

How A Class Won The Attendance Banner

(A Story)

by Antonio Muñoz

IT was Thursday afternoon when two sixth grade boys, Pedro and Juan were on their way home. They were down-hearted for one of their classmates was absent that afternoon. A weekly attendance contest was going on in their school. Every day from Monday of that week to that unlucky Thursday afternoon, their class had one hundred per cent attendance. Their closest rival was the fourth-grade-A class. Martin, a member of the rival class, was their pal. He was obedient and truthful and was honest in all his dealings. The only trouble with him was that he would rather suffer than disappoint a friend. For this weakness, he became the victim of his two good friends.

"What shall we do, Juan?" asked Pedro as they trudged along. "Martin's class will surely get the banner for they will again have a hundred per cent attendance tomorrow."

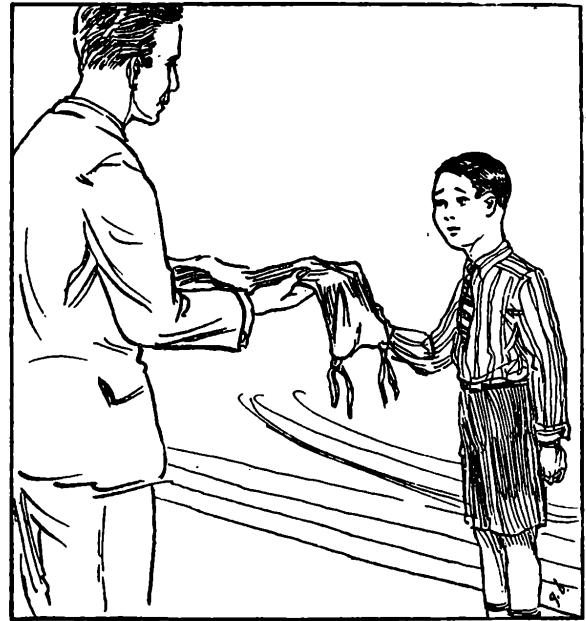
"You need not worry, Pedro," answered Juan, "for I have just thought of a plan which will make our class win the banner in spite of Jose's absence this afternoon."

"What is it? What is your plan?" eagerly asked Pedro.

Juan looked around, and, finding nobody near, said in a low voice, "You know that Martin has a weak stomach. That is why his mother has forbidden him to eat 'pansit'. Martin obeys his mother and the poor fellow has never had a taste of that fine Chinese food although he has heard much about it. As to winning the attendance banner, please give me your ear and I'll whisper the secret to you."

There in the middle of the street, Juan poured into Pedro's ear his plans.

That evening at six o'clock, three boys were eating 'pansit' in Tan Lo's "Pansiteria."



"How do you like it, Martin?" asked one.

"Oh, Juan, it's the best food I have ever eaten!" exclaimed Martin.

"You see, Martin," said the third boy, "it's really nice. Take advantage of this opportunity. This is your first but it may be your last 'pansit' meal. If your mother hears of this, it will be a farewell to dear old 'pansit'. So let us eat as much as we can."

"I think you are right, Pedro," agreed Martin. "Please make another order."

As they went out of the Pansiteria, Martin said, "It seems to me I have a little pain in the stomach and I feel like vomiting."

"You seem to feel that way, for this is the first time you have eaten 'pansit'. Just go to bed and all will be well," Juan advised him.

On Friday afternoon on the front lawn of the school and immediately after the flag ceremony, the principal teacher made the following remarks:

"We have had a hot contest this week. The fourth grade-A class and the sixth grade class were running neck to neck until yesterday afternoon when the latter fell

(Please turn to page 134)

RIZAL IN LIFE ☆

THE more you know about Jose Rizal the more you love him. Contact with his life does something for your own. It grips you and stirs you with a desire to be noble like he was. He was the embodiment of an ideal, like Sun Yat Sen or Mahatma Gandhi—how like them both!

But Rizal is in danger—in danger of being turned into a cold statue on top of a monument, in danger of being honored or sainted or even worshipped by some, while the people who do him honor are not informed—or misinformed!—as to what he did and why he died. Even today he is lost to millions. His portrait is on their walls, they may have read his "Noli Me Tangere", they may even have memorized his "Ultimo Adios"; but when one relates some of the most important incidents of his life, nearly everybody, even among educated Filipinos, says: "I never knew that!"

Yet the *life* Rizal lived is a more abiding gift than the books he wrote. The conditions he fought against have largely been remedied, or will be remedied, and are becoming merely history, but the life he lived is of endless importance. Every Filipino youth needs

to be saturated with the purity, sincerity, and devotion of that lovely spirit. In public and private schools as well as in homes he must be studied. Now that the Commonwealth has come with all its hopes and perils, EVERYTHING will depend upon whether the Filipino people possess the ruling passion of Rizal's life: Progress for his country through character and education.

"So he who takes wise Education by the hand

Invincible shall guide the reigns of motherland."

Rizal was not perfect, yet a complete list of his "sins" could probably be written in one short paragraph. Rare are the men whose life story you dare begin by enumerating their weakness!

1. As a youth he played some jokes on his friends that made them angry.

2. For a time he chewed tobacco. (How has this escaped advertisers).

3. Occasionally he lost his temper:

He once fought a cab driver; he was heard to swear when he learned of some atrocities in the Philippines; he twice challenged men to duels.

One of these men, Antonio Luna, said something insulting about a woman of Rizal's acquaintance. In our day duels are outlawed, but in Rizal's day in Europe, his championing of the reputation of a woman was the highest proof of honor. Antonio Luna apologized and became Rizal's warm friend.

The other man, W. E. Retana, was chief editor of a paper controlled by friars in Spain. He made a bitter attack on Rizal, but when he received the challenge, he published a retraction and an apology. Retana later became Rizal's warm friend, ardent admirer, and greatest biographer.

These challenges were inconsistent with Rizal's philosophy of pacifism; and we must place them in the brief list of his weaknesses, though to the men of his own day they were an evidence of his moral strength and courage.

This seems to complete the list of his "sins"!

When we turn to study his virtues, Rizal shines like a diamond on every facet.

* This article is a portion of a book written by a known American author. The Community Publishers, Inc. is at present making the necessary preparations for the publication of this book.

A Class Who Won . . .

(Continued from page 118)

back a little due to Jose's absence. Then today a strange thing happened. Martin of the fourth grade-A class, who has never been absent since the opening of the school year, is sick. His mother came this morning and told me that Martin was

given purgative this morning because he had a very bad stomach ache last night. His whole day's absence gives the sixth grade class the lead in the race.

Juan had been chosen class representative to get the banner. To the surprise of everybody, he came forward, his face a picture

of sorrow and regret. Instead of taking the banner from the principal's extended hand, he faced the audience and said in a low but firm voice:

"My class does not deserve the banner. The Four-A class should have it. I played a dirty trick on Martin. I am sorry."