

The American School, Inc.

By J. A. Thomas

THE Trustees of the American School, while interned in Santo Tomas, got together on several occasions to discuss plans for a post-war school. It must be admitted that due to the uncertainty of the future at that time, and the day-to-day personal problems of each, not much enthusiasm was in evidence for planning the school's future. In February, 1946, the remaining trustees in Manila, Messrs. J. W. Ferrier, C. H. Davies, A. C. Hall, and myself agreed to hold a meeting of those interested in reestablishing the American School, even though we were not in full agreement that a school was needed immediately. At the first meeting, held at the Army and Navy Club, thirty-five people were present, and the sense of the meeting was that "energetic efforts should be put forth to reopen the school at its old site at the earliest possible date."

At this meeting, Messrs. Ferrier, Davies, Hall, and myself were asked to continue as trustees and Messrs. F. C. Bennett, W. J. Burke, A. D. Calhoun, Finley Gibbs, and F. C. Worcester were selected as trustees to serve with us.

The trustees' problems resolved themselves into (1) getting possession of our property at 2583 Taft Avenue from the occupants, the Philippine Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (PRRA); (2) raising sufficient funds to rehabilitate the buildings and grounds, refurnish and reequip the school, and absorb the early operating deficits while the enrollment was small; and (3) obtain first a principal and then a competent teaching staff.

With respect to our first problem, we soon received a promise that the PRRA would leave by July, but they did not actually do so entirely until September. Since we had set September, 1946, as our objective date to start the school, not much time was left to rehabilitate the buildings. The Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific Company handled the rehabilitation work at cost in a most expeditious and satisfactory manner, and also met the school's opening date.

To solve our second problem, Messrs. Davies, Hall, and Calhoun were appointed as a Finance Committee to campaign for funds from firms, here and abroad, and from individuals and holders of the school promissory notes. Donations from ₱100 to ₱12,500 were received, resulting in ₱127,000 in cash and ₱33,500 in notes being raised. While these funds were sufficient to start the school, much more will be needed before the goal is attained,—that is, an institution adequately staffed, housed, and equip-

ped, and with grounds extensive enough for all age-groups to carry on an educational and extra-curricular program to compare favorably with the better preparatory schools in the United States.

I wish to thank the firms and individuals who generously responded to our appeal, for without their timely assistance no school would have been possible. As to those who could not donate anything at the time of our original drive for good and sufficient reason, we will welcome their assistance whenever they are able to help because a school is always in need of funds to round out its usefulness to its students.

In solving our third problem, our choice for principal was Mrs. Lois Croft, who had been acting principal of the school just before the war and who was a member of the Educational Committee in the Santo Tomas Internment Camp. Mrs. Croft's work in Santo Tomas was well known to many of us. Largely hers was the driving force which made the Camp Elementary School and the High School proceed satisfactorily under handicaps which would have been considered insurmountable by most people. In the main, the children who took the Camp courses offered, lost no time when they entered school in the United States. With Mrs. Croft's arrival from the United States a fully qualified teaching staff was readily assembled from among Americans and Europeans in Manila.

Since the reestablishment of the school, the trustees have followed a policy of trying to satisfy the essentials of schooling for children of the American and European families here. An attempt is being made to produce the same educational, extra-curricular, and social environment which the children would have in their home countries. Because of this policy the enrollment is now 564, whereas the maximum before the war was 350.

We must soon obtain funds to acquire more land and to construct more buildings, or else contract our enrollment to fit our physical plant. For the present, the trustees do not favor the latter measure.

Permit me to thank the following persons who have served with me as trustees for their unselfish efforts in behalf of the school: Mr. F. C. Worcester, Vice-President, Mr. F. C. Bailey, Treasurer, Mr. A. V. Rocha, Secretary, Mrs. F. C. Bennett, Mr. O. A. Boni, Mr. J. W. Ferrier, Mr. A. C. Hall, Mrs. C. H. Hirst, and Col. W. S. Philipps, present members of the Board, and Mr. F. C. Bennett, Mr. W. J. Burke, Mr. A. D. Calhoun, Mr. C. H. Davies, Mr. F. Gibbs, and Col. R. S. Mackie, who served as trustees for a part of the post-war period.

The American School, Inc. Enrollment by nationalities:

Americans.....	425	Spanish.....	14	Italian.....	3
British.....	48	Stateless.....	13	Czechoslovakian.....	2
Philippine.....	24	Austrian.....	6	French.....	1
German.....	17	Dutch.....	3	Russian.....	1
				Polish.....	1

Number of teachers: 30

Tuition:

Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2.....	₱35 a month
Grades 3, 4, 5.....	40 a month
Grades 6, 7, 8.....	45 a month
High School.....	50 a month

Discounts: Two children from the same family, 5%; three or more children from the same family, 10%.