

### DR. S.L. DE SILVA

B.Sc. (special), Ph.D., Diploma in Chemical Engineering (Monash), FIE(Ceylon)

Dr. S.L. de Silva is well known as the father of Technical Education in Sri Lanka and the first Sri Lankan to be appointed as the director of the Ceylon Technical College in 1950.

He was born at Berathuduwa, a quiet village in Balapitiya in 1914. But he had his entire school education at Royal College, Colombo, where he excelled in academics, particularly in chemistry. He graduated initially from the University College, Colombo, obtaining the B.Sc. (London) special degree in Chemistry in 1935. For his post graduate studies he proceeded to London, where he obtained his Doctorate in Physical Chemistry. He also obtained a diploma in Chemical Engineering.

On his return to Sri Lanka he joined the staff of the Ceylon Technical College as a lecturer ultimately ending up as its Director. Later, he also worked as Deputy Director, Technical Education, in the Department of Education. He was a founder member of the institution then called Ceylon Association for the Advancement of Science.

Devi Balika enjoys the present prestigious position in the country today because it was built up on the far sighted foundation laid during the first few years.

The first few years were not that easy. It is a result of the dedication, commitment and untiring efforts of a team led by Mrs. Wimala de Silva. The team comprised of four to six members of the staff, fifty four to hundred and fifty students and Dr. S.L. de Silva whose expertise, support and courage helped in no small measure to make the foundation so strong to ensure the development of Devi Balika as it stands today.

During the first few years, Government Girls' College had no teachers for physics. Neither were laboratory facilities available. As the Director of the Technical College, Dr. S.L. de Silva extended his helping hand to enable these students to follow Physics and Chemistry classes, at the technical college.

### MR. T.D. JAYASURIYA

(born 5th May 1898 & death 7th November 1960)

Government Girls' College, Castle Street (presently Devi Balika Vidyalaya) was a dream of Mr. T.D. Jayasuriya, the Director of Education then, which came true.

He is considered as the Founder and friend of this esteemed institution. "I expect this school to concentrate on quality rather than on numbers. We will look for its achievements not in this year, or next year, but ten years hence." The words he uttered on the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary celebrations of Government Girls' College in 1954 would be an evidence for it.