CHAPTER 5

IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY

With the coming of the British, the Lushai Hills witnessed radical changes in the religious front. Christianity was firstly introduced as a new religion among the Lushai people in 1894 and it gradually replaced the tribal traditional religion of what was known as animism.¹ This new belief increasingly gained ground and by the time the British left the Country, there were about 90% Christians among the Lushais.² It had almost totally replaced the old belief and brought remarkable changes within the Lushai society.

RELIGIOUS TRANSITION:

The persons who first brought Christian religion among the Lushai people were J. H. Lorrian and F.W. Savidge.³ They came to the Lushai Land under the

¹ The religious practice of the Lushai tribes is simply designated as ‘animistic, worship, which best defines as worship of spirits and other living objects. But they also believed in the Supreme Creator, whom they called ‘Pathian’ who is all above other supernatural beings. According to Lewin, the tribes have two gods—Pathian and Khozing. See T. H. Lewin- *The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and the Dwellers Therein*, 1869, Reprint, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 2004, p. 134.


³ Both originally hailed from the Highgate Baptist Church in London.
sponsorship of a rich merchant of Leeds, near London named, Arthington. This Mission came to be known as **Arthington Aborigine Mission**. The two missionaries set their first foot on the soil of Aizawl on January 13, 1894. While Lorrian was locally known as *Pu Buanga*, Savidge was called *Sap Upa* by the Lushais.

However, the **first missionary** who visited the Lushai Hills was **William Williams**. He was a young Presbyterian missionary working in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. A native of New Quay (Dyfed) and a sailor for some years, he had a burning spirit of evangelism through Pengwern Jones who was a missionary on the Plains of Sylhet. It was stated that Pengwern took his friend Williams to the Sylhet gaol to visit some new prisoners. Williams eventually encountered several Lushai chiefs who had been recently captured and brought there. This probably generated

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4 Many writers put the date as 11th January, the date which is still remembered as the beginning of Christianity in Lushai Hills. See John V. Lhuna- ‘Role of Missionaries in Mizoram Education’ in Proceedings of NEIHA, Seventh Session, Pasigahat, 1986, p. 283. But it is apparently the day when the two missionaries arrived at Sairang. Meirion Lloyd gave the day of their arrival at Aizawl as 13th January. See his *History of the Church in Mizoram*, Synod Publication, Aizawl, 1991, p. 26. Yet, Mangkhosat suggests 14th January as the appropriate date. See Mangkhosat Kipgen- *Christianity and Mizo Culture*, The Mizo Theological Conference, Jorhat, 1997, pp. 193-94.

a deep interest in him to work among the Lushais. Williams was about 32 years old at that time.

The Lushai Hills was in a very tumultuous state in late 1890. Non-military visitors were denied entry into the Hills. But Williams was obstinate in his endeavour and waited for his chance of what could turn out to be a perilous journey. He eventually got his chance and started off from Shella on Wednesday, 18th February, 1891. He arrived at Fort Aizawl on Friday, 20th March. Aizawl was at that time sparely occupied and thinly populated. Yet, there were several villages in the surrounding, some up to a thousand houses. Aizawl offered a good deal of market to these villages and people thronged into this administrative and military centre for procuring their daily needs. It was to these people that ‘apostolic messages’ were spread by the early missionaries. Besides, there were a mixture of people like the Khasi, Jaintia, Naga, Mikir and Kuki at the District Capital. A number of Khasis living at Aizawl had become a Christian for the faith had already bore a rich fruit in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. For all these, Aizawl became a Mission centre in the Lushai Hills.

After a four weeks visit, Williams left Aizawl on 17th April, 1891 and arrived in Silchar on the 23rd April. During his stay at Aizawl, he spent a lot of time among the Lushais and was deeply impressed. The Lushais in turn, began to like him. Williams fully prepared his mind to return back to the Lushais to work

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7 Lalchhuanliana- op. cit., p. 21.
among them. But unfortunately, he passed away at the Mission Medical Centre, Mawphlang on 21st April, 1892 due to typhoid fever. This happened within a year after his visit to the Lushai Land. William was buried in Shillong.

**The First Missionaries- Lorrain and Savidge:**

James Herbert Lorrain and Frederick William Savidge belong to the Highgate Baptist Church in London. Lorrain came to India on 21st January, 1891 when he was about twenty years old. Before this, he worked as a telegraphist in the London Post Office but he left his job in December, 1890 to become one of the first missionaries of the Arthington Aborigine Mission. He then sailed for Calcutta without any clear intention where he was going to. He advanced to Agartala, Tripura and applied for permission to work among the tribes there. But this was turned down by the local authority and he retreated to Bengal, where he met F. W. Savidge who came in November, 1891. They then formed a partnership which lasted for forty years till they left for England.

Savidge was a graduate and a school master before he joined the Arthington mission. He came to Bengal in November, 1891. He and his friend proceeded to Chittagong in January 1892 but having failed in their attempt to enter

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9 Meirion Lloyd- *op. cit.*, p. 23.


Tripura, they diverted their attention to the Lushai Hills with an object of making it as a mission field. After spending the whole summer of 1892 in Calcutta, from where Savidge was sent to Darjeeling for treatment from dysentery, they moved on to Silchar towards the end of 1892. They stayed with the Welsh Presbyterian Church there and Dr. T. J. Jones warmly received them. Jones was the missionary in charge of the Welsh Presbyterian Churches of USA in Silchar. It was like a pool to come in Silchar as William Pettigrew, another Arthington missionary for Manipur state was also there at that time and they all turned to be a good assistant to the existing mission in evangelizing the local bazaar during 1893. It was here that both Lorrian and Savidge acquired a little knowledge about the Lushai dialect as the Lushais were in frequent visit of Silchar bazaar for procuring their daily needs. The man who most frequently visited the bazaar was Pu Chawngkhuma, commonly known as Chawngi Pa of Mission Veng, Aizawl.

After waiting there for a year to enter the Lushai Hills, they were given permission for Aizawl in early 1893 by A.W. Davies, Political Officer of the North Lushai Hills. The two arrived at Aizawl on the 13th January and put up their tent on

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12 Ibid, p. 25.

13 Reports of the Foreign Mission of the Presbyterian Church of Wales on Sylhet-Bangladesh and Cachar-India, 1893.

14 Ibid.

the parade ground.\textsuperscript{16} This was a turning point in the history of the Christian missions in the Lushai Hills.

At first, both Lorrian and Savidge experienced many difficulties. They knew little about the local language, they had the difficulty to obtain labour to build their house and they were looked upon contemptuously. Moreover, there was official restriction on their movement. At last, they put their problem to the Superintendent and requested him to give salt permit in their name. As salt was an important commodity for the Lushais which no one could freely buy it at anytime, permission was required to obtain it from the shops. Therefore, it was this permit which changed the impression of the locals upon the two missionaries when they could obtain salt in their name.\textsuperscript{17}

After working for around four years at Aizawl from January, 1894 till the end of December, 1897, Lorrain and Savidge had to return back home for they were called back by the Arthington Mission under which sponsor they came. It was the mission plan of Arthington to keep his missionaries in rotation and not to allow them to remain permanently at a place. Their mission among the Lushais came to a halt at the time when their zeal was at its height and their works yet incomplete.

During their brief stay at Aizawl, the two missionaries wholeheartedly devoted themselves to learning the Lushai language, writing small books in Lushai and translation of hymns and parts of the New Testament. Within a short period,

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 27.
they developed a script A, Aw, B, Ch… for the Lushai people based on the English alphabet and by using these letters, they taught how to read and write.\textsuperscript{18} It was on this foundation that the Lushais were steadily educated and converted into Christianity.

Previously, T. H. Lewin, one of the first white men to enter the Lushai Hills had published a book, “Progressive Colloquial Exercises in the Lushai Dialect,” as early as in 1874 and in 1884, Brojo Nath Shaha, the Assistant Surgeon in the Chittagong Hill Tracts published his “Grammar of the Lushai Language.”\textsuperscript{19} Yet, neither of them could furnish a suitable alphabet and this owe to both Lorrian and Savidge.\textsuperscript{20} The first book printed and produced in the Lushai language was a Child’s Primer, published by the Assam Government in 1895. Lorrian himself wrote a Lushai-English Dictionary of around 33,000 words and a grammar of the language which were compiled together and published as a complete dictionary by the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1940, the year Lorrian passed away.\textsuperscript{21}


\textsuperscript{19} Lalchhuaniana- op. cit., p. 36.

\textsuperscript{20} C. A. Soppit has written his “A Short Account of the Kuki-Lushai Tribes on the North East Frontier with An Outline Grammar of the Rangkhol-Lushai Language and Comparison of Lushai with other Dialects” in 1893.

\textsuperscript{21} Lorrian- Dictionary of the Lushai Language, op. cit.
Lorrian and savidge translated several Christian hymns into Lushais and composed a booklet called “The Old Catechism.” They also completed the translation of Luke, John and the Acts of the Apostles from the New Testament of the Bible into Lushai language.\textsuperscript{22} These manuscripts seem to be handed over to the Bible Society in Calcutta when the missionaries were on their way home to the United Kingdom at the beginning of 1898. Unable to be published in Calcutta, the manuscripts were returned to Aizawl from where they were referred to London by D. E. Jones, who received them and were eventually published.\textsuperscript{23}

The numerous tasks of learning the language, preparing the alphabet and translation of hymns and portions of the Bible could not be completed without the active involvement and help of two Lushai Chiefs—Lalsuaka and Thangphunga. They were not Christian but rendered their valuable services for the education of the people by helping the missionaries. Later on, Lalsuaka became a convert to the new religion he heard for the first time from the two missionaries.\textsuperscript{24}

Savidge opened a small school in 1895 but the attendants were few and unwilling. They were mostly from Thangphunga village. Parents were yet inclined to send their ward to school. Children were attracted by offering sweets. The two men also formed a small Sunday School and held services on Sunday. They gave

\textsuperscript{22} John Hughes Morris- \textit{The Story of Our Foreign Mission (Presbyterian Church of Wales)}, Synod Publication Board, Aizawl, 1990, p. 81.

\textsuperscript{23} Meirion- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 30.

\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Ibid.}
pictures to the children who attended the school and rewarded the ones who attended more regularly. One of their first pupils, Chawnga became one of the first Mission school teachers and served in the Mission Veng Primary School till the age of his retirement in 1946. On Sundays, the two used to venture out in the nearby villages to spread the messages they come for. Though the people were generally friendly and enthusiastic, there was no convert during their four years duration. But this does not mean in the least that their adventure was fruitless and insignificant.

Lorrain and Savidge prepared the ground for the future missionaries by inducing the local people to learn how to read and write. They had fulfilled the task of mobilizing the masses and the good seed had been sown to harvest. Had they remain longer as they cherished, they themselves could have gathered the harvest with joy and thanksgiving. But this slipped out from their hands and the fruit of their labour was reaped by the other missionaries who came after them. They were loved by the people as their simplicity, endurance, hardwork and sincerity influenced the common people and they tried to win others by patience and kindness. They also provided some medicines to the people and this established mutual confidence among the masses.

After Lorrain and Savidge was called back by the Arthington Mission, they formed their own “The Assam Frontier Pioneer Mission” to return to India for the

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25 Ibid., p. 31.
second time and began work among the Abor people. The two friends also severed their connection with Arthington with the view that mission work could not be successful without long and patient endeavour as the latter’s policy was moving missionaries every two or three years. Arthington also died in October, 1900.

The First Welsh Missionary--D. E. Jones:

Lorrain and Savidge firmly believed that Arthington would send a replacement to the Lushai Hills after their return, but when this did not happen, they urged the American Baptist Missionary Union to take over the Lushai Hills as their mission field. But this was turned down by the latter and the field smoothly passed on to the Calvinistic Methodist Mission, later on known as the Welsh Presbyterian Mission when it was handed over by the Arthington Mission. Lorrain and Savidge offered their services to the Welsh Mission but as the latter could not accept them as its missionaries, they pressed the Mission to appoint their own missionaries and send them out hastily before their departure from the Lushai Land. Lorrain and savidge’s intentions were to guide and enlighten the Welsh missionaries who would soon take the field on their arrival.

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The Welsh Mission appointed and sent Rev. D. E. Jones as their first missionary in the Lushai Country.\textsuperscript{28} He arrived at Aizawl on 31\textsuperscript{st} August, 1897. He was a young man from the village of Llandderfel, near Bala in Wales. He proved to be patient, painstaking, simple and systematic a man and left a lasting impression on the Lushais on whom he spent much of his life (1897-1926). The Lushais called him Zosaphlui, meaning the ‘old’ missionary’ though he was only thirty years of age. He was accompanied by a Sub-Inspector of Schools in the Khasi Hills, Rai Bhajur, who voluntarily relinquished his post to become an evangelist in the Lushai Hills.

David Evan Jones had already had his theological training and pastoral appointment by 1895 in Wales. After he was accepted by the Mission Committee early in 1897 for India, he was sent to Scotland for training in the Glasgow Medical Mission. But as and when time ran out for Lorrain and Savidge who had only waited for a Welsh missionary to take their place in the Lushai Hills, they were time and again pressurizing the Welsh Mission to take up the Lushai work without further delay. The General Assembly at Rhyl in May, 1897 officially appointed D. E. Jones as a missionary and subsequently ordained him to be a full time worker at Menai Bridge on 16\textsuperscript{th} June, 1897.\textsuperscript{29} But just before his departure, a telegram from India carried information about a severe earthquake in Assam which ruined many mission centres. The news caused panic among the Christians in Wales and it was likely that his engagement in the Lushai Hills was cancelled.

\textsuperscript{28} Morris- \textit{The Story of Our Foreign Mission, op. cit.}, p. 80.

\textsuperscript{29} Meirion- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 38.
Fortunately for him, the Mission authorities were determined to their arrangement, so was he and Jones sailed on the “City of Sparta” on 26th June, 1897.30

Within two years after his arrival in the Lushai Hills, Jones converted and baptized two young men, Khuma and Khara on 25th June, 1899.31 By the end of 1904, a Church had been formed with 32 communicants and a total membership of 57 at his initiative. Before his arrival, a small school had been opened at Aizawl by the Government and a second was opened by Lorrian and Savidge which was soon discontinued. Jones re-opened it when he had settled himself there with 30 scholars. It was on 15th February, 1898 on his birthday. The school was later on amalgamated with the existing Government school. At the end of 1904, twelve schools were opened with 450 attendances.32

The Welsh Mission- Edwin Rowlands:

One year after Jones arrived at Aizawl, he was joined by another Welsh missionary, Rev. Edwin Rowlands.33 He was born at Pensarn, Abergele, a seaside village in North Wales. When he was sixteen, he migrated to the United States and spent some years in Texas as a School master. He then returned from Texas to Wales in 1889 to work in Rhyl. After a few years, he resolved to serve in the

30 Ibid., p. 38.

31 Morris- op. cit., p. 81.

32 Ibid.

Ministry. He fare very well academically in his college course at Bala and received ordination to work overseas in 1898. In the late autumn, he sailed for India and reached the soil of the Lushais on the last day of 1898.\textsuperscript{34}

Edwin Rowlands remained there for almost ten years until he left in 1907. Within these years, he developed a deep affection for the Lushais and married a Lushai girl. He proved to be a man of rare courage and resource. He was adventurous and willing to work. Though he had no patience, he had the rare quality of involving his audience in conversation and speech. He and D. E. Jones used to tour the Lushai country alternately and at times together. Both of them work together successfully though possessed dissimilar character and talents. One made up the deficiencies of the other and in this way opened a vast scope for evangelism in the Lushai Hills.

Edwin Rowlands was known by the Lushais as “Zosaphara,” meaning “the new missionary.” He was gifted in music and songs which became very fruitful in spreading the new messages. With this special gift that he tour the Hills immeasurably and aroused a great zeal on the people who heart him.\textsuperscript{35} Response was quick from the youth. Visit to the Zawlbuk where the local youths spent their night together became more frequent.\textsuperscript{36} Pastor Phawka, the first pastor to be in charge of the West District first heard the Gospel from Edwin Rowlands. Reverend

\textsuperscript{34} Meirion- \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 43-44.

\textsuperscript{35} K. P. Nath- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 404.

\textsuperscript{36} Lalrimawia- \textit{Mizoram, History and Cultural, op. cit.}, p. 114.
Challiana, a senior Baptist pastor and translator in the South was another who first heard the message from this missionary.  

Both Jones and Rowlands also toured the South Lushai Hills on different occasions. Jones’s first visit to the South was in the spring of 1899. He found that the people there spoke a more or less the same tongue, with a slight variation in accent. He easily understood the tongue spoken at Lunglei as he did at Aizawl. He went as far as Pukpui village and Rev. Zaithanga was a person who first heard his message as a small orphan in the chief’s house at that time. He easily grasped the substance of the new message he heard and later on became a minister of the Baptist Mission in the South and one of the chief scripture translators. Jones also enrolled Khawthinthanga of Pukpui and his family as new believers in this tour.

Rowlands’ first visit to the South occurred in 1900 with the basic purpose of visiting the new believers. He paid a second visit in 1901 lasting for four months. The first Baptism in the South in 1902 must have been baptized by Edwin Rowlands at Sethlun. Three men and a woman was said to be baptized on this occasion. Rowlands also visited as far as Chittagong Hill Tracts to meet George

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37 Meirion- *op. cit.*, p. 52.


40 Saiaithanga- *Mizo Kohhran Chanchin* (History of Mizo Church), Regional Theological Literature Committee, Aizawl, 1969, p. 15.
Hughes to discuss matters on the Baptist Missionary Society occupation of the South Lushai Hills.⁴¹

**Robert Evans:** After Rowlands was suddenly recalled from his appointment in the Lushai Hills towards the end of 1907, Robert Evans was released as a substitute from the Khasi Church by the Mission Board. He remained there till the autumn of 1908. He had been known among the Lushais as ‘The Stammerer’ and the ‘Old Sahib’ before he arrived there. He was fifty-eight years old and had been for twenty-nine years in the Khasi Hills. As a man of great faith, he was well known for his belief in prayer and had a great impression upon many Lushais. Evans continued the tasks of Rowlands through his promotion of music and songs which was also his line of interest like his precursor.⁴²

**A Medical Missionary- Dr. Peter Fraser:**

Robert Evans returned to his formal field Mairang District of the Khasi Hills towards the end of 1908. D. E. Jones, who had been away for almost two years since the spring of 1907 arrived back with his wife and small son, Alwyn on the 9th December, 1908. Along with this family were Dr. Peter Fraser, the first medical missionary, his wife Mary Catherine and Watkin Robert.⁴³ The presence of many foreign missionaries in their midst excited the Lushais more than before.

⁴¹ Hminga- *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁴² Meirion- *op. cit.*, p. 106.

Dr. Fraser hailed from Caernarvon in North Wales. He was born in 31st July, 1864 and completed his medical training from Edinburgh. He was a well known senior medical officer under the Caernarvonshire authority. He had been acquainted with a number of leading personalities in the country and had much experience. Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was a very powerful force in the government, was his friend. But he developed in him an intense evangelical conviction and sacrificed himself to undertake missionary work by leaving his high post. He had the firm belief that God called him to work in the Lushai Hills. And in this spiritual service, his wife, Catherine stood as a worthy aide. She was a woman of charm and ability more so in her lovely voice which mesmerized the Lushais. She was a member of the Royal Academy of Music and with her facilitation; some Lushais obtained the Solfa Certificate (Curwen’s) after teaching them.\footnote{Meirion- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 125.}

Fraser remained very helpful to the Lushais and did commendable services to them in terms of medical support along with his missionary work. He provided 24,000 cases of treatment in 1909 alone when the total population of North Lushai Hills was about 90,000 only.\footnote{Ibid., p. 125.} He went far and near as and when the need arise without any hesitation. Sometimes, he could combine medical treatment with evangelical work and acted as both a doctor and a missionary. He could open a dispensary at his own house after 1910 with a proper building.
The coming of Dr. Fraser to the Lushai Hills almost break the cordial relationship between the administration and the mission to the point over the ‘bawi’ controversy.\textsuperscript{46} The administration wanted that the ’bawi’ system- a kind of servitude practice in the Lushai society, must remain while Dr. Fraser severely condemned this practice as akin to that of slavery in medieval Europe. This eventually led to the expulsion of Fraser from the Lushai Hills but as he undauntedly fought his battle in England, the British Parliament acted upon it and consequently the Assam Government passed laws in his favour. In this controversial issue, Khawvelthanga, chief of Maubuang was his lone supporter and a Christian as well who had freed his slaves ‘bawi’. The Superintendent, Lt. Col. F.W.G. Cole punished the chief and seized his double-barreled gun for his inaction against the Government.\textsuperscript{47} Cole also had to leave the Hills for such a non judicious act.

Dr. Fraser also did several commendable works to the society. He erected many new buildings, among them were two large hostel buildings to give shelter to any free bawi who had been given liberty.\textsuperscript{48} A number of the hostel lads proved to be of great help to him while he went on tour. Being inspired, they formed themselves into a group called \textbf{“Kraws Sipai”}, meaning Soldier of the Cross. They

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\bibitem{46} Lal Dena- \textit{Christian Missions and Colonialism, 1894-1947}, Vendrame Institute, Shillong, 1988, p. 45.
\bibitem{47} Hminga- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 68.
\bibitem{48} Meirion- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 152.
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roamed from village to village spreading the ‘Good News’. They voluntarily devoted themselves to tell the Gospel and they continued it for many years.

Dr. Fraser gave freedom to over forty slaves by paying their ransom and supported over a hundred destitute. He brought a small printing press, the first of its kind in the Lushai Hills for printing Christian literature. However, his career in the Hills was cut short and on 26th October, 1912 he was compelled to leave the country. When his return to Aizawl was not possible, he paid a visit for two weeks but had to leave on the 23rd April, 1915 never to return back to the land he had dearly loved. Fraser died in Wales on December 29, 1919.

**The Youngest Missionary- Watkin Roberts:**

Watkin Roberts was born in Caernarvon in 1886. He was a quarryman but was converted to Christian faith by one of R. A. Torrey’s sermons. He was the last man to arrive at Aizawl among the members of D. E. Jones, who arrived on 9th December, 1908. The Lushais named him, “Saptlangvala” meaning the “Youthful Sahib” as he was much younger than the others who came so far. The Lushais still referred by this name even in his eighties. He was not the staff of the Welsh Presbyterian Mission but his deep interest in mission work brought him here. He stayed with the Frasers at Aizawl for some years but later on, he formed a mission organization of his own based in the USA. He built his career among the hill tribes of Cachar and Manipur with the sponsorship of some Christians in USA. He came
to be in touch with a number of leading Lushai Christians including Dala which proved useful to him in promoting his missionary work.49

Roberts’ interest in missionary work developed with the revival of 1904 in Wales and thereafter, there was no turning back and he decided to serve overseas. Dr. Fraser was his good friend although the doctor was his senior by some years. Roberts came to the Lushai Hills at Fraser’s expense in order to assist him but without any denominational attachment. As he had some knowledge of printing, Fraser put him in charge of the press and editor of the *Khristian Tlangau*. But he had to depart with Dr. Fraser in 1912 to the United Kingdom. Their Lushai friend, Dala was with them in the UK for six months. Dala returned to the Lushai Hills in 1913 and worked in the South Manipur Hills under Watkin’s advice.

The people of South Manipur were closely akin to the Lushais and had somehow heard of the Gospel. They also shared a common culture and traditions separated only by the Tuivai River as a natural boundary otherwise need not be demarcated. The people of Senvon were stirred with the new message when they elusively heard of in a distance. Their chief, Kamkholun Singson sent an enquiry about it to D. E. Jones at Aizawl but the latter felt that it was outside his missionary field. It finally came to Watkin Roberts who sent a copy of the Gospel of Mark to the chief in 1910, and by going through it, the chief was inspired and inquired if

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49 Meirion- *op. cit.*, pp. 126-27.
someone from Aizawl could come and explain about the message.\textsuperscript{50} The year 1910 was a turning point in the Church history of South Manipur Hills as it was on this year that the ‘truth of the Gospel’ reached there for the first time. May 7 has been reckoned as the date of reaching the Gospel at Sanvon village as it was on this day that Watkin Roberts was suppose to arrive there for the first time.\textsuperscript{51} Many denominational groups celebrated May 7 as Missionary Day.\textsuperscript{52} However, the exact date of Watkin’s visit as given by Dr. Lal Dena according to his finding is February 5, 1910.\textsuperscript{53} Even then, 7\textsuperscript{th} May is considered as an important milestone in the Church history of the region as it was on this day that the native workers started evangelism among their own people.\textsuperscript{54}

In response to the enthusiasm witnessed at Senvon, five Lushai youths were sent there to teach and preach the Gospel in 1911. This mission appeared to be fruitful and Senvon later became a mission centre for evangelism and a base for Watkin Robert for Southern Manipur. After his departure from Aizawl, Roberts


\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53} Lal Dena- \textit{In Search of Identity, Hmars of North-East India}, New Delhi, 2008, pp. 48-51.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 51.
spent sometime in the UK but soon hurried to the USA for fund drive for his mission which he called **The Thadou-Kuki Pioneer Mission.** It was a very successful trip and soon expanded the mission work at Manipur field through this fund. The Mission was later changed into **North-East India General Mission.**  

Watkin Roberts settled at Asansol, Bengal after marriage and made it as his headquarters. His North-East India General Mission (NEIGM) penetrated into almost the whole of North East like North Cachar, Tripura and Tamu (Burma) and established its peripheral mission centres there. In the Senvon field, as Roberts himself was restricted to remain or enter there by the government due to sectarian rift, R. Dala was appointed as the first native missionary assisted by three native teachers and evangelists, Savawma, Vanzika and Taisenna. The seed that Roberts had sown at Sanvon began to grow rapidly and the mission was soon extended to over twenty villages in South Manipur Hills. The men who carried on this evangelistic work in the early stages were the Lushais from the North Lushai hills.

**Christianity in the South Lushai Hills- The Baptist Mission:**

While the Welsh Mission struggled itself in extending their field in the North Lushai Hills, the Baptist Mission had penetrated in the South Lushai Hills.


By 1901, the British Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) had established itself in Rangamati on the Karnaphuli river, Bengal and in Chittagong. The Baptist missionaries had met some Lushai Christians there and learnt about them. With the beginning of the twentieth century, the BMS began to turn their attention to the Hills to look out for its possibilities. It instructed one of their missionaries, Rev. George Hughes to visit Lunglei in September 1901 to enquire on the possibility of stationing a European missionary there. Having received a warm welcome from the Christians he met there, he made a report to the BMS Home Committee on the prospect of starting mission work in the South Lushai Hills.

Meanwhile, the Welsh Presbyterian Mission from the North Lushai had resolved to station a missionary in the South and entrusted Edwin Rowlands to go and look for a suitable mission site. Rowlands fixed on a prospective site near Fort Lunglei and convinced the local government to agree to this project. Unfortunately, this venture did not mature into reality. When Rowlands learnt the visit of a Baptist missionary to the South Lushai at the close of 1901, he went to Chittagong to see Hughes, the Baptist missionary and to set matters clear. However, to his dismay, Hughes laid a claim to the South Lushai as a future Baptist missionary field and apparently convinced him.

The Home Board of the Presbyterian Church of Wales in Liverpool did not object to the plan intended by the Baptist Mission in South Lushai. The Home Board had the impression that North and South Lushai Hills were different

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58 Meirion- *op. cit.*, p. 74.

countries. They did not, at the same time, have immediate prospects of sending reinforcements from Wales to the Lushai Hills considering on the consequences of huge financial loss it had suffered out of the devastative earthquake of 1897 in Assam. The Mission Board at home was of the attitude that its main mission was in the Khasi-Jaintia Hills and felt the necessity to direct its attention and resources there than in the Lushai hills.\footnote{Lalchhuanliana- *Mizoram Presbyterian Kohhran, op. cit.*, p. 61.} Moreover, the BMS had huge financial resources and manpower as the vast fortunes of late Arthington passed over to the Baptist Mission for evangelistic work.

Under the above circumstances, mission work in the South Lushai Hills smoothly passed on to the hands of the Baptist Mission unhindered. Interestingly, the Baptist missionaries who gave the first effort of evangelism in this region were none other than J. H. Lorrain and F. W. Savidge, who were the first missionaries and who had so effectively pioneered in the north since 1894 to 1897. They were working in North Assam (now known as Arunachal Pradesh) among the Abor-Miri tribes when they were called upon by the Baptist Missionary Society to work among the Lushais for the second time. They had been working in North Assam since the autumn of 1898 with the support of a band of friends who formed a mission known as the \textit{Assam Frontier Pioneer Mission}.\footnote{Hminga- *The life and Witness of the Churches, op. cit.*, p. 54.}

The General Assembly meeting of the Welsh Mission in Liverpool in the summer of 1902, with the subsequent recommendation of its Mission Board
acceded to the transfer of the South Lushai Hills to the Baptist Missionary Society. The Baptist there upon started their work and entered the Hills in 1903. There had been thirty baptized Christians in the South by then and 125 Christian community including children. Nineteen of them went to Demagiri to welcome Lorrain and savidge on their return to the Lushai Hills. They all arrived at Lunglei on the 13th march, 1903. Thankunga was one among the local Christians who could give help to the two missionaries. Lorrain and savidge were also in absolute advantage as they had known the local language and the people had heard and admired about them.

Lorrain and Savidge established themselves at Serkawn, near Lunglei and co-operated with Jones and Rowllands and other missionaries in the North. This co-operative element present between the two denominations in the Lushai Hills was significant at a time when sectarian conflict and distrust was rampant in the home country. The presence of Col. J. Shakespear was an additional factor to ensure that the two missions worked smoothly alongside. He also convened a meeting of missionaries from north and south to his bungalow to discuss for future co-operation of the two areas. But the establishment of a new mission field with its base at Sanvon by the newly founded North East India General Mission after 1910 under Watkin Roberts soon brought suspicion and distinction from the existing Missions in the Lushai Hills and Manipur. Whenever there was a sectarian

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62 Ibid., p. 75.

animosity prevailing within or among the various denominations in later years, the worst victims were always the native members.\footnote{64 Lal Dena- \textit{Christian Missions, op. cit.}, p. 52.}

**The Baptist Missionary Society:**

The Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) was founded in 1792.\footnote{65 Hminga- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 53.} Since the time of William Carey, it had been working in the Indian Sub-continent and gradually drifted towards the Lushai Hills. The first significant contact with the North East was, however, made by the Serampore mission of the Baptist Missionary Society in the early nineteenth century.\footnote{66 Lal Dena- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.} Remarkably, the real initiative for missionary activity came from the government officials.\footnote{67 \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 18-19.} It was done so as to achieve the object of speedy and smooth occupation and stabilization of political control through the ‘power of the Gospel.’

In December, 1813, on the invitation from the British magistrate of Sylhet, William Carey of Serampore mission entrusted Chandra Pal, the first Serampore convert to work among the Khasi in Sylhet. The latter remained there for eight months and baptized two Khasis and five natives.\footnote{68 \textit{Ibid.}, p. 19.} From there, the work spread to Cherrapunji, the first seat of Colonial administration in the District.
administrative support, the BMS opened a mission centre at Gauhati in 1829. It also started working in Chittagong and in September, 1901, sent Rev. George Hughes to the South Lushai to see the prospect of extending its mission work. Hughes, a missionary in Chittagong at that time went as far as Lunglei and after his return to Chittagong, gave a positive report to the BMS to start the occupation.

When the mission had been enlarged and churches emerged at various places in the region, the Baptist Church took steps towards integration in the South even ahead of the Church in the North. Having firmly established, it also extended to the North Lushai and became the largest mission next to the Presbyterian Church in the whole Lushai Hills. Towards Indian Independence, the missionary activities of the Baptist were extended among the Chakmas and the Riangs in the South Lushai Hills and the missionary zeal of the Lushai Christians grew further. Its purpose could have been somewhat fulfilled if not insurgency in the post-independence period hampered this move.

**GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE LUSHAI HILLS:**

The *Pax-Romana* was responsible for the rapid spread and growth of Christianity within the Roman Empire in the early centuries. Likewise, the *Pax-Britannica* contributed a lot for the rapid expansion of Christianity in the Lushai Hills in the early decades of the twentieth century. From its inception towards the end of the nineteenth century, Christianity as a new faith gained ground speedily and within half a century, almost the whole population of the Land was converted.

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69 Hminga- *op. cit.*, p. 213.
into this religion. The first converts were Khuma and Khara, who were baptized by D. E. Jones on June 25, 1899.\footnote{Morris- \textit{The Story of Our Foreign Mission, op. cit.,} p. 81.} They became the first fruits of the Lushais which the early missionaries had devotedly sown the seed since 1894. After this, there was no break in its march and evangelism went forward as if nature’s will or prophetic fulfillment.

**Christian Population:**

\textbf{Census of India, 1911} recorded that out of the total population of 91,204 persons--43,028 males and 48,176 females, there were 1263 male Christians and 1198 female Christians in the Lushai Hills.\footnote{E. A. Gait- \textit{Census of India, 1911 Vol. I, Part II-Table XIV,} Superintendent Govt. Printing, Calcutta, 1913.} The total population who still followed animism was 38,816 males and 45,769 females while 228 males and 110 females professed some other religions. The number of Christians increased further in the **General Census of 1921** and a remarkable growth was visible within a span of ten years. In the Census report of 1921, the Christian population was 12915 males and 15005 females in the whole Lushai Hills.\footnote{Lushai Hills Village Census Tables, 1921, Mizoram State Archives, Aizawl.} In Aizawl division, there were 10143 male and 11955 female Christians and in Lunglei, there were 2572 male and 3050 female Christians as per the record.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} Let us observe the Census Record of 1921 in more detail from the table given below—\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Division</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Christians Male</th>
<th>Christians Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aizawl</td>
<td>70,328</td>
<td>33,390</td>
<td>36,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,143</td>
<td>11,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunglei</td>
<td>28,078</td>
<td>13,262</td>
<td>14,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,572</td>
<td>3,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98,406</td>
<td>46,652</td>
<td>51,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12,915</td>
<td>15,005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1931, the number of Christians rose to 26,727 males and 32,583 females. The number of females became usually higher than that of males due to the higher number of female population in the region as per the census records. The strength of Christian population in 1931 can be observed from the Census table as given below—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Sub-Division</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>No. of Christians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aizawl</td>
<td>42,556</td>
<td>46,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunglei</td>
<td>16,634</td>
<td>18,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59,190</td>
<td>65,214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mizoram State Archives

74 Ibid.

75 Lushai Hills Census, 1931, Mizoram State Archives, Aizawl.

76 Abstract of Registrar 1, Census Lushai Hills, 1930-31, forwarded to the Superintendent of Census Operation, Assam, dated the 11th May, 1931, Aijal.
The following is the strength of Christian population for the whole Lushai Hills between 1901 and 1951—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Christians</th>
<th>Total No. of Literate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>82,434</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>91,204</td>
<td>2,461</td>
<td>3,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>98,406</td>
<td>27,720</td>
<td>6,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>124,404</td>
<td>59,123</td>
<td>13,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1,52,786</td>
<td>98,108</td>
<td>29,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1,96,202</td>
<td>157,575</td>
<td>61,093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As per the given table, it is seen that the Christian population in the Lushai District went on increasing every ten years with a high growth rate. From merely 45 Christians at the initial stage, it reached to 157,575 persons soon after the British left the Country including 65,711 males and 91,864 females as recorded in 1951 General Census. This shows that around 80.31% professed this religion by 1951.


The given table highlights the Christian population of the Lushais during the years 1901 to 1951 in percentage—\(^79\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Population</th>
<th>Decade rate of Growth (Percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>5369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>28.17</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>47.52</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>64.21</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>80.31</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the number of Christian members grew, the number of denominations also rose. Churches increased by leaps and bounds and chapels were established in almost every villages and areas. By 1948, almost every existing denominational group had emerged and established itself in the Lushai Hills as a separate mission. The Christian Missions\(^80\) which worked or started working in the District and year of their formations as well as their area of influence at the time of Indian Independence were—

1. Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Mission (Presbyterian) since 1897, Aizawl Sub-Division.


2. The London Baptist Mission since 1903 at Lunglei Sub-Division.
3. The Lakher Pioneer Mission since 1909 in the Lakher areas.
5. The United Pentecostal Church since 1947 for entire Lushai Hills.
6. The Salvation Army since 1916 and then again in 1948 covering the whole Lushai Hills.
7. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission since 1948 for entire Lushai Hills.\(^\text{81}\)

While the Presbyterian Church emerged as the dominant group for the entire Lushai Hills, the Baptist Mission asserted its dominion in the South Lushai Hills (Lunglei Sub-Division).\(^\text{82}\) But almost every denomination has spreaded across the entire District by establishing its offices and Churches here and there. Thus soon after the British left the Lushai Hills, there arose many more local congregations and missions within the District as a result of the swift rise in Christian population.

It must be noted that the South Lushai Hills had a larger number of Christians than the North at the initial decade. It was because the South Lushais were more receptive at the onset because of Darphawka’s dream.\(^\text{83}\) His significant dream was—‘In the night a voice spoke to me saying’, ‘A great light will come


\(^{82}\) Ibid., p. 74.

\(^{83}\) Hminga- *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.
from the west and shine upon the Lushai Land: follow the light, for the people who bring it will be the ruling race.” In the morning, Darphawka told about his dream to his sons and friends and advised them: “This light may not shine in my life time, but when it comes, follow it—follow it.”

When the Gospel reached the South Lushai Hills, people still remembered the dream and were prepared to accept it readily, one among them was Saiaithanga, author of a history of the Lushai Church.

In South Lushai Hills, there were 714 Christians at the beginning but increased to 1, 017 members within five years starting from 1903. It further increased to 3, 198 members at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. But as the population of North Lushai Hills was always much larger than the South, the number of Christians in the South was always relatively smaller except at the beginning of the first decade of the said century. The following tables highlight a comparative study of the Christian members between the North and South Lushai Hills from 1899 till 1947:

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84 *Ibid.*, p. 44.

85 Saiaithanga published his *Mizo Kohhran Chanchin* (History of Mizo Church) in 1969 (The regional Theological Literature Committee), Aizawl.

86 *Hminga- op. cit.*, p. 121.

The first table shows the Christian population of the Presbyterian Church in North Lushai Hills for about fifty years under the British control—

**Christian Statistics in North Lushai Hills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian Community</th>
<th>Communicant Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian Community</th>
<th>Communicant Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>22, 108</td>
<td>8, 006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>34, 893</td>
<td>15, 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>35, 577</td>
<td>15, 660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>38, 550</td>
<td>16, 817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>53, 153</td>
<td>20, 803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>59, 566</td>
<td>20, 850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>63, 872</td>
<td>22, 994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>64, 983</td>
<td>28, 882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>66, 399</td>
<td>29, 510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>66, 945</td>
<td>29, 864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>70, 175</td>
<td>31, 188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1, 723</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>72, 173</td>
<td>32, 077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>2, 455</td>
<td>851</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>74, 987</td>
<td>33, 327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>4, 776</td>
<td>1, 665</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>76, 657</td>
<td>34, 069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>5, 839</td>
<td>1, 931</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>78, 535</td>
<td>34, 904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>7, 168</td>
<td>2, 805</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>80, 584</td>
<td>35, 815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>8, 579</td>
<td>3, 087</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>83, 858</td>
<td>37, 270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>17, 838</td>
<td>6, 418</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>87, 617</td>
<td>38, 941</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statistics for the years 1907, 1917, 1918, 1922-24, 1926, 1928 and 1930-32 are not available in record and hence excluded in the above given table. The next table illustrates the Christian population in South Lushai Hills under the Baptist Mission for the period 1902-1947 except for the years 1942 and 1947 where records are not available.

**Christian Statistics in South Lushai Hills (Baptist Church 1902-1947):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian Community</th>
<th>Communicant Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian Community</th>
<th>Communicant Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>8,770</td>
<td>3,198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>8,965</td>
<td>3,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>9,720</td>
<td>3,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>9,935</td>
<td>3,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>10,031</td>
<td>3,478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>10,398</td>
<td>3,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>11,209</td>
<td>4,059</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Table A: Statistics of Presbyterian Church, 1899-1947**

Presbyterian Church of Mizoram, 1899-1983 and Bible Society Translation File at the Bible House, London (Number of Lushai Christians in 1927).

Baptist Missionary Society *Annual Reports 1902-1955.*
### Table B: Statistics of the Baptist Church, 1902-1947.

The statistics for **Mara Christians** in South Lushai Hills for a few years are also available as below—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian Community</th>
<th>Communicant Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian Community</th>
<th>Communicant Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1, 130</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1, 544</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>2, 647</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>2, 739</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>2, 772</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>2, 686</td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>3, 108</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>3, 630</td>
<td>969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>3, 670</td>
<td>1, 017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>4, 790</td>
<td>1, 218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>55, 83</td>
<td>1, 559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>7, 820</td>
<td>2, 059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>8, 105</td>
<td>2, 773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>4,866</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table C: Statistics of Mara (Lakher) Church 1910-1947.**

The statistics provided for the Presbyterian Church naturally meant the general number of Christian population in the North Lushai Hills as it was the only existing mission there during that period. Similarly, the statistics given for the Baptist Church and the Mara Church sufficed the Christian population in South Lushai Hills as there was no other mission existing in the region during the given period. A **comparative analysis** of the growth in Christian population between the North and South Lushai Hills since the beginning of the twentieth century depicted an ascending growth in both the areas with a faster growth rate and greater number in the South than in the North at the first decade. However, from the second decades onwards, the growth of Christian population was rather definitely fast in the North though it was no less favourable in the South too. Since then, the number of Christians became always larger in the North with a faster and larger growth rate. This must also be due to the larger number of population in North Lushai Hills.

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90 General Secretary, Mara Independent Evangelical Church in Hminga’s *op. cit.*, p. 351.
Spirituol Revivals as a factor of Growth:

The whole Lushai Hills witnessed a quick progress in the number of Christians not long after Christianity entered the Land. This was in fact, due to the series of revivals which visited the Hills. The first revival took place in 1906 and soon after the revival, many new members were added to the Church. It began at Chaltlang, presently a part of Aizawl town. It was the outcome or impact of the Welsh revival in 1904 and the Khasi revival in 1905. As Hminga has written, “The little flock of Christians in Mizoram heard about the revival in Wales and in the Khasi Hills and were praying fervently for such a visitation by the Holy Spirit.”

The Second revival occurred in 1913 at Champhai, near the borders of Chin Hills in Western Burma. D. E. Jones visited the village during the course of the revival. It started on 13th April, 1913 and then spread to Durtlang, six miles to the north of Aizawl and finally to Aizawl after a week. The 1913 revival was more vigorous than that of 1906. In 1913 revival year itself, the Presbytery sessions were held, followed by baptism of 62 members and appointment and ordination of

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92 See Hminga- *op. cit.*., p. 69.

93 Meirion Lloyd- *History of the Church, op. cit.*, p. 162.
the first Lushai pastor, Chhuahkhama.\textsuperscript{94} Another 400 members partook the ‘Lord’s Supper’.\textsuperscript{95} This revival lasted for two years.

The third wave of revival started on 26\textsuperscript{th} July, 1919 in three separate villages—Zotlang and Thingsai in the South and Nisapui in the North.\textsuperscript{96} The revival was extraordinarily potent and speedy. It affected all the Lushai speaking areas including Manipur and Tripura. Hymn singing and dancing was the common occurrence with the beating of drums. The spiritual success was that 4,000 were converted to Christianity from animism during the year.\textsuperscript{97} The Presbytery sessions were held in the autumn of the same year and the Chapel was full with many hundreds unable to get the inside. There was much report of church growth and one session was devoted to reports on such growth in various villages. New elders were appointed, three more Bible Women were taken and two promising young men were sent to Cherra Theological College for ministerial course.\textsuperscript{98} All these progress were due to the impact of the revival.

The fourth wave of revival began in 1933 and continued strongly till 1937. The spiritual success of this revival was astounding that by 1933, with the result of

\textsuperscript{94} Morris- op. cit., p. 83.
\textsuperscript{95} Meirion- op. cit., p. 163.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., p. 191.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., p. 192.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., p. 197.
the local revivals which had occurred since 1931, there were over 6,000 converts in the Lushai Hills.\textsuperscript{99} The figure of Mission members reached to 63,872 by 1935.\textsuperscript{100} The revivals tended to affect almost every aspect of the Lushai life.\textsuperscript{101} The table given below indicates the growth of members in Christian churches in the Lushai Hills during the fourth revivals with a slight comparison to the pre and post revival years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Previous</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>48,948</td>
<td>38,550</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>Pre-revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>51,271</td>
<td>48,948</td>
<td>2,323</td>
<td>Pre-revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>56,097</td>
<td>51,271</td>
<td>4,826</td>
<td>Revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>62,302</td>
<td>56,097</td>
<td>6,205</td>
<td>Revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>67,968</td>
<td>62,302</td>
<td>5,666</td>
<td>Revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>75,546</td>
<td>67,968</td>
<td>7,578</td>
<td>Revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>81,321</td>
<td>75,546</td>
<td>5,775</td>
<td>Revival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>83,207</td>
<td>81,321</td>
<td>1,886</td>
<td>Chaotic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>85,862</td>
<td>83,207</td>
<td>2,655</td>
<td>Chaotic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>86,288</td>
<td>85,862</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>Post-revival</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., p. 297.

\textsuperscript{100} Lalchhuanliana- \textit{Mizoram Presbyterian, op. cit.}, p. 68.

\textsuperscript{101} Detail see, C. Nunthara- \textit{Mizoram, Society and Polity}, Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1996, p. 102.
As seen from the above figure, there was a sharp decline in the number of converts during the years 1936 and 1937 as a result of the violent or alarming nature of the revivals from some revivalists. This revival period was generally known as the Chaotic Years. And the growth rate further pointed downward in 1938 that the number of new converts drastically went down to only 426 persons after the end of the revival in the same year. This was due to the fact that the revival turned hectic in the later stages after it took a disquieting turn in an eastern village named Kelkang. There was a strong conviction among the villagers that the end of the world was imminent and they stopped all work in the rice fields. As the then Superintendent, McCall was opposed to all these irresponsible revivalist sentiments, there was an alleged tendency to oppose the Government and kill the Superintendent if he interfere with the work of the Holy Spirit. However, the plotters were cleverly entrapped and surprised on one Sunday morning which led to their arrests at Kelkang village. This eventually led to the end of the revivals.

The fourth revival which began from Hlimen, near Aizawl reached its climax in 1934. It was in this year that the highest number of 7, 578 converts

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102 Mangkhosat- op. cit., p. 247.


104 Mangkhosat- op. cit., p. 246.
was ever recorded in the Church history of Lushai Hills. Another revival started from Biate, a large village in the South eastern part of North Lushai Hills in 1935. The villagers subsequently took the revival spirit to Aizawl area, from where it spread in all directions of the District. The revival could have been a continuous success unless took an extreme ecstatic turn at Kelkang in the later years. This was mainly responsible for the eventual decline of converts which certainly witness the lowest ebb of conversion ever in the Church history of the Land. It obviously almost halted progress and membership growth for the time being. The relative decline in growth rate was however, not perpetual and membership shot up once again from 1941 onwards. By 1951, almost all the Lushais had embraced Christianity and the Lushai District had the highest percentage of Christian population in North East India with over 90% of the total population embracing Christianity.

IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON LUSHAI CULTURE AND SOCIETY:

One of the fundamental factors which led to the gradual abolition of chieftainship in 1954 was the rise and spread of Christianity. There was always an atmosphere of clash between the chiefs and native converts throughout the


Colonial period not long after the inception of the new religion. Sometimes, the administration had to intervene to find a peaceful solution. When the Colonial masters left the Country, the chiefs were soon disposed of their position through legislative procedure. It actually was the outcome of antagonistic relation between the chiefs and the Mission leaders on the one hand, and between the chiefs and the newly emerging educated middle class group on the other, who began to assert position and status in the newly stratified socio-political establishment. This new middle class group was also the by-product of Christianity.

The abolition of Zawlbuk from the social life of the Lushais after 1936 was also the resultant impact of Christianity. The missionaries established schools—educational and Sunday schools after 1894 which indirectly replaced the zawlbuk system and as such, the existence of Zawlbuk gradually lost its credibility. Christianity taught morality and humanity above others in the service of Christ and as a result, head hunting and aggression in all forms were rejected to, which led to

108 Dr. Sangkima- Mizon Society and Social Change (1890-1947), Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1992, p. 163. The clashs were on issues like Zawlbuk and bawi abolitions, apart from religious antagonism. McCall- Lushai Chrysalis.


the demoralization of the Zawlbuk practice. The native Mission employees were the prime movers for abandoning the Zawlbuk system.\footnote{McCall- \textit{Lushai Chrysalis}, op. cit., p. 211.}

The \textbf{eradication of superstitious beliefs} in the daily life of the Lushais too, was the relative impact of Christianity. Superstitions had long been practice by the Lushais and inherent in the day to day lives of the people. But as Christianity taught that God the Creator of all things ‘protect us from all harms’ and to rest one’s faith in Him meant escape from every danger, the Christians began to trust in His Providence. The message of Christianity also brought enlightenment, modernity and audacity to the new believers, enough to thwart the deep rooted belief in superstitions. The introduction of modern education by the western missionaries acted as an additional factor for the elimination of such social belief.\footnote{H. Thangtungnung- \textit{Social and Cultural Transformation in the Lushai Hills under the British Rule}, a paper presented at the 33\textsuperscript{rd} Annual Conference of NEIHA, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh, 1-3 Nov. 2012, p. 2.}

Another remarkable impact of Christianity was \textbf{obliteration of sacrifices} and rituals. Christianity preached that sacrifice and rituals in all forms could not please God, who is the Creator of all animate and inanimate objects and therefore, it was devotion and personal sacrifice to Him that relief us from sinfulness. The spirits were only one of His creation and they cannot save human beings from eternal death, as salvation is only possible through the belief and service of the
Saviour Messiah. This convinced the minds of the receptive Lushais which eventually led to the abandonment of sacrifices and rituals.

Christianity also had a great influence on the abolition of bawi practice. Though European officers justified the bawi system, the missionaries found the institution against Christian ideals and principles. Even then, the missionaries were also reluctant to oppose it at the beginning and did not openly condemn the practice. It was Dr. Frazer who took the initiative for the dissolution of the age old institution with a few natives. He earned the wrath of the local government as few supported his cause.\textsuperscript{113} The missionary doctor was obstinate in his stand that this servitude act was not to compromise with modern democratic system as well as Christian religion, under which all men are born free and equal in every respect. The result definitely turned in his favour which led to the abolition of the servitude practice called ‘bawi’ in the Lushai Hills by 1936.

Another area of social change due to the impact of Christianity was the customary practice of drinking local rice beer, Zupi. The traditional use of Zupi was slowly abandoned after the Land was converted into Christian faith and instead, the use of tea became prevalent. Though the use of Zupi had a great significant in the daily affairs of the tribes, the Gospel prevented them to continue the practice and forbid in their daily personal lives after conversion.\textsuperscript{114} Therefore, beer vases were broken and threw away or abandoned into disuse in many villages.

\textsuperscript{113} McCall- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 128.

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 209.
Tea replaced Zuπi drinking in every customary rites and gatherings. Even in festivals, the common use of Zu became insignificant.

A notable impact of Christian religion in the social and cultural lives of the Lushais was the gradual discontinuance of traditional festivals like Pawl Kut, Mim Kut and Chapchar Kut among others.\textsuperscript{115} Though the celebration of some of these festivals like Mim Kut and Chapchar revived recently, it was done in a modified form and in conformity with the Christian doctrines. The cultural significance has lost its importance in the celebrations of these festivals in modern time. Thus, many festivities lost their existence and became oblivion by receding into the background after Christianity became a dominant faith.

As Christianity spread the message of love, peace and harmony, the bond of love among the Lushais greatly increased after the conversion. There was a bond of unity and affection in the society which was somewhat absent in the pre-Christian days.\textsuperscript{116} The affection and brotherly love among Christian members were in a sense greater and manifested in helping the needy, aged, widow and orphans within the Church. Such helps were also extended to non Christian members within the villages.


One of the most significant impacts of Christianity was deliverance of the savaged tribes from ignorance and backwardness. The Lushais were uplifted from their humble lives to average living and from darkness to lightness. They began to have a decent living and optimistic attitude. Christianity brought about modernity and broad outlook among the people. Their approach to life apparently became more rational with modern outlook and thought.

The living standard of the common people was greatly improved after Christian religion penetrated into the thick Hills. Social lives were transformed through humanitarian works provided by the missionaries and also the Church. Personal health, hygiene and public sanitation within the household and outside localities were highly improved due to the importance given by the missionaries in this field at the very onset. The coming of Fraser, a missionary doctor was a blessing to the Hills, as he performed his best to serve the people by giving medical treatments and social services. The activities that he took for the welfare of the public during his short stay were incomparable. Villages were sanitized, dispensaries were opened and medical treatments were given to both town and village folks.

There was also a visible change and improvement in the way of dresses and designs. Modern mode of living began to be practiced and adopted by many Lushais. There was a marked advancement in room decorations and house designs which became more and more Westernized. European manufactured goods found its place and Western cloths made their appearance among many locals especially among the educated middle class. The town dwellers started taking the Western
lifestyles, fashion and behavior.\textsuperscript{117} Material goods came to be highly cherished and the whole social trend drifted into materialism. The Lushais were no more lacking behind the other folks in India towns and cities soon after the British left them. The emerging trend in the urban society soon penetrated the rural villages and almost each and everyone became conscious of their dress, hair, household material and decoration, living standard and income as well as health and hygiene.

The form of \textbf{music and dance} began to change from traditional to Western. The early missionaries discouraged the native Christians to compose songs and hymns in traditional tunes as they considered it to be somewhat connected with the native ritual lore.\textsuperscript{118} Therefore, initially instead of composing new hymns, existing Western hymns were translated into Duhlian-Lushai dialect and used in worship and devotional services. Otherwise, the Lushais were good composers of songs and music as they were naturally great lovers of music and art. They were creative and talented people as well. Their skills would be proved by the fact that many hymns were later on composed by the native Christians themselves, many of which became very popular within and outside the Lushai Hills even till today.

Christianity brought radical adaption in the traditional practices of \textbf{death and burial}. Every village began to have its common burial ground at the village outskirts and the rich and poor alike were buried there instead of the traditional practice of burying the dead nearby the house. A corpse was no more kept for days

\textsuperscript{117} Nunthara- \textit{op.cit.}, p. 110.

\textsuperscript{118} J. V. Hlun, an interview on 4\textsuperscript{th} September, 2012, Aizawl.
and months but buried within the same day or two. The practice of burying the
dead with his prized possessions was also gradually abandoned. The Christian
hymns replaced the songs sung in times of burial. As such, there was great
improvement in the tribal burial custom.

Even the **tribal marriage system** was vividly transformed. Arranged
marriage became less common with the increasing adoption of love marriage.\(^{119}\) Arranged marriage might not be abandoned, but the consent of both the boy and
girl concerned began to be more sought.\(^{120}\) Instead of usual night ceremony at the
house of the marriage party, marriage came to be performed in the Church,
solemnized by a pastor. The usual bride price became fewer and negotiable. The
unusual practice of Eves dropping of the bride by young men to the groom’s house
diminished and slowly abandoned. The throwing of water, mud or rotten eggs at
the bride’s party while on the approaching road to the groom’s house was also
derelict.\(^{121}\) Thus, the Christian culture has transformed or modified the tribal way
of life in every front.

Christian culture had many sweeping influences on the Lushai society as
discussed above. It has come to the point of consideration that the **modern culture**
of the Lushai people as a whole is none other than the Western culture brought
about by Christianity through its missionaries. As people came to adopt the


\(^{120}\) In olden days, marriage was usually performed with the sanction of Parents.

\(^{121}\) Hminga- *op. cit.*, p. 293.
Christian way of life, they began to disown their aged old customs and practices.\textsuperscript{122} Laltluangliana Khiangte\textsuperscript{123} has rightly written, “Their customs and ceremonies have been greatly changed and are controlled by their newfound religion. Hence, a new culture has been formed and is rightly named the Mizo Christian culture.” But its negative impact of Christianity has not been accepted by some Lushais including Laltluangliana Khiangte himself as he again concludes, “Christianity has in every way sublimated whatever was good in the Mizo traditional way of life to a higher ideal while the ancient superstitions, fear of spirits and ghosts have vanished with the result that the hills and the dales all over Mizoram is now an abode of perfect peace.”\textsuperscript{124}

Insipite of differing notions, the importance of Christianity in the Lushai society can hardly be ignored. It has become the strongest integrating force in the socio-religious set up. As the religion almost totally influence the lives and thoughts of many Lushais, it opened up new vistas of closer relationship among members within the society. The existing Lushai society could have been assimilated by outside forces or broken apart in itself if not Christianity. It was

\textsuperscript{122} Nunthara-\textit{ op. cit.}, p. 101.

\textsuperscript{123} Dr. Laltluangliana Khiangte-\textit{ Mizos of North east India}, L.T.L Publications, Aizawl, 2008, p. 54.

\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Ibid.}
apparent that the adoption of this faith did not adversely affect the Lushais by modern secular forces.\footnote{Ibid., p. 58.}

**Status of Women before and after Christianity:**

Until the advent of Christianity, the Lushai women were secluded into the four corners of the wall and did not take part in any social and religious affairs except for community participation like festivals. They did not possess any special skill or training. They were considered to be an inferior creation.\footnote{H. L. Mawlsawma- *Sociology of the Mizos*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 2002, p. 165.} Men looked upon them as an object to satisfy or to serve their hunger and needs. Women did all household chores in addition to the jhum works.\footnote{Lewin- *The Hill Tracts, op. cit.*, p. 157.} Moreover, they shouldered special responsibility in taking care of the children. They also had to fetch water and carry fire wood. They did not go back home empty handed from the jhum land, but carry loads of wood for fire. By night, they had to cook the pig’s feed or spun the cotton for cloth and did not go to bed until their men folk retired.\footnote{C. G. Verghese & R. L. Thanzawna- *A History of the Mizos*, Vol I, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997, p. 332.} They used to wake up very early in the morning and pounded paddy after fetching enough water for the family. All these heavy tasks were usually done without a single help from their men.
Customs did not permit women to inherit any property.\textsuperscript{129} The Lushai society was a \textit{patriarchal society}—father was the head of the family. The women had no say in the family affairs. Though the \textit{patrilineal system} is still in practice, the involvement of women in family and religious matters have become common today. By customs, the youngest son inherited the property and position of the father, but the British rule made it through a \textit{standing order} that the chieftainship right of a chief must be inherited by the eldest son while the other sons would share the other properties.\textsuperscript{130} Women gradually began to have a say in this and could eventually claim a share in the property of her father. This was also in fact, due to the indirect impact of Christianity as the new religion taught to love one’s neighbour and even one’s enemies. The new faith also instructed its member to share together their possessions, to help the poor and serve the needy.\textsuperscript{131}

After the advent of Christianity, the Lushai men were aroused from their slumber. Both men and women were enlightened from their rigid attitude and thought by the light of the Gospel. \textit{Closer relations} were started building between husband and wife through the \textit{respect and honour} that women showered upon their husbands more than before and the \textit{love and affection} that the men poured

\textsuperscript{129} Lal Dena- \textit{In Search of Identity}, op. cit., p. 36.

\textsuperscript{130} ‘Succession and Appointment of Chiefs’ in A.G. McCall- \textit{The Lushai Hills District Cover}, Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, Reprint, 2008, pp. 33-34.

\textsuperscript{131} New Testaments, the \textit{Bible}. Refer Traina, A. B., rev.- \textit{Holy Name Bible}, The Scripture Research Association, Irvington, New Jersey, 1963.
down upon their women like the one unknown before. Women started to participate in Church deliberations and choir groups. They shared equal opportunity with men to go outside on mission activities and thereby became sophisticated as a person. Their workloads began to be shared by their male counterparts. The series of revivals and revival movement emboldened their minds to pursue equal status with the men. The main concept of a revival is to be spiritually filled and if a woman claimed to be spiritually guided, none could deny her liberty to express and free movement. Women more liberally preached in Church and public places in subsequent periods though the Bible itself prohibits preaching by women in the pulpit.

Christianity as well as education became a liberating force in the position of women. Modern education not only transformed their inferior status, but also acted as a stimulative factor in the liberation of women. The school going girls were subsequently looked upon as equal to the boys though at first, girls attending the school were looked at differently. Literacy emancipated them from the clutches of inferiority, adversity and ignorance. Gender equality thus soon became an issue to reckon with in the society.

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132 This cordial relationship between couples is in accordance with the Bible teaching as in Colossians 3: 18-19; I Peter 3: 1-7 and Ephesians 5: 22-33. Refer The Sacred Scripture, Assemblies of Yahweh, Bethel, Pennsylvania, USA, Reprint, 2001.

Women status underwent considerable changes with the presence of a number of women missionaries in the Hills. Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Sandy, Miss A.C. Lewa, Mrs. Mendus and Miss. K. Hughes were among the early missionaries working in the North Lushai area. The presence of many foreign women at different point of times among the Lushais facilitated the growth of women status in the long run. Foreign women missionaries and co-workers who came under the Welsh Mission in the North Lushai Hills were—

1. Mrs. Jones 1904-1927
2. Mrs. R. Evans 1907-1908
3. Mrs. P. Fraser 1908-1912
4. Mrs. Sandy 1915-1926
5. Miss A.C. Lewa 1922-1925
6. Miss K. Hughes 1924-1962
7. Mrs. G. Jones 1927-1928
8. Miss C.M Davis 1927-1930
9. Mrs. G. Williams 1928-1936
10. Miss W. Jones 1928-1934
11. Mrs. Williams 1929-1931
12. Mrs. Evans 1929-1933

14. Miss. E. Williams 1933-1938
15. Mrs. Mendus 1935-1944
17. Mrs. S. Davies 1937-1951
18. Miss A. Harries 1939
19. Mrs. Jones 1945-1953
20. Mrs. Lloyd 1946-1964
22. Miss Parker 1945
23. Miss Roberts 1947-1952
24. Mrs. O.W. Owen 1952-1957
25. Miss Bound 1954-1968

Women missionaries were considerably large in numbers. Though some of them came merely as aide to their husband, they contributed a lot to the Lushai society especially in women emancipation. To mention a few, Miss K. Hughes and Mrs. Sandy were good singers and song composers. Both were a master in tonic solfa and possessed music experiences. Halleluiah Chorus in Lushai was the work of Sandy.\textsuperscript{135} Katie Hughes was a trained certified teacher with eight years

\textsuperscript{135} Lalhuaka & Upa T. Chawma- Zoram Sikul Zirna Chanchin, Mission leh Kohran Hnathawh (History of School Education in Mizoram and the Missions), Lalhuaka published, Zarkawt, 2000, p. 112.
experience in England. Mrs. Jones taught the Lushai women knitting, sewing, medication, health care and midwifery. She opened a girls’ school at Aizawl in 1904 for this purpose. Katherine Ellen Williams was instrumental in forming and leading the Presbyterian Bible Women since 1915. Mrs Jones (Pi Hluii), Miss Kitty Lewis (Pi Zomawii), Katie Hughes (Pi Zaii) and Miss G.R. Roberts (Pi Teii) effectively supervised the only girls’ school. The Lushai had such advantages among them. The activities of foreign missionaries in various social and religious fronts contributed much to the liberation of women. It was continued by the Church where women began to play a significant role.

CHRISTIANITY AS A HARBINGER OF EDUCATION:

Christianity promoted education which was hitherto unknown among the Lushais. The missionaries encouraged over-all education in order to advance their religion. This resulted in the increase in literacy rate. Literacy in turn led to a growing appetite for magazines and books. A literate man became conscious to

136 Lalrimawia- ‘British Policy to the Education of the Lushais upto 1947’ in 


138 Ibid., p. 140.

139 Lalchhuanliana- Mizoram Presbyterian, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

140 Mizoram Kum 100, SLPB, 1996, Aizawl, pp. 115-16.

141 Mawsawma- op. cit.
new ideas and propaganda.\textsuperscript{142} He started reading portions of the Bible which were translated into Lushais and began to accept the new found faith. Literacy grew faster in the Lushais Hills than the rest of India.\textsuperscript{143} The following table shows the growth of literacy as well as Christian population in the Census between 1901 and 1941—\textsuperscript{144}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Christians</th>
<th>Percentage of Christians</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Non Christians</th>
<th>No. of Literates</th>
<th>Percent of literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>82,432</td>
<td>82,389</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>2461</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>91,204</td>
<td>88,743</td>
<td>3,635</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>27,720</td>
<td>28.11</td>
<td>98,406</td>
<td>70,686</td>
<td>6,183</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>59,123</td>
<td>47.52</td>
<td>124,404</td>
<td>65,281</td>
<td>13,320</td>
<td>10.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>98,108</td>
<td>64.21</td>
<td>152,786</td>
<td>54,678</td>
<td>29,765</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the given table, if a comparison is made between the numbers of literate Christians and non-Christians, literacy among the Christians was always

\textsuperscript{142} Lloyd- \textit{History of the Church, op. cit.}, p. 296.

\textsuperscript{143} Census of Assam 1951, ‘Introduction’ to Lushai Hills District, Assam Govt. Press, 1952, p. iii.

\textsuperscript{144} Lalhuuka- \textit{Zoram Zirna Lam Chhinchhiahna} (The records of Zoram Education), Tribal Research Institute, Aizawl, 1981, p. 86.
much higher than the non-Christians. This shows that the respond to modern education was much higher among the Christians than the non Christian population. This respond had a far reaching impact in transforming their personal and social lives.

The following table also depicts the literacy rate of the Lushais till 1951 Census as Given by Daman Singh\textsuperscript{145} with a slight variation from the above--

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Census</th>
<th>Percentage of Literacy to total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>10.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>19.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>31.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 1961, Assam.

The literacy rate shot up since 1931 Census and by 1991, the Lushai Hills, now known as Mizoram recorded 82.27 % literates, which was much more than the

\textsuperscript{145} Daman Singh- The Last Frontier People and Forests in Mizoram, Table 2, TATA Energy Research Institute, New Delhi, 1996, p. 234.
national average. It has become the second highest literate state in India after Kerela. Educated Lushais were not only engaged as evangelists, pastors, mission workers, clerks and government servants within the State, but many of them went outside as well. The *Census report of 1941* documented 21 persons who were away from home in the North Lushai Hills. This highlights that the Lushais were made aware and enlightened by education the Christian missions brought in the Hills. They were for the first time released from their secluded lives and began to have outside contact. As Meirion Lloyd has written, “The access to books and contact with minds of people in other lands and ages, brought about by literacy, had a magical and transforming influence on the nation, which people who have enjoyed centuries of literacy find hard to comprehend.”

It does not mean that all those Lushais who went outside were educated ones or they were away for the purpose of education. Some were in search of works so as to earn their means of subsistence. The majority of them were of course, sepoys in various armed forces under the British Government. There were some who went outside as students. In a letter from the Superintendent, Census Operations, Assam to the Census Commissioner for India, it was stated thus—

“...In four out of six villages examined in Aijal sub-div (none was found away in Lungleh) 21 persons were found to have been away from their homes, of...

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146 Census of India, 1991, Assam State Archives, Guwahati.

147 Superintendent, Census Operations, Assam, Mizoram State Archives, Aizawl.

these 9 were in Burma Rifles, 3 in Assam Police, 1 in Tripura State Police, 1 as a Sepoy in Calcutta. 1 as servant in Burma, 1 probably as cultivator in Digboi, 4 as students in Shillong and Jorhat, the occupation and whereabouts of only one were unknown.”

Some Lushai youths also went away for mission training or on tours through mission support. For instance, three men and a woman went away with Fraser in 1915 to the United Kingdom. The Lushai Choir group toured many Indian cities and outside like Europe. Mission workers occasionally visited the Khasi Hills and some other places for attending mission meetings and assemblies. It had been since the baptism of the first Lushai converts, Khuma and Khara that such outside journey had begun, firstly on October, 1899 to attend the Assembly meeting at Mairang in the Khasi Hills.

A number of schools were opened up in various parts of the District and they thrived ably. These schools were at first left to the care of the missions and there were only upto primary level at the beginning. But by 1915, there was one middle school, two Upper Primary School, 49 Lower Primary School and one

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149 Extract from letter No. 7105 dt. 10th July, 1941. From Superintendent, Census Operations, Assam to the Census Commissioner for India.

150 Lloyd- *op. cit.*, p. 169.

151 Ibid., p. 56.

Girl’s Lower Primary School.\textsuperscript{153} English was the \textbf{medium of instruction} from the very start. The table given below shows students population and number of daily schools in North Lushai Hills under the Welsh Presbyterian Church—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of School</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Total No. of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1931</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2823</td>
<td>615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>5935</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>5392</td>
<td>1627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>5975</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>5621</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>5884</td>
<td>2729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>6232</td>
<td>2882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>8078</td>
<td>4475</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Source: Mizoram Hmarchan Assembly Bu Book 1-21.}\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{153} Hminga- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 112.

\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Mizoram Hmarchan Assembly Bu Book 1-21}, Pub. by the North Lushai Assembly (Lushai Hmarchan Christian Chhiarna, 1932-1952).
The importance of the Missions in playing a pivotal role in the field of education did not diminish even after Independence period as is evident from the following table—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Schools</th>
<th>Government Edu. Dept.</th>
<th>Aided C</th>
<th>Missions</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Ed. Trg Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Basic Schools</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers Training</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source: Mizo District Census 1946-1955.**

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155 Mizoram State Archives, Aizawl.
Apart from the Church, privates were also beginning to play a significant role as many private schools started to exist at the Independence period. Nevertheless, technical schools were still very much lacking as only one such school existed so far under the Mission. There was no separate school for girls. Higher secondary was totally absent for higher studies and medical and nursing schools were still out of sight.\textsuperscript{156} Nonetheless, the progress in basic education was no less swift and remarkable.

The foreign missionaries immediately started a Sunday school for Bible study when they first entered the Hills. The strength of students in Sunday Schools grew considerably. Here is the report of the BMS Mission in the South Lushai Hills given by J. Herbert Lorrain and F.W. Savidge for 1913 after ten years of its existence—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Schools</th>
<th>Scholars on Roll. No.</th>
<th>Average Attendance</th>
<th>Increase of Schools during years</th>
<th>Increase of Scholars during year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{156} The British administration and also the missionaries did not promote higher education and limit to upper primary level, that is also only after 1903. John V. Hluna- ‘Role of Missionaries in Mizoram Education’ in \textit{NEIHA Proceedings}, 1986, (pub.) Shillong.
It was evident that the number of students attending the Church Sunday Schools for the purpose of spiritual education grew considerably after 1910. It definitely proved the growth of members within the Mission and in ten years of its formation, a number of Sunday schools were firmly established with a considerable number of pupils attending them. These religious based schools indirectly disseminated literacy and knowledge not only about doctrines but also general awareness around them. The pupils were taught how to read and write their own language in the Sunday schools and the Western missionaries were the teachers during the initial stages. It became an informal platform for educating the masses.

**Growth of Literature under Christian Missions:**

The Lushais were illiterate, ignorant and savage when the Western Missionaries first entered the Hills towards the end of the nineteenth century. They

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were in every sense backward and unpolished. They did not have a script of their own and no writing system was in existence. Everything they conveyed to each other was through oral messages which were passed down from father to son. But miraculous to state, the Lushai society underwent a speedy progress in the area of literature soon after J. H. Lorrain and S. W. Savidge introduced an alphabet and translated many Christian works into Lushai based on this alphabet. Lorrain wrote a Lushai dictionary of thousands vocabulary soon after his arrival which was later on published.\(^{158}\) The beginning was thus made with the initiative of the two missionaries.

Lorrain and Savidge whole heartedly taught the new script to a number of Lushais and induced them to read and write during their short period of stay. They translated into natives the Gospels of Luke, John and Acts of the Apostles from the New Testament of the Bible. Their valuable services were fruitful as was evident from the response made by the natives in the field of education later on. Much had been done within a very short time which contributed to the rapid growth of Christianity in the long run. Thus it was a give and take policy thriving like a two way system in the benefits of both the players. The British promoted education while offering their religion which was accepted altogether by the natives but by giving away many of their aged old cultural traditions.\(^{159}\)

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The toil of Lorrain and Savidge did not end along with them but was continued by the Welsh missionaries who came right after their departure. D. E. Jones translated Matthew, I and II Corinthians which were published in 1906 and 1907 respectively. He also translated the Book of Revelation in 1911. In such works, Jones was helped by local Christians like Chhunruma and Vanchhunga. A native Christian, Pu Thanga, translated the Book of Proverbs published in 1914 and Daniel in 1915. Rowlands rendered the Gospel Mark and some of the epistles. Rowlands might have translated some books from the Old Testament but were not published may be owing to his early departure from the Lushai Hills.

In the South, Lorrain undertook his scriptural translation soon after he arrived there in March 1903 under the Baptist Mission Society. There were 125 Christians already when Lorrian and Savide arrived in Lunglei. A number of hymns were translated in Lushais. The North and South cooperated strongly and always worked together inspite of the distance it took to travel between Lunglei and Aizawl. The whole New Testament was published in 1916. The books of Psalms, Genesis and Isaiah were also made available though the complete Bible came out only in 1959. ‘The Story of the Bible’ translated in 1908 by Rev. Challiana, a native Christian and the Pilgrim’s Progress translated in 1916 by Rev. Chuaautera, another native were valuable supplements in Christian literature. The Kristian Tlangau (Christian Herald) became the first Christian monthly which was published without a break since 1911.

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160 Lloyd- *op. cit.*, p. 131.

161 Hminga- *op. cit.*, p. 278.
Printing Press played a considerable role in the promotion of Christian literature when there was hardly any Non-Christian literature in Lushai except the school textbooks and news bulletin of the Government. For the first time, the Lock Printing Press was installed at Aizawl in 1915 and another at Serkawn in 1933. A small press had been set up in 1921 at the South of Serkawn. The three presses actively became instruments in the production of Christian literature and School and Sunday school text books.\footnote{162}{\textit{Ibid.}, p 278.}

Fraser was not only a doctor and social activist, but also personally contributed a lot in promoting the native literature. He joined D. E. Jones to the Lushai Hills in 1908 and remained till 1914. He brought out a small printing press and installed at Aizawl for producing Christian literature. It was the first of its kind in the Lushai Hills. The timely arrival of Fraser’s small press to Aizawl enabled the publication of the ‘\textit{Krista Tlangau}’, renamed as Kristian Thangau later on. As it was his private property, Fraser took it away with him in 1912 when he left for Lakhipur. The loss was a severe blow to the hope of the Christians as well as to Jones, the Welsh Presbytery missionary at Aizawl. However, to the joy of the local Church, Col. G. E. Loch, the local Commandant, offered Jones to provide for a new machine out of his private pocket as a gift on hearing the sad news.\footnote{163}{Lloyd- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 138.} He also gave the assurance that it would never be removed from Aizawl. This new modern press was named after the donor, ‘Loch Printing Press’. Loch, a old bachelor offered his good service for the growth of literature as well as modern education by
proving not only a costly light machine, but also generously held out small gifts like bars of soap and alike for merit students as an encouragement to the scholars.\textsuperscript{164}

Edwin Rowlands, a missionary who first joined Mr. Jones in 1898 and left in 1907 left a permanent impression during his short stay among the Lushais. His great zeal and devotion with a gift of music inculcated in him induced him to translate and compose over a hundred Christian hymns.\textsuperscript{165} Most of them are still there in the ‘Mizo Hymn Book’ and sung frequently till today. He was well remembered for his marvelous voice which stimulated the spirits of every one of his listeners. He thus remained a worthy promoter of Christian religion as well as its literature. With such contributions, several editions of \textit{Hla Bu} (Hymn Book) in Lushai succeeded since 1897 and in 1903, a thousand copies containing 83 hymns was printed at the Allahabad Mission Press published by the North India Christian Tract and Bible Society. Within less than two years, it was reprinted with an addition of 42 new hymns. By 1927, the local Hymn book contained around 500 hymns and sacred songs.\textsuperscript{166}

Christianity contributed much to the growth of education and literature. It was the Mission which first brought out a press, literature and translation works as well as a school. There was no Non-Christian literature in local dialect for a long

\textsuperscript{164} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{165} Hminga- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 67.

\textsuperscript{166} Lloyd- \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 132-33.
time. Though the Government opened its own school in the same decade Lorrain and Savidge established, but without any earnestness and with a very meager budget. The main initiative was left to the Missions for a long time.\textsuperscript{167} 

Almost every Lushai accepted that Christianity was the main factor of social and economic changes. There is a general opinion that Christianity educated them and released from the clutches of ignorance, poverty and backwardness. It transformed their social and economic lives into an advanced and civilized one. When the general opinions of intellectuals and laymen alike were sought in this regard, the responds were overwhelmingly confirmatory, more so from the mission workers.\textsuperscript{168} Such conceptualization has always remained relevant.\textsuperscript{169} 

\textsuperscript{167} McCall- \textit{op. cit.}, p. 199; Lalrimawia- “Missionaries and Education in Mizoram” in J. B. Battacharjee, edit. & pub., Fifth Proceedings of NEIHA, Aizawl, 1984, pub. in Shillong, p. 135.

\textsuperscript{168} Not only individuals whose personal opinions were sought but also almost every author and preacher has held out about this conception. As such, detail list of informants were not necessarily reflected here.

\textsuperscript{169} Dr. Hminga has analysed and examined this view during his extensive research and thereby incorporated his findings in his doctoral thesis published as, \textit{The Life and Witness, op. cit.}, p. 287.
IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON TRIBAL ECONOMY:

Tribal economy was a backward economy. The Lushais were still under the grasp of poverty till almost Independence. Their ignorance and illiteracy impoverished them. But the impact of Christianity transformed and improved their lives. Christianity brought literacy and advancement. It ameliorated their low living standard and enhanced their economy to a much better one. As Christianity was already an advanced religion, the coming of such religion was a boon and a blessing in disguise to the once secluded and primitive Lushais. How far this assumption holds truth could be analyzed with further study on the economic impact of Christianity.  

The Lushai economy was purely agrarian until the advent of Christianity. But contact with the British revolutionized their lives and the growth of mass education initiated by the Christian missionaries changed their economy. The old agrarian economic structure was transformed into a new economy based on agriculture, industry, profession and trade and in the process, the egalitarian nature was slowly losing its ground. Consequently, economic diversification took place and the working forces were gradually driven from agricultural sector to


the other economic sectors. Some of them became Government servants, paid mission workers, teachers and traders. Some others worked outside and a number of them served as sepoys.

More and more parents began to send their children to school with the prospect of Government job in various capacities. Once an educated person obtained a service, he began to avoid manual works and satisfied himself with his monthly income. This new economic condition drifted the tribes away from hard work and sturdiness. Nevertheless, it raised the living standard of the Lushais and enabled them to live better than before with lesser effort. It also released them from the clutches of jhum labour all the year round. This economic change particularly raised the living standard of the town dwellers. As a result, Christianity is always considered as more a blessing than a curse for the Lushais otherwise, they would still remain in constant backwardness. T. S. Gangte has accurately written, “If any religion can play a vital role in changing the life-style of a society, it is the Christianity and its mission that have effected this miraculous change…”

One of the most significant impacts of Christianity in the Lushai Hills was the end of nomadic life. Until then, the Lushais were migratory in nature changing their habitat frequently. But with the advent of Christianity, schools, dispensaries

\[172\] Malsawma- *op. cit.*, p. 175.


and Church were established and people came to flock together in this thereby area by building large settlement.\textsuperscript{175} Aizawl in the North and Lunglei in the South were a proof to this fact. They became mission centres in the Lushai District for the Presbyterian and the Baptist respectively. Human settlement grew rapidly in these centres and the two towns gradually became the biggest ones in the whole Lushai District. Thus Christianity and growth of the Church was mainly responsible for such a secure and permanent living.\textsuperscript{176}

Urbanisation in the Lushai Hills started only after Christian religion penetrated the land. Churches were established almost in every village and in due course, the people were reluctant to abandon such beautiful places of worship.\textsuperscript{177} They slowly set aside their primitive life and the forest dwellers were gradually turned into a modern man. The growth of modern towns like Aizawl is a sufficient proof to this which was thinly occupied and still insignificant in 1890. These economic and social changes were the outcome of Christianity brought about by the missionaries.

\textsuperscript{175} Introduction to Lushai Hills, \textit{Census of Assam, 1951}, District Census Handbook, p. iii.

\textsuperscript{176} Chitta Ranjan Nag- \textit{Mizo Polity and Political Modernisation}, New Delhi, 1998, pp. 95-96.

\textsuperscript{177} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 96.