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The Philippine



EDUCATOR — THE VOICE OF 85,000 TEACHERS

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE *Philippine Public School Teachers Association*

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Editorial

Dean Paco Benitez Passes Away!

Dean Paco Benitez of the U.P. College of Education went to his eternal rest after succumbing to a heart attack on June 30, 1951. Elsewhere in this issue are editorials clipped from local newspapers depicting the life of our Beloved Dean and the influence of that life upon the education of this country in particular and upon the people in general. We can add nothing to the glory of his name, except the following futile words:

He was of and for the people, especially the masses, those who are unpretentious, those who are lowly, those who are untouched by the glitter and glamour of sophisticated society. He used to ride in busses, not in shining limousines, so that he could be in close touch with the people and feel their heart-throbs. His simple tastes are proverbial. Among those who received the solicitude and ministrations of his great heart were janitors and laborers of the University campus, who received regularly from him some form of material assistance. He used to walk around with his inseparable umbrella, and he loved to talk to people, hold them by the sleeves or pat them on the shoulders, and greet them by their first names. He had a great memory for names, especially for those of his students or his associates in education. He remembered names of persons he had known many years back. He knew many men and women now become great in their respective careers, but he never mentioned the fact that they were once his subalterns. One of the great politicians of the country today used to be his clerk, but he never mentioned that fact in public. He was indeed a great lover of humanity!

His was the philosophical mind, for he took things in his stride, and looked upon life rather philosophically. He was never perturbed over issues, great or small. He always looked upon problems of every-

day living with a heartening outlook, and this attitude was so well manifested in his contagious and cheery smile. His was a mind that delved deep into the meaning of things, and from apparently prosaic situations he was always capable of drawing out an object lesson, a meaning, an enlightening opinion. Ever bubbling with enthusiasm for new ideas, he nevertheless refrained from imposing his opinion on others. He was always desirous to draw something from the potential greatness of each individual personality. He never had an obsession beyond giving each man his due and recognizing each man's worth and prerogatives. He was indeed the Great Democrat!

He was never in a ruffle, nor was he ever in a hurry. He always wanted to have ideas simmer down, to take time to season and mature, and to crystallize of themselves in God's given time. He was conservative in the sense that he wanted to preserve real gains in culture; but he was progressive in the sense that he never closed his mind to the influence of a new idea. He was not easily swayed by rhetorics, nor did he take in everything that science would offer for his thinking. Always he mulled over ideas, turning them over and over again, looking at them from all angles, much as a sculptor does in fashioning a statue. Having examined an idea from all points of view, he usually comes out with an idea all his own. He was indeed an educational statesman!

We have lost the Beloved Dean, but his memory will linger long in the hearts and in the lives of his countrymen.

MARCELINO BAUTISTA
Editor

Editorials From Local Papers

DEATH OF A GREAT TEACHER

The sudden, unexpected death of Dean Francisco Benitez seems to be a jarring note in a life which was all the more fruitful because it was given to contemplation. It is hard to believe that Dean Benitez, a man who had spent most of his years in the peace and quiet of the classroom, should be overtaken by death on a sidewalk bustling with life and people. And yet, viewing his career as an educator and looking once more at his philosophy as a man, it seems fitting that he should die in the presence of the anonymous people he understood so well and with whom he proudly identified himself.

For the outstanding quality of Dean Benitez was his enormous love for the people. He was tolerant of their shortcomings and it was for their improvement that he labored hard and long. He regarded education not as an end in itself but as a means to elevate the people, to make of them useful and thinking citizens, and to enable them to enjoy what Bertrand Russell has called "the good life."

He was for an educational system geared to the needs of the people. A liberal and a democrat to the very root of his being, he had a pas-

sionate abhorrence for any method of instruction which would give rise to any form of aristocracy, intellectual or social. In the minds of thousands of students who passed through his hands and who are now teaching in schools scattered all over the country, he instilled a respect and love for democracy. He taught them, by precept and example, their usefulness as teachers could be measured only by their efforts towards the strengthening of democratic society.

Considered one of the ablest of our educators, Dean Benitez found contentment and a chance to render service in the comparative obscurity of his position as dean of the U.P. College of Education. Save for a brief term as Secretary of Education under President Osmeña, his life was spent wholly in the campus. But his fame went far beyond the boundaries of the campus, not because of that publicity which has projected many a less gifted official into prominence, but because of an inner worth which not even his self-effacing nature could obscure.

Those who have known him will feel the tragedy of his death. For surely, it is for having known him that many of them are richer in experience and wisdom. He was a teacher in the classic sense of this much-abused term. He was a pipe-smoking Socrates, always humorous yet ever so wise, whose greatest teaching is devotion to principle. Well may it be said of him, "After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well."

Reprinted from THE MANILA CHRONICLE, July 1, 1951.

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HE DID NOT DIE

The man who has build^d can never die.

The hand of fate which cruelly and suddenly tore Francisco Benitez from the soul and structure of his people, did not kill Francisco Benitez.

Francisco Benitez throughout his full life has been the Builder. He founded and built the edifice of Philippine education from which came the status today of the Philippine nation as high among its peers in the culture of the world.

His physical presence has left the scene of his endeavours. But Francisco Benitez lives in his achievements, in the cultural heritage he bequeathed to his people.

He did not die.

Reprinted from THE MANILA TIMES, July 1, 1951

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YOU AND I

DEAN FRANCISCO BENITEZ,
Teachers Cottage,
Heaven

Dear Dean:

I read in the papers that you left yesterday for a long rest.

Sorry I was not there when you took your flight. And I am writing to tell you that I miss you and your cheerful chuckle.

You know I am so selfish I really wished you did not go so soon. For I need both your counsel and your companionship. But I am not so dull as not to know that you have toiled so long, and the body, however strong, always needs a little repose.

Last December they voted you Teacher of the Year, remember? I remarked then that at last they discovered you after you have been teaching for fifty years without stint.

And I said I was not praising you. I was only envying you for the happiness that you have brought to uncounted people through your teaching.

But what really got them beholden to you is that, as a teacher, you are never smug. You are revolutionary in ideas and pedagogy, always blazing a short cut to decent humanity. They finally captured your inspiration and pinned a medal on your breast.

Listen, dear friend, I know you will have a chance to meet the Teacher of Galilee, the first revolutionary Dominic. He made the high priests of Israel so mad with his seditious lessons that they eventually got Him nailed on the Cross, which ultimately became the symbol of the redemption and divinity of man.

I would be very happy if I could listen to your colloquy with the Divine Teacher.

But bestir not yourself now.

In the night when everything is quiet, just whisper, dear friend, and I'll understand.

Rest well, Adieu.
G.R.

DEAN F. BENITEZ

In the death of Dean Francisco Benitez the nation has lost a man who knew the sterling virtues that make the stalwart man and who sought constantly to teach them. In his quiet, unassuming way, the late Dean Benitez has helped mould the minds of his people in a manner most conducive to the good, honest life.

Identified during his lifetime with the educational progress and development of his country, Dean Benitez has served faithfully and well in the effort to enrich the Filipino mind.

To his many friends and admirers, and to future generations, he has left the pattern of his own life as a legacy. His was the quiet greatness of a man in whose life one recognizes the basic values he imparted to others. It is the kind of greatness that deepens the loss to a people of a man who has contributed immensely to their moral and spiritual growth.

Francisco Benitez, Noted Educator, Dies After Heart Attack

Dean Francisco Benitez, of the UP college of education, died at 11 o'clock yesterday morning at the Singian Clinic, following a heart attack. He was 64 years old.

The dean left his San Juan residence as usual at 8 o'clock yesterday morning to go to his downtown office. He was walking along Carriedo with a friend whom he had met when he suddenly felt pain in the heart.

The friend hailed a taxi and accompanied him to the Singian Clinic. On the way to the hospital, Dean Benitez lost consciousness. He died a few minutes after arrival at the hospital.

His body lies in state at the chapel of the University of the Philippines in Diliman. Interment will take place today, Sunday, funeral cortege starting from the UP chapel at 10 o'clock this morning.

Surviving are his widow, the former Paz Marquez and four children, Francisco Jr., Mrs. Virginia Licuanan, Roberto and Rafael.

Universally considered the foremost educator in the Philippines, Dean Benitez was born in Pagsanjan, Laguna, on June 4, 1887, son of Higinio Benitez, one of the signers of the Malolos Constitution.

He graduated from the Philippine Normal School in 1904 and after serving a few months as principal of the primary school in Paquil, Laguna, he was sent to the United States as government pensionado in 1905. He graduated from the Western Illinois State Normal School in 1908.

Returning to the Philippines, he became assistant supervising teacher in Bacoor, Cavite. He went back to the United States in 1910 and obtained B.S. degree from Columbia University. In 1914, he was granted an M.A. by Columbia.

After teaching education at the University of the Philippines from 1915, he founded the state university's college of education in 1918 and became its dean. He has been dean of the college since then.

He also was member of the national council of education in 1936, acting commissioner of private education in 1938. After the war, President Osmeña made him member of his cabinet as secretary of education and chairman of the national council of education.

In 1929, Columbia University granted him the University Medal for distinguished service to education. That same year, he was granted the degree of doctor of laws, honoris causa, by the University of Manila. The National University conferred on him the doctorate degree this year.

He was the founder and the editor of the Philippine Journal of Education. He was also organizer and first president of the National Federa-

tion of Filipino Teachers; director, Institute of Pacific Relations, Philippine council; and director, Boy Scouts of the Philippines.

High tribute was paid the late Dean Benitez last night by President Quirino who issued the following statement:

I mourn with great sorrow the death of Dean Francisco Benitez of the College of Education, University of the Philippines. Dean Benitez has dedicated his life unselfishly and devotedly to the service of his country in the field of education. Our educational development today can be attributed to a considerable degree to his efforts.

Legions of school teachers over the Philippines were his students who love him for his big heart and deep understanding. He was respected by all for his quiet simplicity and high integrity of character.

Reprinted from THE MANILA TIMES, Sunday, July 1, 1951

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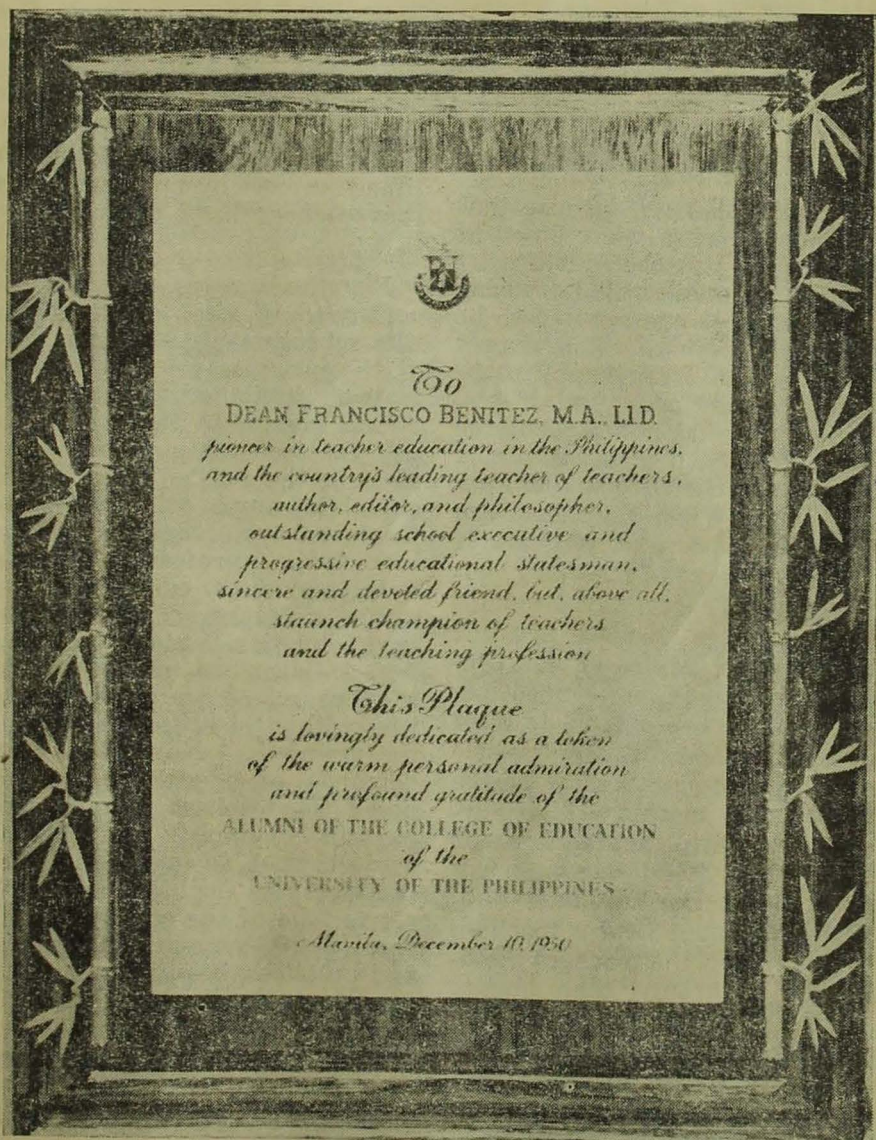
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To

DEAN FRANCISCO BENITEZ, M.A., L.I.D.

*pioneer in teacher education in the Philippines,
and the country's leading teacher of teachers,
author, editor, and philosopher,
outstanding school executive and
progressive educational statesman,
sincere and devoted friend, but, above all,
staunch champion of teachers
and the teaching profession*

This Plaque

*is lovingly dedicated as a token
of the warm personal admiration
and profound gratitude of the*

ALUMNI OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
of the
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Manila, December 10, 1950

Picture of the plaque awarded to Dean Francisco Benitez when he was voted Teacher of the Year last December, 1950.