

The home-room meeting consists of a small group of people but lends itself to a democratic atmosphere where the people feel free to speak. If the parents know each other well, they freely loosen their tongues, too.

In the buzz sessions, according to Hymes, small groups of people bring chairs together and talk to each other for a few minutes. Each group is formed from the people who happen to be sitting near each other. The term buzz session, according to its inherent implications is as good as any meeting because it sounds the way the method works.

Among the advantages of this recently developed method of meeting parents in the most informal and natural way are the easiness of operation, the groupings that come about naturally, participation of everyone and the freedom of approach to participation. Following the buzz sessions only a few people may stand up and speak to the whole group, but now a buzz is heard.

Another method of enhancing the promotion of teacher-parent relationship is the face to face or heart to heart talk between the teacher and the parents. In this method both teachers and parents iron out many minor difficulties as these come up. In these brief chats they talk together face to face thus strengthening the relationship and thereby giving some indications of parents' interests and concerns.

A fast-growing practice in knowing the child in his full color, shape and form as a person is home visitation. This idea has already become a crystallized regulation: "You must visit every home at least once." A "royal welcome" may be expected and assured by the teacher in every home, the fact that she is the child's teacher who is interested in him. Parents are delighted with the chance to talk with their child's teacher. They are pleased and emotionally moved upon the teacher's visitation.

In home visitations, as in other phases of meeting parents, there are no special things to be aware of, to be sure to do other than thinking of commonsensical, decent and polite things which drive us and have taught us to do. In this visitation wrapped with the atmosphere of cordial friendliness, reactions of parents are expected. Some parents seem to be more talkative than you are; others are quiet; others feel at ease; and others feel a little bit tense.

This form of visitation gives both the teacher and the parents the information that are needed to tailor-fit the school curriculum with relation to the child's needs, strengths and weaknesses, attitudes and interests.

Wholesome parent-teacher relationship, therefore, is a necessary support to a modern school program as the posts are the necessary foundation to a well-built house. The school curriculum which is a child-centered and a life adjustment program is continuously geared to the needs of the ever-growing child.

Some of Rizal's Characters in Modern Setting

By Gregorio Borlaza

Basilio and His Two Christmas Eves —

AMONG the characters in Rizal's novels, Basilio has the distinction of appearing in both novels on Christmas eve, and in very dramatic moments in both instances.

In the *Noli Me Tangere*, he appears as a sick boy, limping on account of a wounded foot, enjoying the care and hospitality of a poor but kind rural family. A girl about his age encourages him to get well and promises to play *pico-pico* and hide and seek with him and to take him to the mountain top where he can drink the fresh blood of deer. The girl's grandfather, having made some brooms, asks the girl to sell them and buy things for Christmas for the children, including Basilio.

Basilio, however, sadly asks permission to go to town to look for his mother, Sisa, and his younger

brother, Crispin. The old man tries to dissuade him because he is not yet well, but he insists on going, for he can't bear the thought of his mother being so unhappy missing him on Christmas. He wants to give her a present — her long-missing son.

At the tearful parting, Juli, Basilio's girl playmate, accompanies him part of the way, making him lean on her arm.

Basilio eventually finds his mother who, having become insane in his absence, on account of the shock and humiliation she received in the hands of the Civil Guards, runs away from him. Basilio runs after his mother who flees into the wooded property of the Ibarra's where she locks herself behind the wooden door of the grave of an old Spaniard at the foot of a *balete* tree. Basilio, failing to force the door open, climbs up a nearby tree, clammers along some branch-

es of the *balete* and drops down to embrace and kiss his mother before she can flee. The insane woman, seeing the bleeding brow of the boy, and drawing from her subconscious reserve of sanity, recognizes her son who has fallen unconscious to the ground, embraces and kisses him. It's too much for the mother's tormented heart. Too much and too sudden a surge of joy causes her instant death.

At this tragic moment, while the moon reveals the worn out lifeless features of his hapless mother, Basilio recovers consciousness, finds his mother dead, and is surprised to see a stranger who directs him to burn the body of his mother together with his (the stranger's) own, as he, too is dying. The stranger points to him some hidden gold and advises him to use it for an education if no one else comes.

But someone else comes — Crisostomo Ibarra, owner of the gold buried there by Elias, the man who has had his body burned with that of Sisa. Ibarra, having become blind with fury and thirsting for vengeance, gives him only a little of the gold and takes the rest away to be used in his plot of revenge.

And so, in *El Filibusterismo*, we find Basilio living with Capitan Tiago and pursuing an education at a medical college run by the Dominicans. The tender attention he received from Juli, who supported him in her arms as he left their mountain home more than ten years ago, has left a permanent bond of affection between the two. He visits her often during vacation in their new home, Juli's father having become a prosperous farmer known as Cablesang Tales. But tragedy catches up with Cablesang Tales. The hacienda of the Dominican corporation claims ownership of his land and requires him to pay rentals which the corporation keeps increasing until Cablesang Tales, in disgust, refuses to pay, takes the case to court, and patrols his land with a shotgun on his shoulder. His gun is confiscated upon orders of the government and he is kidnapped by the *tulisanes* who demand a ransom of ₱500.00. Juli sells her jewels except a locket given her by Basilio, but she fails to raise enough for the ransom; whereupon, she tries to borrow some money from a rich woman who requires her to work as a servant till she can pay her debt.

And so, on another Christmas eve, some thirteen years after the last one when he left the small hut in the mountain, reclining on Juli's little arms, Basilio goes to his home town, San Diego, with the intention of visiting Juli, who has since grown into a sweet woman whom he intends to marry when he gets thru with his studies. In the evening, he visits the grave of his mother so he can visit Juli early on Christmas morning. At his mother's grave he encounters Ibarra who has since acquired much wealth and influence and who, under a clever disguise, passes for Simoun the Jeweler, but is actually an embittered man smarting for revenge, seeking to destroy the wicked, even

at the sacrifice of innocent men, so that a new nation can rise in all its purity over the ashes of the old.

When Basilio visits Juli on Christmas morning, it may be read between the lines, he does not find Juli at home for she has started working as a servant. With his savings Basilio pays her debt to release her from bondage and buys her and her grandfather a little house, her father, Cablesang Tales, having gone with the outlaws after stealing Simoun's revolvers.

Sometime later Basilio is to fall into the toils of the corrupt laws and is to go to jail. Juli, in her effort to secure his release, is to die to save her honor from the very man whose intercession for him she has sought. This drives Basilio mad and he joins Simoun in his diabolical plot of revenge, only to weaken at the sight of so many innocent lives in danger. He reveals to Isagani Simoun's plot to kill everyone at the wedding of Paulita, Isagani's former sweetheart, with an explosive lamp he has placed at the dining table. Isagani frustrates Simoun's plot in obedience to a sudden impulse of gallantry and Christian forgiveness.

Both Christmases were sad ones for Basilio, and if he could return to life this Christmas of 1957, he would perhaps be glad to find a general atmosphere of gaiety in his country; with Santa Claus and Christmas trees in many homes; and with Christmas music everywhere.

But it would make him sad to find that there are still kidnapers in the land, demanding far bigger ransoms than that demanded for the return of Cablesang Tales; that there is still widespread poverty in millions of nipa shacks from which hungry, ill-clad children watch with envy the costly toys with which their rich neighbors are playing around, crisp brown *lechon* roasting in the rich families' backyards.

Lovers no longer have to sacrifice their lives to get their loved ones out of jail where they don't justly belong in the first place, but the wheels of justice still grind so very slowly, and the cost of court litigation is still far beyond the reach of the common man. There are public defenders for him, it is true, but money is still needed to make them take his case with seriousness and enthusiasm.

There are no more boy sacristans who are fined, beaten and liquidated on false accusations. There are no more civil guards who drive women out of their wits thru cruel and inhuman acts, but there are still the third degree and the *pabagsak* perpetrated by some unprincipled officers of the law who give a black eye to an otherwise much improved police organization. "Not yet," he would perhaps say upon revisiting the graves of Sisa and Juli, before returning to the other world, "not yet may I truly say that you, my mother, and you, my sweetheart, have not died in vain!"