs with tonic solfa was brought out in the same year.

In 1937, a book of selected songs called "Hla lawrkhawn a solfa nen," which contained 21 songs with tonic solfa was published and was printed at the Loch Printing Press, Aijal. In the following year the first edition of "Solfa zirna bu 1-na," a book for learning solfa, book I was printed in June and the first edition of "Solfa zirna bu 2-na," a book for learning solfa, book II was printed in December, 1938. Another book, "Hla leh Solfa" (songs and solfa) prepared for the coming Synod of the churches was brought out in the same year.

"Solfa zirna bu 1-na" was reprinted in 1940 and 1945. "Solfa zirna bu 2-na" was also reprinted in 1940. These two books were combined and were printed in one volume in 1948. Later on, it was re-published in 1951, 1955, 1960, etc. 42

The introduction of tonic solfa in the school as well as in the church and the frequent publications of the book of solfa gradually spread the knowledge of tonic solfa system in the whole of Mizoram. It had become quite familiar with the Mizo christians especially with the church leaders.

42. Welsh Mission Bookroom & Press stock Register.
The advent of Miss K. Hughes made rapid progress in singing and considerably increased knowledge of tonic solfa among the people. Most of the books of tonic solfa mentioned above were prepared by her with the assistance of the natives. She had a good knowledge of tonic solfa and was deeply interested in music. She was very good especially in the teaching of singing. She used to teach the Mizo to sing hymns in accordance with the system of tonic solfa. As she was a gifted musician and was fond of singing, the Mizo called her "Pi Zaii" which means "Madam Singer". She organised a music class which rapidly made progress in the knowledge of tonic solfa in various parts of Mizoram. As she was a very good singer, the Mizo women also greatly improved in singing under her leadership.

**Tonic Solfa Examination:**

Miss K. Hughes introduced an examination in tonic solfa. The first examination to earn a Junior Certificate was conducted among the school children in 1927. It was also notified that the same examination for adults was going to be held in rural areas. The syllabus for elementary certificate examination in tonic solfa was published in the Kristian Tlangau (Christian Herald) for information to those who intended to sit for the examination. In 1926, the Education Committee of the

Baptist Mission decided to establish an annual examination in tonic solfa so that the students, after leaving the school, would be able to help in the singing in the village churches. Singing and knowledge of tonic solfa, therefore, became an examination subject in the schools in the south Mizoram for the first time in 1927. In the north Mizoram about 80 young people sat for the tonic Solfa College Examination in 1939 and they all succeeded in having a certificate. The solfa examination had been conducted at different times and this gave much incentive to the people to learn tonic solfa. Through the efforts of the missionaries the church was able to publish a hymn book with tonic solfa for the first time in 1955.

6:8 Choir

A choir is a singing group consisting of male and female members. Miss K. Hughes formed a Mizo choir which attracted the young people. The choir had been already organised before her arrival in Mizoram but the newly formed choir under her leadership grew much better than the choir of the previous years.

44. Misses M. Clark and E.M. Chapman, Report for 1926
45. Mr. W.J.L. Wenger, Report for 1927
46. K. Hughes, Report for 1939
Under the leadership of K. Hughes a Mizo Choir of 40 members attended the Synod (now called Assembly) of the whole mission field of Assam which was held at Sylhet in March, 1929 (The Synod was held once in every three years and was attended by representatives of every part of the mission field). On this occasion the greatest attraction of the Synod was the Mizo choir. The Synod was presided over by the Rev. J.W. Roberts.

The Mizo choir sang gloriously choruses from the Messiah-Worthy is the Lamb, For Unto Us a Child is Born, and the Glory of the Lord, Lift up your heads, the Hallelujah Chorus and the Amen Chorus. The people present were all surprised and completely captivated to hear their singing. The Rev. Ralla Ram, a delegate from the United Church of North India was so much impressed by the singing of the choir that he wrote an article in "The Indian Standard" expressing his great admiration of the Mizo Choir's performance. The choir made a remarkable impression in the Synod.

On the invitation of the Rev. Ralla Ram, one of the leaders of the Presbyterian Church in India, the Mizo choir

48. Miss E.M. Lloyd, Report for 1929
of 50 members led by Miss K. Hughes made a tour of the principal cities of North India in 1933. About 40 concerts were given and from 12 to 15 choruses from the Messiah and the Holy City were sung in addition to solos and Mizo hymns, the latter being sung to the accompaniment of a drum as in their homeland. The singing produced a great impression on the audience and many encores were given to the choir. At the end of the concerts many expressed their admiration of the choir's attainments. They visited 16 cities of northern India and in every city they were given a warm welcome and the most kindly hospitality. 49

Knowledge of tonic solfa kindled a great interest in hymns and music of all kinds among the Mizo and the choir could be formed and organised in every church in the whole of Mizoram.