

A LITTLE BIRD WHISPERS.....

THOMIANS USE NEW TACTICS TO DEMORALISE ROYAL

All,

This is how we STC have now mounted our campaign against our old rivals. We plant the sons of ex-Thomians amidst your midst without you knowing we did. We had Prof.Lakshman Watawala's son with you(our former Head Prefect etc.,Judge SPK Ekaratne's son and now Rambukwella's son). This is a long term stragey of ours to infiltrate and make you guys 'rotten' See the results of our work. It's paying 'dividends' for us now.

From *The Sunday Leader* - June 15th, 2008.

"Ministerial brat takes war of terror to Royal College"

Royal College: Standing firm with its tradition of discipline (inset) Keheliya: My son did not do it and Principal Gunasekera: unshaken amidst the threats

By Ranjith Jayasundera

Controversy has engulfed Colombo's proud and esteemed Royal College with the school's old boy's union and Principal locked in a bitter battle with Government Spokesman, Minister Keheliya Rambukwella, over the conduct of his son within the school.

The minster's attempts to meddle in school affairs and bring down the might of the government on a disciplinary inquiry sheds ample light on this government's attitude towards the 'impunity' enjoyed by its own kith and kin and draws attention once again to therole of ministerial brats.

Robbed

Rambukwella's son, Ramith, along with four other students of Royal College, have been found by the school to have forcibly broken into the room of Senior Games Master, Sudath Liyanagunawardena, and having robbed his room of files relating to the assault of another student by these very baby goons.

In true Medamulane gangster style, the ministerial brat and his trusty sidekicks had forced open the door lock with a crowbar before ransacking the room and making off with the incriminating files.

When the school authorities discovered the break in, they had alerted the Cinnamon Gardens Police, who immediately visited Royal College and took fingerprints from the crime scene.

In the process of the school's internal inquiry, Principal Upali Gunasekera managed to identify the culprits, and four out of the five (all but Ramith Rambukwella) confessed to having committed the crime.

With virtue to their confessions, Principal Gunasekera debarred the four students from all co-curricular activities including sports for a period of one month. However, given the amount of evidence against Ramith Rambukwella and the fact that he refused to confess, the principal ruled that he would receive the same punishment over a longer period of three months. (see box for part of confession of one student)

Minister Rambukwella's wife was summoned during the course of the inquiry and was shown by the principal, the written confessions of the other four boys involved, all of whom claimed that her son was the mastermind behind the break in.

The minister's wife had little to say, and Keheliya proved that the insubordination and cockiness genes were the result of his chromosomes with his performance the next day.

Government Spokesman and Cabinet Minister Keheliya Rambukwella arrived at Royal College with his wife and several beefy, armed security personnel in tow, and sat before the principal of Royal College, denying any involvement of his son in the break in and robbery.

Inside

The minister according to inside sources threatened to drag Principal Gunasekera before the Human Rights Commission and to file a Fundamental Rights case against him in the Supreme Court, if he did not immediately withdraw the punishment meted out to his brat.

It appears that Minister Rambukwella feels that anyone connected to the government has a 'fundamental right' to do as they please and abuse any law and rule they wish, with things like discipline and culpability being reserved exclusively for commoners-the 'other kind'.It appeared the government's war on terror had been taken to the hallowed portals of Royal College.

Meet

After his bombastic performance in front of the principal, Rambukwella had sent a Royal old boy, Kalinga Indratissa to meet the school's principal and go through the evidence against Ramith Rambukwella, and ultimately Indratissa tooit is reported was convinced of the boy's guilt.

When the Royal College Union met on June 11, several old boys spoke out against the pressure exerted on their school and vowed to back Principal Gunasekera to the hilt against the forces of government power.

Necessary

The union passed a unanimous resolution to take up the matter with the education minister and even the President if necessary, to ensure that justice prevails.

The union asserted that that under no circumstances should the Principal of Royal College, a school that has stood for hundreds of years, be forced into withdrawing disciplinary action against a child based on external pressures.

The fact that the four others involved had also been punished, further compounded the matter, and it would indeed be a case of their lacking 'equal protection' should Ramith Rambukwella be allowed to roam scot free-being the main suspect who denied involvement and hung his accomplices out to dry in true Chinthana style.

Not 48 hours later, Principal Gunasekera was told by Education Minister Susil

Premajayanth to punish the Rambukwella offspring by preventing him from attending rugby practices, but to allow him to attend cricket practices as a compromise.

Ridiculous

That this is an absolutely ridiculous solution goes without saying, as not only is it improper for ministers to intervene in a school's disciplinary matters on the basis of personal connections, but it sets a precedent in the future for any son of any minister (the number of which is rising steadily with the rate of inflation) to land their sons at Royal College and set them to roam free like ravenous foxes in a chicken coup.

The Royal College Union has thus taken the position that the principal should stand by his decision, with several eminent Royalist lawyers prepared to appear for Gunasekera in court free of charge, to preserve the name and integrity of their alma mater.

Several teachers from Royal College told The Sunday Leader that Ramith Rambukwella has been involved in a colourful plethora of other "extra-legal" activities, but that the school had turned a blind eye to his abuses out of some sort of reverence to his father.

Robbery

Breaking an entry and masterminding a robbery to subvert a disciplinary inquiry, however, was considered to be the last straw, and there is scarcely a member of staff at the college canvassing in support of the minister's brat-the school has united in its own defence.

The principal is no one's angel however, and Gunasekera has been the subject of criticism from old boys as well, for not sacking the culprits summarily or suspending them from school given the severity of the offence.

The official action taken to rescue Rambukwella Junior is exactly as predicted. Both the principal and school teacher whose room was raided have had their phones ringing off the hook with death threats and all manner of callers threatening to butcher them and their families in the most exotic of ways.

Upali Gunasekera is to be commended for holding fast against the dangers he faces by taking on the full might of the most authoritative government that democratic Sri Lanka has ever seen, in pursuance of good discipline in his school.

"Through his efforts and those of other principals of Gunasekera's ilk, there is a glimmer of hope that the next generation of ministers may have some gentlemen amongst them.

Ramith and Chilanka broke the lock...

Following is an English translation of the confession made in sinhala by one of the students:

We (Nayanajith, Hilmi, Ramith, Chilanka) went to Ruchindra's house in Ramith's car. We apologised to Ruchindra's mother. Then Ramith suggested that we go inside the school to watch cricket practice. Then Ramith said that we should break into Sugath Sir's room. Then an iron pole that was left in the Year 11 lobby was taken. Thereafter I remained near the western music room.. Thereafter Ramith and Chilanka broke the lock. Thereafter Ramith, Chilanka and Nayanajith went into the room. They came out after five minutes with some files in their hands. Then we all left in Ramith's vehicle to the complex.

President gets tough with Keheliya

President Mahinda Rajapakse on Sunday informed Royal College Principal Upali Gunasekera not to succumb to pressure from any quarter on matters of discipline and to take whatever steps necessary to ensure discipline in the school.

The President also directed the Principal to make a police complaint on any threats received and assured his fullest support in ensuring justice.

The President's call to the Royal College Principal followed the lead story in The Sunday Leader of June 15 where it was reported that Gunasekera was forced under pressure to withdraw the punishment meted out to Minister Keheliya Rambukwella's son who was involved with four other students in an incident of breaking into a teacher's room and stealing some files.

Minister Rambukwella's son had been suspended by the Principal for three months from all co-curricular activities, which suspension was subsequently withdrawn under pressure by the Minister.

Minister Rambukwella who had visited the school with his security had warned the Principal that legal action would be taken if the suspension order on his son was not withdrawn.

It is learned the Principal and Deputy Principal were also warned they would be transferred to Vavuniya if the suspension order was not withdrawn.

It is further learned, the Principal and two teachers in the school had received death threats over the telephone following the incident, but there was no confirmation as to the source of the threat.

Informed sources said the Principal had explained to the President what led to the disciplinary action and details of the subsequent developments including the threats received.

The President it is learned had said he read the full report in The Sunday Leader and that his son Namal had also drawn his attention to it.

"Take whatever action that is necessary including restoring the suspension order. You must ensure discipline in the school and don't succumb to pressure by Ministers and MPs. You can count on my full support," the President had said.

Informed sources said the President had also called Minister Rambukwella on Sunday to reprimand him for his conduct, but the Minister had not been available. It is learned the President had later reprimanded Rambukwella over his conduct but the Minister had denied issuing any threats or using pressure tactics.

Giri Chandrasena

URGENT APPEAL FOR STC

We expect most old boys are aware of the STC Rugby Teams invitation to participate in the Melbourne Grammar School's (MGS) 150th year celebrations. It was certainly a 'feather in the cap' of STC to be the only school invited from Sri Lanka. Other participants are from Japan, New Zealand England and Australia. The invitation that made us all proud.

To get straight to the point: College and the Warden were unpleasantly surprised a few days ago when expected funding commitments were withdrawn for the tour. Warden was taken by surprise and had to cancel the tour. That resulted in many a heated view being put forward in Melbourne that the good name of STC and indeed that of the Sri Lankan community was slurred. Over the last three days much has transpired and the Principal of MGS has been in contact with Warden.

Yesterday (Monday 16th June) Warden personally led an interview session with thirty four boys and made a commitment that the tour will go ahead. Mind you he did this as a result of the hue and cry from the OBA Community in Melbourne. As a result of Warden's direct involvement many 'new' parents and boys have agreed to fund their tickets. Of the two new coaches one will fund his own ticket and the other will fund half the cost of his ticket. There are two or three boys who can make some contribution towards their tickets.

There is a shortfall of eight (8) tickets. There is an appeal running in Colombo to raise some funds to cover this shortfall as we speak. Our appeal to the OBA Membership in Melbourne is that we should do our best to salvage our reputation as a matter of urgency. We have heard many arguments, all of them valid, as to why we should abandon STC and let them suffer the consequences. However, if we don't salvage the good name of College who will? Another OBA? or OGA? or perhaps a "Sri lankan Association"? STC is ours to protect.

We have an opportunity for 20-22 kids to have an experience of a lifetime, stand shoulder to shoulder with international students, have a great learning experience (nothing whatsoever to do with rugby, we can tell you) and take all that experience back to College for at least the next two years. They are a young, fresh, keen squad. **The tournament commences on the 7th July. The STC lads need to be here no later than the 6th July. Gentlemen! We have very little time.**

We like to think that a target of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5000) is achievable. We like to think that annoyed as we may be at STC, critical as we may be that 'once again' STC has floundered, We ask that you guys step up to the mark and not let the school down. It is up to us ...we cannot ask anyone else to do that for us.

THIS IS AN URGENT APPEAL. TICKETS MUST BE BOOKED WITHIN THE NEXT 48 HOURS. VISAS MUST BE CONFIRMED. PLEASE DO YOUR BEST.

Please post your donation to:

STC. OBA Australia Branch

P O BOX 2337

Mt. Waverly, Victoria 3149

Please. Contact a friend or class mate and urge some action. One on one contact is the best.

You may also contact Stefan or Nalin should you want to discuss the matter Further.

Stefan : 0407 411 980

Nalin : 0421 705 070

Regards,

The Rugby Sub Committee

Stefan D' Silva

Frankie David

Selva Kanagasabai

Ralph D' Silva

TRINITY COLLEGE KANDY

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents

I am sorry I have not been able to say farewell to you all in the proper way. Circumstances have overtaken my wife and I and we can now only write to express our warm thanks to you for the excellent support and hospitality you have given to us over the last four and a half years. We have appreciated the many warm friendships we have made with you, and we have greatly enjoyed building meaningful relationships with your sons.

To clarify for some of you who may not know – our visas were granted by the Govt. in March 2008 for us to complete our contract with the College up to Dec.2008. In April we received a letter from the Immigration Dept. canceling these visas and demanding our immediate exit from the country. No reason was given, so the Board of Governors, in unanimous support of their Principal, took the matter to the Supreme Court, who also established no reason for our expulsion except that we were foreigners. In fact the judge expressly stated in his deliberations that “the Principal has done no illegal act”, but for technical reasons (we had already complied with the order) did not allow the expulsion to be rescinded.

So we are temporarily back in the UK, and expect to return to Asia soon, but realize that it will not be possible for us to be back in Trinity. We are encouraged by the news of the excellent performance of the boys in rugby, swimming and other sports, and the fact that the school is progressing well under the Leadership Team. I am quite confident that the Board will be able to appoint an excellent successor, although there may be a longer “inter regnum” than was planned.

I am concerned that the forces outside the school that have managed (after many previous attempts) to expedite our expulsion from the College, will continue to attempt to interfere with the College management. Their ultimate scheme is to remove the present governance of the College (which is based on the Foundational traditions and values of the Founding Fathers) and which has lasted 135 years and given Trinity its unique character. They object to Trinity’s value of equality and harmony between all ethnic and language groups in the country. They object to the Christian character of the school, and its management. They object to Trinity’s independence to forge its own unique path for the betterment of your sons. They object to the strict moral code I have adopted in the management, where no favour can be won by influence, money or friendship. All in all they want to gain control over the College so that it can be steered away from its founding roots and values. As parents you need to be aware of this evil strategy and stand firm against it, for the sake of the Trinity College into which you chose to admit your son.

We follow the situation in Sri Lanka with deep concern and prayer, as the war seems to be intensifying. But we do look forward to meeting you in the future. In the meantime we would love to hear from any of you or your sons on our personal e-mail address: r2gilberto@yahoo.com

The headline in the Daily News on 21st May ran – “Trinity remains unbeaten”! May that be the sprit that carries you forward in every area of the school until “Respice Finem”

My wife and family join me in greeting you warmly

Rod Gilbert

Wesley sacks cricket coach

By T.B. Rahaman

Wesley College has sacked its junior cricket coach following complaints received from parents that their budding cricketer sons were allegedly being misguided, the Daily Mirror learns.

The Daily Mirror learns that the Cricket Development Council of the Old Boys Union of Wesley College held an inquiry following the complaints and found that the allegations were substantiated by the parents of players. SHOW THIS TO HIS LORD SHIP THE BISHOP

School authorities preferred to withhold the name of the controversial coach but the Daily Mirror learns had he (coach) submitted his resignation after realising his services were to be terminated.

An official of the Wesley College Cricket Development Council, who wanted to remain anonymous for sensitive reasons told the Daily Mirror that distinguished old boys of the school were also keen to maintain the dignity and name of the school and were unanimous in their decision to do away with the junior coach. SHOW THIS TO HIS LORDSHIP THE BISHOP

“Anybody can approach us and discuss what is happening at the College. If we find any member of the staff or students conducting themselves in an uncalled for manner we will recommend stern action. We want to maintain credibility of the College,” he declared.

He alleged that the coach had behaved in a manner unbecoming of what was expected of him.

The Daily Mirror learns that the sacked coach also harboured differences with two other top notch coaches attached to the school’s senior team which was also taken into account when the decision to sack him was made.

Wesley’s sacking of its junior coach marks probably the first time in recent years that a coach has been sacked from his job.

The Daily Mirror understands that several junior coaches especially in Colombo and the suburbs are exploiting their positions for vested interests and continue unchecked.

..... **As reported in the Daily Mirror**

Blue Black and the Bishops

by Ranil Mendis with Evin Mohamed

The writers dedicate this article with love and affection to the memory of their dear friend Premalal Goonesekera, the cricket captain who won the Royal-Thomian in one of the most exciting matches ever played in the series. Moreover, his abiding passion in life was the welfare of the school.

Esto Perpetuaz

"Oh GOD, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home;"

On 21 December 1849, exactly one hundred and fifty years to the day before the daughter of a great Thomian, Chandrika Dias Bandaranaike was re-elected President of Sri Lanka, another momentous event took place.

On that day, the first Anglican Bishop of Colombo, the Right Reverend James Chapman, laid the foundation stone for a modest school. The school was named after Saint Thomas. It was located in Mutwal, next to the Christ Church Cathedral.

The date 21st December is an auspicious one. It is the day of St. Thomas, an apostle who is reputed to have visited Sri Lanka. So, when a great daughter of a great Thomian contests a Royalist on that day, the result should be a foregone conclusion, as it proved to be.

Two years later, in 1851 the school opened with fifty boys. The Right Reverend James Chapman was its first warden, which is the designation given to the principal.

The congenital association between the Bishop of Colombo and the school was a sweet and happy one, for over a hundred years. It has latterly turned sour, as we shall see later on in the article.

The school with its humble and modest beginning was to grow rapidly. The love and devotion that the old boys had for the school was chiefly responsible for the growth. In 1917 cramped for space, the school moved from Mutwal to Mt. Lavinia. It had come of age. It was then a leading institution of education in the country.

The chief reason for St. Thomas' College hereinafter referred to as STC to become a great school were its wardens and dedicated teachers.

After meticulous research the writers would pick Bishop Chapman, Rev. Stone and Canon DeSaram as the greatest wardens of the school. Of the other teachers far too numerous to mention individually two must be mentioned. Dr. Hayman who built the swimming pool in Mt. Lavinia and made substantial improvements to the school at Gurutalawa, at his own expense and who willed his estate to the school upon his death. Rev. Boyer Yin, a

mathematics wrangler from Cambridge University, who started the festival of nine lessons and carols. He trained the choir to be one of the very best in the island.

Bishop Chapman for being the founder of the school. He planted the seed of great English liberal values and ensured its germination. Later wardens nurtured and maintained these great traditions.

Rev. Stone for guiding the school through rapid growth and ensuring the smooth transfer of the school from Mutwal to Mt. Lavinia.

Last, but by no means least, and perhaps the greatest of them all, and the protege of warden Stone, Canon De Saram.

Canon De Saram was the first Thomian and the first Sri Lankan to be Warden. He held office for twenty five years and was the longest serving warden of the school.

He had the gumption to tell prime ministers to go to hell.

Incidentally, both writers were unceremoniously sacked from the school. When Evin was sacked, he cried like a baby, because he was so fond of the school. He pestered his parents who were friends of the Senanayake family to ask Dudley to intervene. Very reluctantly, Dudley phoned Canon DeSaram. Canon De Saram very curtly, told off Dudley, saying quite rightly that Evin was absolutely of no use to the school. The sacking could not be reversed. No one would be happier today, than the good Canon, to see how useful Evin has now become. With the greatest of enthusiasm and diligence the entire research for this article was accomplished by him alone.

Canon DeSaram himself on his last day as Warden, prior to retirement, in his farewell address to the boys of the school, said that ironically, it was the boys whom he caned and sacked who surprisingly, showed the greater devotion to the school. There is another anecdote that we would like to share with the reader.

P. N. Perera, better known as Vaddah, one of the most mischievous of Thomians, saw an old and feeble Canon De Saram, well into his dotage, climbing a hilly road, returning to his retirement home, in Nuwara Eliya. Vaddah very much wanted to greet him, but wondered whether the Canon would remember him. Nevertheless, with grave trepidation he approached him and asked "Sir, I wonder whether you can remember me". Pat came the answer "of course Perera, one can forget the roses, but never the thorns".

Canon De Saram was a great scholar and a good athlete, participating in most sports at STC. He was a contemporary of another great scholar S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. They went through STC and Oxford University together. Both excelled. SWRD becoming the first Sri Lankan to be elected secretary of the Oxford Union. Canon De Saram was awarded a 'Blue' for Boxing, the first Sri Lankan, to win a "Blue" of any kind at Oxford. They were rivals throughout. This rivalry led Canon DeSaram to take one questionable decision which will be adverted to, later on in the article.

Be that as it may, the liberal traditions, set in place by the founder Bishop Chapman was a strong influence on all those who attended the school. This enabled, in the words of Mao to "let a thousand flowers bloom, let a thousand schools of thought contend". This enabled

staunch Buddhist patriots like the Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake to send his sons to STC. It enabled Anagarika Dharmapala to form his ideas on the revival of Buddhism without hindrance. The school did not indulge in proselytisation. It was one of the first Christian schools, to teach those of other faiths, their own religion. As a result Thomians developed their talents in diverse ways. As we the writers, very proudly, unveil the roll of honour, it can be seen that Thomians have excelled in every activity of human endeavour.

We shall start with the first Prime Minister of independent Sri Lanka, and the father of the nation, D. S. Senanayake, and his son Dudley. Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike who led a liberal democratic revolution, and made democracy a reality to the common man. He has the further distinction of having a wife and daughter, who became leaders of this country. W. Dahanayake who succeeded S.W.R.D. as Prime Minister, and holds the record for filibustering in parliament.

The men who dominated politics in the pre-independence era, F. R. Senanayake and Anagarika Dharmapala, who led the movement for national independence, temperance and Buddhist revival.

Of others, in politics, who made their mark, in a long and distinguished list include. Chelvanayagam, the founder of the Federal Party, Sunderalingam who was also a great mathematician and orator, the left wing revolutionaries Dr. N. M. Perera, Leslie and Cholmondley Goonawardena, Leader of the House C. P. de Silva, Dr. Kaleel, who was chairman of the U.N.P., Sir Francis Molamure, the first Speaker of the House of Representatives. In contemporary politics, Professor G. L. Peiris, who is also the pre-eminent scholar, produced by Sri Lanka, in the post independence era.

In the field of law, Sir Arthur Wijewardena, the first Ceylonese Chief Justice, so appointed in 1949. Sir Arthur, was also the first Ceylonese to act as Governor-General, i.e., the head of state. H. L. Wendt who retired as Senior Puisne Justice, the highest Judicial Office then available to a Ceylonese. Supreme Court Justices Canekeratne, Gratien, Swan and Felix R. Dias, the father of a powerful minister, in the cabinet of Sirimavo, the first woman prime minister in the world.

In more recent times, former Chief Justice, G. P. S. De Silva, Tissa Dias Bandaranaike, SPJ, his brother Lakshman, who was legal draftsman, and who later drafted the constitution of Malawi, in Africa.

In the official bar Attorney Generals Tilak Marapana PC and the present incumbent Kamalabayson.

In the unofficial bar, Queen's Counsels, the brothers E.B. and E. G. Wickramanayake, and Sam Kadirgamar, President's Counsel, Choksy and S. L. Gunasekera, are outstanding Denzil Gunaratne is a rising star. The bard of Hultsdorf, Mervyn Casie Chetty and instructing attorneys, Oxonian Michael Sproule, and Dijan De Saram.

In the field of sports Thomians have excelled. The first Ceylonese to play for Ceylon in the colonial era was, A. C. Ahmath. Six have captained Sri Lanka in cricket, D. L. De Saram, S. Saravanamuttu, V. G. Prins, Michael Tissera, Anura Tennekoon and Duleep Mendis.

While the aforementioned did well with the bat and ball, Thomians have also done well as cricket administrators. Robert Senanayake, Dr. N. M. Perera and Ian Peiris were good Presidents of the Board of Control of Cricket. But, the greatest contribution to the administration of cricket was accomplished by someone who never held office. His name is Clifford Ratwatte. He was instrumental, in cleaning up the corrupt mess that had befallen the Board of Control for Cricket, and in appointing, the present interim board. Sri Lanka cricket has flourished since then.

The number of Thomians who have excelled in other sports are too many to mention. In tennis, Rupert Ferdinands, D. D. N. Selvadurai and P. S. Kumara, who was also, a stylish batsman and won the prize for Batting in the year he played. Niranjana Sinnethamby in swimming, and A. C. Dassanaik and S. Thangavelu in boxing have excelled in their respective sports.

In the field of music and drama, three Thomians have achieved international recognition. They are the brothers, Rohan and Druvi De Saram and Keith Potger who was the lead guitarist of the internationally famous and popular pop group the "Seekers". In the Sinhala Silverscreen, the most popular film star, director and producer, Gamini Fonseka, Asoka Pieris who won the best actor award in 1999, Jith Pieris who produces English plays and musical shows.

In the field of media and journalism Thomians have made their mark. The paramount doyen in this category, standing heads and shoulders above the rest is D. R. Wijewardene, the founder of the Lake House Group of Newspapers. He, was a staunch Buddhist patriot who played a key role in the independence movement. He is the grandfather of the present Leader of the Opposition. He is the father of Ranjith Wijewardena the chairman of the "Times". Nimal Welgama, is the managing director of "The Island" Newspaper group. The editors of the two leading English Daily newspapers are Thomians, Geoff Wijesinghe of the "Daily News", and Gamini Weerakoon of "The Island". The Editor's favourite journalist Amita Abeysekera was indeed outstanding.

In the mercantile sector, the Senior Partner of Ford Rhodes, and Thornton, Rajan Asirwathan. Rajan is the son of old Mr. Asirwathan, who was one of the great teachers at STC, who taught the writer English. Apart from being a good teacher, he had high ideals and integrity. He would have been as proud as the writer was, when his son declined any remuneration, when appointed chairman of the Bank of Ceylon. Thomians, making their mark in the mercantile sector are far too numerous to mention. However, picking a few at random, Michael de Zoysa, Chairman Liptons, in the tea industry, Anil Amarasuriya, General Manager of Sampath Bank, Capt. Ryle Mendis, in shipping and last but by no means least, the Equestrian, Kareoke champion, the life and soul of the Stallion tent, and representing the garment industry, the Chairman of Butani Exports, Prakash Butani are worthy of due recognition.

If STC is famous for the above products of the school, it is also famous for the ones that were refused admission.

The most famous of those is Anura Bandaranaike. The Bandaranaiques' and all their near relations are staunch and true Thomians. So, naturally, SWRD wanted to enter Anura to STC. However, Canon De Saram snubbed the Prime Minister of the day, by refusing to admit Anura. In this, very clearly, Canon De Saram was wrong. Whatever the differences he had

with SWRD he should never ever have taken it out on the son and heir. Because of this acrimony, SWRD was never invited to be chief guest on the prize giving day. SWRD a loyal Thomian would have liked to be the chief guest. The brilliant orator that he was, the boys and other guests missed a treat.

And what a difference this has made to Anura. If the good Canon admitted him, he would have been the writer Ranil's classmate. With this benign company, Anura would no doubt have been the present Prime Minister. Instead, he was forced to attend Royal College and became the classmate of the other Ranil. As a result, he, the poor fellow is now languishing in jail, otherwise known as the opposition benches. We must hasten to add that no disrespect to Royal College is ever intended by the writers. In fact, Thomians respect all schools but have the highest respect for their traditional rival Royal and that school on the hill, known as the best school of all, Trinity College.

More seriously though, the incidents with regard to Anura and Evin have been cited to show how the warden was able and willing to displease the Prime Minister of the day. The requests of two Prime Ministers, Dudley and SWRD were declined. Led by the warden, the other teachers followed suit. They and the boys of the school were no respecters of the sons of the rich and powerful. All were treated equally. A lesson in humility, was taught to those who got out of line. Strict discipline was maintained. This was another key factor that made STC a great school.

"Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day"

Thomians young will not know the difference. Thomian old will know that the school has declined.

The school has declined in many ways:

(1) The failure of the Bishop of Colombo, who exercises overwhelming influence on the Board of Governors, hereinafter referred to as the BOG, to appoint a suitable Warden for the college. The Bishop, in addition to his overwhelming power on the BOG has the right of veto, on the appointment of the warden. Therefore, the Bishop of Colombo has to assume full responsibility for the aborted appointment. Perhaps, God and the spirits, of the previous great wardens and old boys, acted through the Supreme Court. The fact that the issue had to be litigated upon is not a good reflection on the Lord Bishop. However, God has given the Bishop another opportunity. It is our fervent prayer that he, this time around, will accept the advise of eminent members of the BOG, who have been referred to, earlier on in the article, and make an enlightened choice, in order to, resurrect the school to its previous glory. The relationship between the school and the Bishop which formerly led to its prosperity, but now contributes to its decline is reverted to later on in the article.

(2) The Old Boys Association, hereinafter referred to as the OBA has also to be blamed. The sordid avarice for positions, which leads some to indulge in writing malicious letters anonymously and rig elections, is a sacrilegious insult to their Alma Mater, STC, which is sacrosanct. Perhaps, the OBA should consider, term limitations and changes to election

procedures to eliminate this atrocious practice. The membership of anyone who indulges in ungentlemanly practices, should be terminated.

(3) The strength of STC was its boarding. The fact that it was more of an all island school, than any other contributed to the diversity of the boys and hence added to its strength.

The great boarding houses Miller, Chapman, Coplesten and Claughton should be restored. A certain quota should be reserved for boys from outer provinces. A special quota should be reserved for boys from the Northern and Eastern provinces which are sadly affected by our deplorable civil war.

If there is any tendency for the people of any particular town, and any particular caste or creed to regard that STC belongs to them, this tendency should be excised forthwith. STC should never ever be an exclusively, Anglican school. With respect and gratitude to the founding father, Bishop Chapman and a host of others who have contributed so greatly to STC, the school should always be managed by the Anglican Church. Ideally, the Warden should be an Anglican priest. This is a formula that has proved its success.

(4) Taking all facts into account, the writer personally feels that the Rev. Duleep Chickera is the best choice to be warden. Father Duleep is a Royalist whom STC has acquired without compensation. The fact that he is a Royalist adds to his strength. This article is dedicated to Premalal. Both Father Duleep and Premalal are good gentlemen. Both loved the school enormously. In the writers eye both had a flaw. Both reconciled themselves to mediocrity. Several years ago the writer suggested to them individually that STC should raise standards by introducing an English stream. Both scoffed and rejected the idea. Both thought that having an English stream would make STC elitist. Both were dead wrong.

It is the bounder duty of the school to offer the student the best possible education. Just as much as it is the bounder duty of the Lord Bishop to appoint the best possible person to be Warden so that STC is enabled to offer its students the best possible education. Knowledge and education is the greatest gift that God has given mankind. It must be admitted that a better education can be received in the English Language. Today, it is the people's choice.

Looked at from another standpoint, the founding father Bishop Chapman and great Wardens that followed never intended the school to be average. Like Fraser of Trinity College Kandy, the Wardens of STC always intended that the school to be the best school in the world. This is not elitist. Indeed, if every school in Sri Lanka strived to be the best, the entire nation will prosper. Therefore it can be clearly seen that the pursuit of excellence is a noble goal of egalitarianism and is not in any way in conflict with it.

Let us at this stage quote Rev. Buck a warden of STC in his farewell letter to the school.

"You belong to one of the best schools in the world, a school with splendid traditions and a most honourable name and I charge you to try and hand down those traditions and that name to those who come after you, untarnished and unimpaired."

And a message that some members of the OBA could do well to heed.

"Be proud of being Thomians, and make the college proud of numbering you among its sons. Remember that whatever you do, and wherever you go, your life and your actions will

reflect either credit or discredit on the college where you were trained and to which you owe so much. You have learned the best lessons in the world at STC, I trust not only English and Classics and Mathematics, but true manliness and truth. Courage, purity, and all those things that make a man and a gentleman. Try never to forget them, but be men and gentlemen always".

These profound thoughts written by a great warden and a true Christian, setting high standards of excellence that each and every Thomian should try to live upto and be the living testimony of, regardless of petty divisions of race, caste and creed.

Not surprisingly, many old boys consider Warden Buck's period to be the "Golden Era" of STC.

(5) Presently, each member of the BOG can nominate two candidates to be admitted to STC. From a management and organizational point of view and from many other points of view, this is a bad practice and must be discontinued forthwith.

The BOG must not interfere with the Wardens prerogative to run the day to day administration of the school or in matters such as whom to admit and who is to be sacked. We are back to Anura and Ewin. Even if the Warden makes a gross mistake, such as in the case of Anura, the BOG should hesitate to interfere. A warden is human, however great he may be. It is human to err. The reason for this is that any interference by the BOG on a decision made by the Warden would inevitably and disastrously undermine the authority of the Warden. Can anyone imagine even for a nanosecond Warden Canon De Saram tolerating any such interferences? No way! However, that does not mean that the BOG has no role to play. It should set the standards of high excellence and define the guidelines within which the Warden should act. The warden should be held accountable but should never be deprived of the authority of discretion.

Having said that we shall revert as promised earlier to the Bishops of Colombo, in their sweet and sour relationship with STC.

First and foremost the early English Bishops of Colombo were appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of the Church of England. The later Sri Lankan Bishops were elected by the Diocese of Colombo. In pastoral care, the Sri Lankan Bishops being indigenous, may well have been more effective.

However, when it comes to education and the administration of schools like STC the English Bishops had a distinct advantage. They had the benefit of the vast experience the Church of England had in running public schools in England.

If we consider the background of Bishop Chapman the aforementioned assertion becomes crystal clear. Bishop Chapman schooled at Eton, which is one of the first four leading English public schools owned and managed by the Church of England. The other three leading schools were and are Harrow, Rugby, and Winchester. He won a scholarship to Kings College, Cambridge. In order to achieve this he must have been an outstanding scholar. He was a master at Eton and was ordained sometime later. Chapman was a short listed candidate for the headmastership of Harrow.

As a mere example, the background of Bishop Kenneth is no match. It's chalk and cheese. Therefore, the Lord Bishop Kenneth can serve God, the church and STC best by playing a reduced role in the affairs of STC and be guided more by the eminent old boys of unimpeachable integrity, and high academic achievement, in the BOG.

The Sri Lankan Bishops prior to Bishop Kenneth had a great and unbounded love for STC. Bishops Harold, Cyril Abeynaike and Swithin are counted in this number. After all, although the Anglican Church, owns and manages many good schools, STC is the Jewel on the Crown.

An unsuitable warden was appointed on one occasion when STC got a head who was a misfit in a sports oriented school which prided itself on its standard of English. Although a good man, he could not inspire the respect of the staff and boys of the school. This warden announced to the school, at assembly that the first eleven will play rugby football against St. Peter's. The rugby captain invited him to witness the match he said that he will come after the lunch interval.

The great moral lesson of this is that, the warden of STC should be selected with greater care. No one worthy of the job will apply to a two by two advertisement in a newspaper. The BOG should take the initiative and search for a good warden. Rev. Chikera, Frank Jayasinghe, Ralph Alles and Yoheshan Casie Chetty are examples of the calibre required. The BOG should not shirk from selecting an expatriate if a suitable local candidate is not available.

Bishop Kenneth is heir to a line of Bishops who loved STC, and contributed greatly to the welfare and progress of the school. God has given him another chance. He should realise that there is a symbiotic relationship between the church and STC. We pray that he makes the right choice.

"Under the shadow of thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure
Sufficient is thy arm alone
And our defence is sure"

Taken from *The Island*