

A Whisper to Fellow Teachers

By Faustino Domine

- 1 — Govern: Temper, Tongue, Conduct;
- 2 — Cultivate: Courage, Affection, Gentleness;
- 3 — Commend: Thrift, Industry, Promptness;
- 4 — Despise: Cruelty, Arrogance, Ingratitude;
- 5 — Wish for: Health, Friends, Contentment;
- 6 — Admire: Dignity, Gracefulness, Intellect;
- 7 — Give: a. Alms to the needy,
b. Comfort to the sad,
c. Appreciation to the worthy.

The above quotation was circularized to us by our district supervisor, for he found it "essential for habit-formation among the teachers who are models in character — in the community." He also suggested that it be "written on a large tag-board — to be placed on the wall with frame." "It is imperative," he concludes, "that they will be observed by all teachers everyday in their daily life."¹

Personally and professionally, I am in full accord with my energetic supervisor. And to substantiate my stand, I am expanding on the first line, the First Trinity of Life that one should:

Govern: Temper, Tongue, Conduct

Would you be a successful teacher? Then govern your temper. But, just what is a successful teacher? we may ask ourselves. Presently, I am turning the hands of the clock to the late '20's and try to recall my different teachers in the grades, normal, and college.

Different professors of education give innumerable qualities that teachers should possess in order to succeed. Dr. Herman Gregorio² of Siliman University, being of our race, would make a good reading for any would-be successful teacher.

There are as many standards of a "successful" teacher as there are individuals. To one, high salary, reaching perhaps to one grand;³ to another, high position, maybe the Superintendency, the directorate, or the secretaryship; and still others, doubtless a rosary of titles of no less than the doctorate, either earned or conferred. But what I mean is simply the sweet-

tempered guro who is remembered by his pupils or students as long as life lasts. His stipend maybe rack-bottom but is contented in his own kingdom of a classroom. His educational attainment? Well, he may possess the minimum requirement or hardly it, but for diligence in study and application, and brilliance of mind, he possesses C. S. eligibility that makes his tenure as lasting as his good behavior in the service of the Republic.

As a premise, I confess that I had been a problem at home, at school, and in the profession. For this alone, there was enough reason for any teacher of mine to dislike me. But there were those teachers of mine whom I cannot forget and for that matter, I consider them successful. And if one asks me why, it is just this: They were sweet-tempered despite my being a problem to them. I remember a teacher of mine in the grades. For a boyish prank that I did intentionally in class, I was scolded severely *before* the class, too, and furthermore, was made to stand in the corner for the rest of the period. I was not bitter about it because as the period ended, my teacher came placing his big arm around me and led me to the corridor, away from the eyes and hearing of others. "I am very sorry, Fa . . .," he was talking very softly. "Yes, sir, but— but— I— I— I— was all to blame!" I cut him short. I looked up to him and saw two pearly tears rolling down his aging cheeks. From that time on, there was no more pranks and we were fast friends. He indeed felt the punishment more than I did. His anger was short-lived as a child's. Two little tots fought hard during a marble game, but in no time they were arms-in-arms again on the playgrounds. Teachers should not only be sweet-tempered, but also short-tempered. The Apostle Paul admonished his constituents of old in this wise: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."^{4a}

There are no doubt not a few such teachers who are flesh-and-blood examples of what the Service Manual says the teacher is to his pupils and that is, he is in loco parentis to them.⁵ This relationship is well portrayed by Miss Noemi Reyes in her poem:

4 Holy Script (a) Ephesians 4:26
(b) Proverbs 16:24
(c) Mark 7:14-23
(d) Matthew 7:12

5 Section 1207, B.E. Service Manual (1927)

1 District Cir. Letter, Oct. 10, 1957 (P.V. Echavez, Tamparan)

2 Gregorio, Herman: PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING, pp. 285-289

3 P1,000 in Guerrilla Term, Panay, W W II.

ANG PALO NG INA

*Tunay nga ba anak na ikaw'y naglampo
Dahilan sa aking pagpalo sa iyo?
Nagwalang kibo ka't nang kausapin ko
Ay patak ng luha ang isinagot mo.*

*Halika nga anak sa aking kandungan
At ating iwasan ang pagtatampuhan;
Di kita pinalo upang ikaw'y saktan,
Ang hinahangad ko'y iyong kabutihan.*

*Kung alam mo lamang na sa baw't palo
Puso ko rin itong siyang nagdurugo;
Bata ka pa, anak, di mo natatanto,
Pagpalo sa mahal ay di gawang biro.*

And now, what of the tongue? I heard a Maranaw Muslim telling his group that if there ever was one thing which Allah, the Compassionate, failed to control in Creation, it is the tongue. "For look!" said the narrator (opening wide his mouth for emphasis and demonstration). "In the beginning, Allah imprisoned this innocent-looking something called the tongue (wagging it for effect!) with these fort-like and seemingly impregnable teeth." (The Muslim pointed to his two lines of glistening gold teeth.) "And to assure Himself that this metallic wall would hold on, Allah plastered it with fleshly layer." He clapped the top of his head with his left hand and simultaneously with the right hand he pushed up his chin. The small crowd was all attention when suddenly the tip of his naughty tongue showed out! The women laughed to the cagrin of the men in the group.

Modern engineering has demonstrated with pride the closing of rivers to the advantage of mankind, but in vain have we heard of any discovery to shut up this contrivance of a tongue from destructive circulation except in the humour page⁷ of magazines and newspapers.

I was fortunate to have been under a tall, slow-moving, and soft-spoken American English supervisor in my senior year in the Old Philippine Normal School. The moment Miss O. entered our class, we were all ears to her, lest we would miss a word of her every explanation. To me her "pleasant words are as honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the homes."^{4-b}

The successful teacher should take heed to himself, specially herself, never to be a tell-tale nor a gossip. "A school official or teacher should hold inviolate all confidential information concerning his associates and school; he should not divulge to interested persons documents which have not yet been officially released..."⁸ "...Anonymous or fabricated criticisms of an associate is unwarranted. ...No criticism of

an associate should be made in the presence of pupils or students, fellow teachers, or parents, and patrons."

The Code of Morals for Boys and Girls¹⁰ runs in this wise, "The good Filipino controls himself," for those "who best control themselves can best serve their country." So then, "I will control my tongue, and will not allow it to speak mean, vulgar, or profane words." Again the same Code enjoins us to "be kind in all our speech," for "words may wound or kill."¹¹

Often it is better said than done that example is the best teacher. A mother was observing closely her little girl at the mirror busying herself with her hairdo. "That's how ma'am does it!" whispered the little imp as she kissed Nanay goodbye for school. The children's own speech, too, not infrequently is a revelation of their teacher's. Why should we not blame the twins, Totoy and Nene, for their obscene and vulgar language? Listen to this conversation of the two at recess time before World War II.

Totoy: Salbaheng guro iyan!

Nene: Sino? Aling guro, Kuya

Totoy: (Evading) Tila talo't puyat na naman sa madyongan ang walang hiya!

Nene: Ah, si ma'am ba? Bastos ngang talaga! Kay ruming dila mayroon siya!

Totoy: Walang puno't dulo kung makapagmura! Mabuti't 'saved by the bell' ako, ah!

Nene: (More to herself) Bakit kaya pinapagturo ang mga katulad niya?

"Only one in a thousand" we may say in defensively. Yes, some such isolated cases should be the deep concern of administrators from the principal up for the children's sake. Investigate and recommend for appropriate action at the end of the school term. For why should we tolerate such? There is an over-supply of teacher-applicants. Undoubtedly, true democracy does not and should not countenance this. Any administrator bypassing a teacher of this brand indicates similarity of feather.

And now, most important in the trinity of life that we ought to govern in us is our conduct. I remember in the grades, we were required to memorize:

"Sow a thought and you reap an act;

Sow an act and you reap a character;

Sow a character and you reap a destiny."

This is a ladder of three rungs: Act, Character, Destiny. The solid foundation upon which this life ladder is planted is the Thought of man.

After an allegorical discourse on Thought^{4-c} to the masses, the eager pupils of the Nazarene Teacher asked Him in private to explain the parable further to them. "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts," resumed the Master in his dis-

⁹ Art. 5, Sect. 5, *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Second Law, CODE OF MORALS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS (Inc. 2, Memorandum 107 s. 1957)

¹¹ Ninth Law, *Ibid.*

⁶ Page 50, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY, October, 1955

⁷ Page 72, Philippines Free Press, October 12, 1957

⁸ Art. 5, Sect. 4, Professional Ethics

course and enumerated 12 common specific evils on which men often ponder in themselves and ultimately do. "All these evil things come from within, and defile men," concluded the Teacher of teachers.

One principle I should like to pass on to fellow teachers" is teach as you live. Emerson, one of the most beloved of American philosophers, made a remarkable statement to that effect when he said, "What you are speaks so loud that what you say can't be heard." And again the Golden Rule^{4-d} when reduced to its lowest term as the give-and-take way of life, would make a safe rule of conduct if we stick to the order enunciated, viz, first give, then take; never reverse the order. In other words, Be whatever you desire to impart to the children and the result shall follow. Slowly, perhaps, but surely! All our teachings

are as writings on water if these are not flesh-and-blood in us, first of all. "Teachers and educators have the right to be treated as persons of dignity and worth—and the corresponding duty to treat their co-workers and their pupils in the same manner." This *corresponding duty* should be first expected from us, "fellow-teachers," before we "have the right to be treated as persons of dignity and worth."¹²

Would you like to have your name written forever in the hearts of men? Then, govern your temper, tongue, and conduct. Your personality shall continue for eternity in the lives of your children in spite of your attainment, position, and remuneration.

12 Art. VII, a CHARACTER FOR EDUCATORS AND EDUCATIONAL PROFESSION.

The Teaching of Optional Physics

By Jack Smith

PHYSICS, as a school subject, has been dreaded by most students. In some secondary schools, the subject is offered as "optional," perhaps, to attract the students, especially those who are interested in the study of science but could not tackle the mathematical side of the subject. At any rate, the contents of Physics are taught similarly to students taking the subject as an optional or regular course. While this practice is wholesome, yet much disappointment and discouragement has been felt by the students taking the subject as an optional course. Something should be done to evolve a certain course of study of Physics as an optional subject or a subject fit for students of low intelligence, without defeating the purposes and objectives of the course. The idea is to make a modification of the course of studying to fit a particular kind of students to it.

The writer, for this reason, is suggesting the inclusion of but three study units in Physics as an optional course or as a course for those desiring to take it but has a low intelligence to pursue it as offered in the regular curriculum. These units are: (1) Mechanics and Sound, (2) Heat and Light, and (3) Magnetism and Electricity. The following are the breakdown of the details for each unit:

(1) Mechanics and Sound

a. Rectilinear motion: velocity and acceleration, uniform acceleration, simple problems on the variation of displacement and velocity with time. The relation between force, mass and acceleration with simple problems. The determination of g by a simple method. Vector and scalar quantities; parallelogram (triangle) of displacements, velocities and forces. The resolution of a force into components at right angles. Moments. Center of gravity and its experimental determination.

b. Work, energy and power; the conservation of energy; simple problems involving the units erg, joule, watt, foot-pound weight and horsepower. Simple machines: levers, the common balance, the inclined plane, the single pulley, the block and tackle; the hydraulic press, the wheel and axle, the gear wheel, the screw. Mechanical advantage, velocity ratio and efficiency. Qualitative ideas on friction.

c. General differences between solids, liquids and gases. Elementary ideas of the kinetic theory of matter. Density; relative density (specific gravity); principle of Archimedes and flotation; the common hydrometer. Pressure in fluids; barometers (excluding