

# Mr J. S. Pereira

## Knight In Shining Armour

**Mr. Joseph Salvador Pereira** has had a long association with **St. Andrew's High School**. He received his early education in this school. Later he shifted to St. Xavier's High School and finally graduated in Science from St. Xavier's College.

He began his career as an Assistant Teacher at Dr. Antonio da Silva High School, Dadar. After this he worked in the office of the Accountant General as Auditor of the largest treasury (i.e. the Bona Karachi and Bombay PWD) and was then promoted to the Loan and Gold Section of the newly opened Office of the Deputy Controller of Currency.

However, at the request of several friends, he resigned this prestigious Government appointment and joined **St. Andrew's High School as Principal in 1920**, on the death of Fr. Roque Fernandes. It was due to the untiring efforts of his predecessor that the school had (towards the end of the year 1919) been formally registered as a High School and affiliated to the Bombay University. It was the right time now to expand the School premises. **It was during Mr. Pereira's tenure as Principal that the building which many of us know as "dugdi shala" was built.** Out of the five acres of land on which this impressive stone edifice and playgrounds are situated, four acres of land were offered by the Salsette Catholic Co-operative Housing Society in exchange for equally valuable land situated elsewhere. The fifth acre was added by purchase.

It is worthwhile to note that Mr. Pereira was also the visionary behind the development of Kantwadi Scheme of the Salsette Society whose aims were not only to provide accommodation to Catholic families but also to cater to the educational (St. Andrew's High School), medical (Holy Family Hospital) and recreational (Bandra Gymkhana and D'Monte Park) needs of the community. The foundation stone of the School building was laid on 18th April 1926. **The School Building was designed by Messrs. W. A. Chambers & Co., Architects, to accommodate 700 pupils.**

**"J.S."** as Mr. Pereira was affectionately known was instrumental in planning all the details that went into making the stone building, a modern English School. An important aspect of this planning was the building of the school in an East-West direction to ensure that most of the classrooms remained cool through the day and dry throughout the monsoons. He was also responsible for laying out the vast playgrounds. The playgrounds — the largest in Bandra, have nurtured many sporting heroes, local and international.

**From 1923 to 1928 St. Andrew's won almost all the cricket and hockey trophies.**

Many ex-students may recall seeing in the school lobby a working model of the solar system. The planets made out of brass, could revolve around the sun and the whole model was enclosed in a glass case. But not many knew that this was probably the school's first visual aid and was acquired by "J.S." from London for the school.

**With the decision of the Archdiocese to have only priests as Principals of all Diocesan schools, Mr. J.S. Pereira resigned as Principal of St. Andrew's School and in 1931 joined Dr. Antonio da Silva High School, Dadar as Principal.**

He continued to be involved in the fields of education of Catholic schools and was the educational advisor to the Archdiocese of Bombay. In recognition of his work in the educational and social fields he was awarded the **knighthood of St. Gregory the Great from the Vatican.**

