

# “WOMEN of the YEAR”

THE year 1937 will go down in Philippine history as the “women’s year” and as such will be unequalled in many years to come. Even without consulting our newspaper file or own scrapbook on women’s activities, we can remember the events that made this a banner year for local womanhood.

First, of course, there was our enfranchisement automatically acquired after our overwhelming victory at the woman suffrage plebiscite which the “doubting Thomases” placed across our way as a barrier to political emancipation but which turned out to be our glorious vindication. This was followed by the election of numerous women to municipal councils and provincial boards barely nine months after the women were granted the right to vote. Most famous of all these newly elected municipal and provincial officers is pretty *Carmen Planas*, first woman to be elected to the Manila municipal board, who was said to have triumphed not on women’s vote but on men’s votes. Next to occupy the most newspaper space was *Mrs. Olga Vargas*, whose eligibility was questioned because she was an American citizen. However, she was allowed to take her oath when the office of the secretary of the interior gave the opinion that she has acquired Filipino citizenship because of her marriage to a Filipino.

*Cecilia Muñoz*, now *Mrs. Rodolfo Palma*, is not the first woman to cop the first place in the bar examination results, Attorney *Tecla San Andres* having done the same before, but the newspapers played up this item just the same because it seemed to fit in so nicely in the “women’s year” and also seemed to be what was expected.

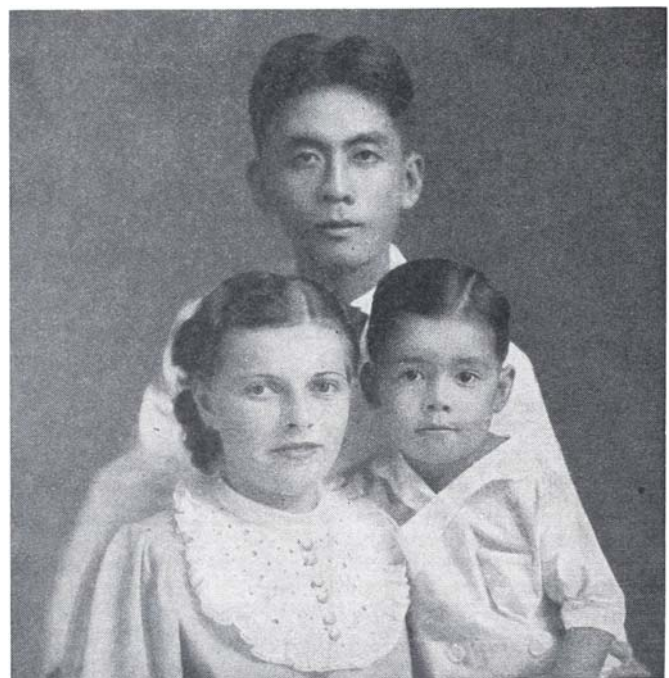
*Mrs. Salome Regidor de Lopez* had been occupying the position left vacant by the resignation of *Charles A. Bauer*, chief of the administrative division of the city engineer’s office, for some time before the newspapers became aware of the fact and promptly gave it front page space. The position, we understand, is a responsible one, and the appointment of *Mrs. Lopez* to it is therefore an honor not only to herself but also to Filipino womanhood as a whole.

Another “first” woman is *Mrs. Angela A. Villa*, the first woman to be appointed to the Board of Pharmaceutical Examiners. Why a woman to be appointed to fore the appointment of *Mrs. Villa* is beyond us, considering the fact that most of those who take the pharmaceutical examinations every year are women.

The efforts of the Manila Woman’s Club, spokesman for the women of the city, for the formation of a policewomen squad for the protection of women and children was crowned with success when the first Manila policewomen squad was organized last month. There are twelve members, with *Ambrosia Landicho* as corporal. These women have been chosen very carefully, for their physical, mental and moral qualities. The great majority of them are college graduates. Three are lawyers, four are graduates of the college of education, one is a normal graduate, one is a nurse, one is a pharmacist, one a radio telegraphy graduate, and one an ex-newspaper woman. *Mrs. Rosalia Aguinaldo*, well-known as a writer of Tagalog stories, is the matron in charge of women detained at the Luneta Police Station de-

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A few “firsts”: *Carmen Planas* (right); first Woman to be elected to the Manila Municipal Board; *Marcelina Villanos* (directly below), first Woman detective chemist in the Philippines; *Mrs. Angela A. Villa* (below, right), first Woman to be appointed to any government examining board. She is a member of the Philippine Board of Pharmaceutical Examiners.



*Mrs. Olga Vargas, with her husband and child.*

**"WOMEN OF THE . . ."**  
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tention cell.

We must not forget *Paciencia Latuja*, who occupied much space in the metropolitan newspapers when she stabbed to death (with a mere sharpening knife) a masher who had been bothering her with his unwelcomed attentions. She was accused of homicide but was released when the judge ruled that she acted in self-defense. Chief of Police Torres took advantage of the publicity given to this case to warn girls and women to give mashers who abound in Manila their "due," as *Paciencia Latuja* did.

**CANDON: First In War,  
First In Peace**

MANILA may very well sing praises to her sweetheart, *Miss Carmen Planas*, Cavite may justly applaud her *Mrs. Cristina Aguinaldo-Suntay*, and San Jose, Mindoro, may point with pride to *Mrs. Olga Vargas* and *Mrs. Juanita R. Ponzalan* who sit in the town council, but Candon, Ilocos Sur, has a better reason to be proud of. She has three women in her Municipal Council, one of them, *Mrs. Agripina L. Gacusan*, obtaining the greatest number of votes ever cast for a Municipal Councilor in the history of Candon elections, Police and Treasury department reports both certifying to the same, and all adding machines functioning smoothly without a hitch. The other two women elected are *Mrs. Potenciana Valdez* and *Mrs. Fulceda Abaya-Gray*.

*Mrs. Gacusan* is a vernacular writer of no mean repute and a prominent social worker and suffragette. She contributes poems, stories, and plays to the *Bannawag*, biggest Ilocano weekly, and her plays have been very successful. *Mrs. Valdez* is a former school teacher and an out and out suffragette. She is at present a retail merchant. *Mrs. Gray* is not a novice in the game of politics. Her husband is *Salvador Gray*, former Member of the Provincial Board of Ilocos

## Teaching Adult Illiterates

Is a Full-time Job, Says Mr. Paterno Villanueva of the U.P. College of Education.

"BUT I like the work", he continued musingly, so much so that I am thinking of doing more on it if I get a chance abroad." We were immediately interested particularly since we had heard that the Yale University was offering fellowships specially on that line of education. But Mr. Villanueva would not open up willingly on the subject, so that we had to keep a discreet silence. We looked questioningly at the letter of Yale catalogues and official-looking documents with Yale letterheads. "Yes," he answered our unspoken query. "Yale does offer a good graduate course in Adult Education. But their requirements are pretty stiff. Good undergraduate grades (we were sure Mr. Villanueva could handle that requirement) and a reading knowledge of French and German". And he added, "I must begin working on my French," giving himself away.

The Yale University, it appears, is interested in encouraging students to work on Adult Education projects, and is welcoming students on

Sur and three times elected Municipal President of Candon.

That Candon should choose to elect three women to her council is not in the least surprising. For Candon is used to lead in many things. Just as the First Cry of the Revolution was made at Balintawak for the Tagalog region, so was the first cry for freedom made at Candon for the Ilocano region. The municipality of Candon ranks

fellowships, particularly those coming from countries whose illiteracy percentage is conspicuously high. "China, for instance." Mr. Villanueva continued, "show illiteracy figures that the Westerners feel should be improved. In this connection, many foreigners, sometimes, just naturally assume that the Chinese are a stupid race. But they fail to see that the Chinese who can't read usually have had no opportunity to learn." We remarked that the same thing may be true of the Filipino illiterates. "Exactly!" he returned enthusiastically. "Now if a Chinese student is accepted in Yale for this fellowship, all he can really learn would be general ways and means of approach which he could adopt for teaching his illiterate people, for, of course, their alphabet is so different from ours."

He wanted to talk about the "methods of attacks" used in the U. P. campaign against illiteracy. "We are maintaining projects in several localities, in Pateros, in Santa Cruz, Laguna, Pasig, Tondo, Paco, Ermita, Polo, Cabuyao, and in Sta. Maria, Laguna. In these places, U.P.

first in the amount of income, in the production of sugar and coconuts for the entire province of Ilocos Sur. The only second class municipality and the only town with women councilors in the whole province of Ilocos Sur, it is the first and only municipality in the entire Commonwealth with three women councilors. Such is Candon, first in war and first in peace.

—By Teodoro Ayson.

personnel actually make the trips to do the teaching. Other places like Cardona, Biñang, Baguio, Isabela, Antique, Masbate, Tarlac, and Pangasinan have to depend upon volunteers to whom are provided literacy and citizenship materials." We wanted to know about the projects which we vaguely surmised might be complimentary to, if not identical with, the Federation projects along the same line. "Well, we have reading and writing, citizenship training, character education, current events, dress-making, flower-making, fabric and glass-painting, knitting, cooking, horticulture, poultry, shoe-making, and making of useful articles out of coconut shell and husks." An ambitious program, we thought, but Mr. Villanueva assured us that it was making headway everywhere. "You see, the people who are in this work are volunteers and put a great deal of enthusiasm and good will into their self-appointed tasks. There are many problems, however, which come up every and then," he sighed almost wearily. "Such as attendance. We have to do a lot of coaxing. Many of our pupils are quite mature, and have to be reasoned with to persuade them to come to the classes. They make all sorts of excuses, such as their work, the seeming uselessness of learning how to read and write. We even have to fight off odd suspicions and superstitions regarding excess knowledge!" But they go on, these modern knights who battle not against infidels, but against ignorance. "You know why we like the work? It takes us out of the routine of our school teaching and brings us face to face with real, actual living. We get to know every interesting people, and interesting stories. We start, for instance, by teaching a man to read and end up by helping him to combat the insect pests in his crops. They also have many useful, practical suggestions about farming or fishing that are worth while taking note of. And then, of

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