

reau of Agricultural Extension, Bureau of Plant Industry, and Agricultural Credit and Cooperative Financing Administration.

Any change in the present teacher program of CLAC will take into consideration the recommendations of the three-man Stanford University Team working to improve agricultural instruction in CLAC. The three-year contract of the Philippine Department of Education and Stanford University is expected to produce results soon.

Doubtless, there are problems to be threshed out

by all teacher training institutions. Coordination of activities and/or curricular offerings as well as setting of standards are among the problems that have to be tackled.

The future of our country is indeed bright. With the full cooperation of all officials, agricultural educators and government agencies, agricultural education programs will succeed in producing youth that will contribute their potentialities for the agricultural welfare of the country. CLAC is doing its part. It will continue to do everything in its power, as in the past, to do so.

Life of an Indian Primary School Teacher

By D. H. Sahasrabudde

A dedicated life

AS I think of the subject of this article, a thin tall figure with wrinkles on the face and the forehead and with a white Kahdi cap on the head rises before me. He was a primary school teacher who, on the verge of retirement, had come to see me just to express his satisfaction with the education which his son had received in the school of which I happened to be the headmaster. He had served 28 years of his life as a primary school teacher and was then drawing a salary of Rs. 38/per month. In spite of financial hardships, which worried him all his life, his face wore a look of self-satisfaction and indicated that he had made a good job of his life.

His problem

Naturally during the conversation that ensued, I enquired of him as to why was it that he was not continuing for another two years, when he would attain the scheduled age for retirement. He replied, that circumstances had changed and he had not as much freedom as he enjoyed previously and the chances of getting his self respect hurt were steadily increasing. This he said, was because of unnecessary and undue interference in the work of the Head of the school, by members of the Local Body under which he was serving.

At once a picture and a problem

This in short, is at once the picture of an average primary school teacher in India and the chief problem which confronts him.

Rs.38/per month after 28 years of service! Shocking indeed but none the less true.

Average Teacher: A Local Body Employee

Elementary education is the charge of Local Bodies in India and therefore 90% of the primary school teachers in India are Local Body employees. Hence the life of a Local Body primary teacher represents the life of an average Indian primary school teacher.

Proverbial Poverty

The poverty of the Indian primary school teacher has become proverbial. He is paid anything between Rs.20/ to Rs.40/per month and the rate of annual increment is Rs.1/ which is very often not given to him because of financial stringency of the Local Body. Our Indian primary school teacher, by tradition and training, is taught to live within his means, howsoever slender they may be. Therefore he never felt the pangs of poverty so strongly till very recently when prices of all commodities shot up 200% or more.

Still a life of honour

Financially, the thing which all his life worries him most is the irregular payment of his already meagre salary. He cannot balance his budget from the date he receives his salary to that uncertain date when he may get it the next time. Morally he suffers all the more. He cannot walk through the market street freely lest somebody would halt him for the bill which is overdue. The Indian primary teacher in spite of his poverty calmly struggles to live a life of honour but the irregular receipt of his salary breaks

all his fortitude and then he feels like preferring death to dishonour.

His Home

The primary school teacher lives in a small cottage of two rooms with mudwalls with a country-tiled roof above and a small courtyard in front. The cottage has a distinct mark of cleanliness about it. The teacher usually feeds a family of four or five. Though the women in an Indian village go out to work and earn their livelihood or add to the income of the menfolk, such a thing is taboo to the wife of a teacher. So in a village he supplements his income himself by cultivating a small field and in a city by earnings on private tuitions.

Training

A very large majority of the primary school teachers to-day are no doubt senior elementary graduates without training but gradually more and more secondary graduates are being recruited. A senior elementary graduate candidate has to undergo two years of training while the secondary graduate has to undergo only one year of training. During the course of training, along with general subjects they are taught educational psychology, teaching methods and now-a-days some craft, mainly spinning, gardening or agricultural. They have also to give 40 practical lessons including a few criticism lessons-at the end of which pupil-teachers discuss the merits and demerits of the lessons under the guidance of their teacher. At the end of the training period the pupil-teacher has to present himself for theoretical as well as practical examination.

The School

The primary school day usually begins with an Assembly when all the pupils of the school stand in lines with folded hands praying to the Goddess of Knowledge for Her blessings, while all the teachers of the school stand in meditation associating themselves with the pupils. Thus the school begins at about 11 a.m. in an atmosphere surcharged with prayer and meditation and continues till about 5 p.m. In the village a teacher has to manage at least two classes at a time. While one class is given the work of recitation or learning by heart, the teacher teaches a fresh lesson to the pupils in an adjoining classroom. Since recitation and learning by heart at the primary stage are still considered to be of educational value the rhythmic sounds of learning by heart can be heard as we approach a primary school in India. Our primary pupils must learn elementary physiology-hygiene, social and natural sciences apart from language and arithmetic. They must also do some hand work, either clay or paper and recently the *Takali*. Necessarily, therefore, our primary school teacher must be a ver-

satile hero with an ability not only to teach all subjects mentioned above but also the ability to guide pupils in handwork, dramatics, song, music, drill and sports. So our primary school teacher is an 'all rounder'. The fact is that he has certainly picked up the rudiments of all the above subjects but one or two subjects with distinction so that with close cooperation amongst his colleagues in a school do present themselves very ably to their tiny taughts in the school and the elderly people outside.

The School and the Community

The primary school teacher does not confine his activities within the four walls of the classroom. Every day in the time table, there is a physical exercise and a sports period which he has to attend. The whole year round there are a large number of activities in which he engages and attends to the all round development of the pupils. Every school has either an Annual Day to be celebrated and/or there is an Education Week which is held in big cities or over a certain area at which the various activities of the primary schools in the area find an expression. There is singing, dancing, dramatics, dialogue and a large number of games and handicrafts. There are colourful drills, school as well as mass, and the honour a school gets is naturally shared by the members of the staff. Through these functions the primary school teacher reaches the community and earns social recognition for himself.

Professional Organization

In his every day life an average primary school teacher does not seriously care and has not anything to do with what his Association is doing for him or for the betterment of education. That consciousness of professional organization is still lacking in an average teacher. No doubt he has his moral support and he extends his sympathy by paying the annual subscription fee but he attends the meeting only occasionally. The work of professional organization in India has also not all those aspects which a professional organization should have. The professional organization today in India is concentrating all its energies on the betterment of service conditions of its Constituents and therefore commands sufficient influence over the members of the organization. If and when the organization asks its constituents to be vocal and active, by attendance at meetings and participation in 'Morcha' (a march to meet an Authority for redress of grievances) or to offer 'Satyagraha', our primary school teachers give a ready response to their call. During recent history in most of the States, there was overwhelming response to such calls of the organization with the result that the professional organizations have been able to secure better conditions of service for the primary school teachers in India as a whole. Recently the Government of India has

directed that no primary school teacher, should begin on a salary less than Rs. 40 per month, if he is an untrained and less than Rs. 50/ if he is a trained one. The insecurity of tenure of a teacher has also attracted sufficient attention and attempts are being made to give him the security which he so sorely needs.

The life of an Indian primary school teacher is a dedicated one. He wants only a little elbow room

to live and he is satisfied. Even as it is, he realizes that he is laying the foundations of the greatest democracy in the world of which he is rightly proud. Rightly is he called a Nation Builder. The base of the building is not seen and never appreciated but it is there holding the burden of the whole structure. The primary school teacher's work is this and everybody is conscious of the fact. Because he is dedicated India lives.

Fourteen Hills Away

By Florencio Buen

AT 8:30 in the morning of September 9 the sun was valiantly trying to milt the mist that enveloped Sagada where Mr. Epifanio T. Ramos, the District Supervisor, holds office and the starting point of the 2-week trip that we took to the interior of Bontoc. The day before, I received a letter from him informing me of the trip we shall take together "in order for both of us to see the actual conditions obtaining in the different barrio schools of your municipality especially with regards to enrollment and attendance."

I was new in the place being assigned only a month before as principal and doubtless, Mr. Ramos wanted to show me the conditions of the schools of Bontoc Municipality, the capital town of Mountain Province. Our itinerary covered fourteen barrios in two weeks. What took place in these two weeks is an experience I cannot forget and want to share with others.

At 9:00 o'clock that morning, the two-week hike up and down mountain trails started from the District Office. Sagada seemed to have been swallowed by a big monster in its cavernous and misty mouth. The mist was so thick that you could look up at the sun without hurting your eyes. The cold mountain air whistled among the pine needles and drove the mist among the trees.

There were three of us in the party — Mr. Ramos, Mr. Muting, the property clerk, and I. Mr. Muting came with us to act as our guide and interpreter as he is a native of the place. Mr. Ramos was the pacer of the team. I found out later that despite his diminutive size (five feet-two inches, and weighs around 115 pounds) he was an excellent hiker. I, the tallest and the heaviest, was the poorest hiker having climbed no mountains before. Each carried his own pack on his back.

Our lunch was scheduled at Tanulong, a barrio cozily nestled in a deep valley along the banks of swift mountain rapids. After three and a half hours of hiking, we reached the barrio school which was manned by a husband-wife team. For lunch, they served us dried meat of wild pig shot by the husband in one of his Saturday hunting trips to Dalican, the next barrio in our itinerary.

Three big boys carried our packs for us from Tanulong to Dalican, a barrio atop a high mountain. We started from Tanulong at 1:00 o'clock. Before we reached the foot of the mountain we had to cross the river through a hanging bridge with steel suspensions. The bridge should have been called a hammock bridge because it swang crazily as one walks across it. We had to cross individually because of the dangerous sway. Huge rocks and the swift rapids seemed to wait for the unfortunate. At 1:30 o'clock we started climbing. The sides of the mountains were so steep that one could kiss the heels of the fellow he was following.

The fellow who said that mountain climbing is an excellent sport should have joined us. Perhaps, he would have changed his mind about the matter. As we went up, the air became drier but colder. Water from rivulets rushing down the mountain sides quenched our thirst. The higher we went, the shorter our steps became. Fatigue began to creep on us. We kept on asking our guides how far we had still to go which was invariably answered with "a little bit more." After five or six "a little bit more's" I said to the amusement of my companions that the mountain was growing every minute.

At 4:30 o'clock, we reached the top at last. Here we were richly rewarded with red ripe berries that grew wild every where on the mountain top. We ate