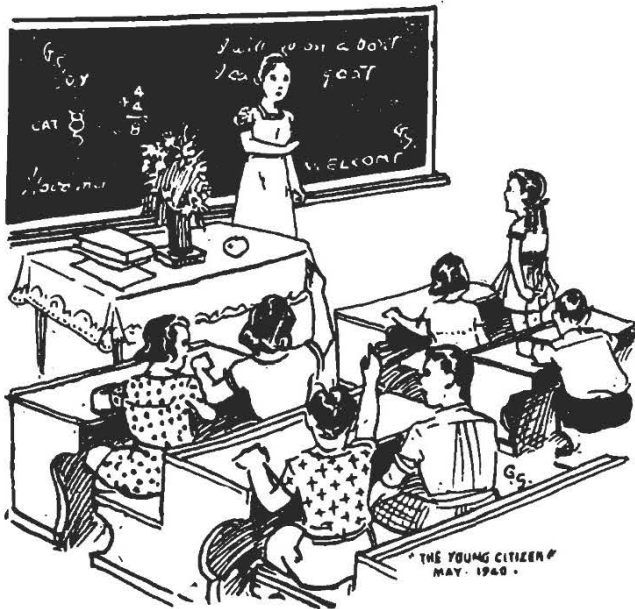


I'LL SELL CHEESE, MRS. TORRES

By AMPARO L. KILATES *



"THIS is the last day of school," Mrs. Torres said to the Grade Four class. "Tomorrow will be the first day of vacation. What are your plans for this summer?"

Many raised hands eagerly.

"Yes, Nita," Mrs. Torres called on a ten-year old girl.

"I'm going to Baguio with Aunt Carmen. Mother says I may," Nita told the class.

"That is good. Baguio is cool and beautiful and is a good place to spend the summer season in. And you, Jose?"

Jose stood up promptly and said, "Oh, I will visit Mt. Mayon and Consocep Falls," he declared.

"Hmmm," Pedro, the naughty boy, cleared his throat in an exaggerated way. Everybody smiled, for it was common knowledge that the two boys had an old-time rivalry for class leadership.

"Well, Pedro," Mrs. Torres said, "what are your plans?"

"I—er—I shall go hunting with my grandfather," Pedro said, and almost every one laughed because the class knew that Pedro's grandfather, already a tottering old man, couldn't even go out without his cane, and couldn't recognize a boy from a girl unless he had his spectacles on.

"How about you, Lino?" This time Mrs. Torres picked out the most polite and serious boy in the class.

Before Lino could answer, and before the teacher could stop it, half of the class chorused in taunting unison: "*Queso, queso! Bagong bago! Tolo veinte cinco!*" (Cheese! cheese! Very new! Three for twenty-five centavos!)

Poor Lino blushed, turned pale, then grew red again. Finally he managed to say in a calm voice, "I will sell cheese, Mrs. Torres, because my mother is sick, and we are very poor."

The tittering of the class subsided into a long silence. Then Mrs. Torres remarked quietly, "Lino, you have the best plan."

WHY THE CATS . . .

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From that time on, the house was rid of rats.

But the rats have never been exterminated. It is because they are clever. They know how to escape and elude their enemies. They are not always hiding. When the cats are away, the rats do play.

* Cabusao, Camarines Sur.