

## READING TIME FOR YOUNG FOLKS

### A Vacation Story

IT was the first day of school and the children in one of the grades of Central School had a new teacher.

"What is her name?" Josefa asked Salud.

"Miss Benitez," answered Salud. "And I think we are going to like her very much."

By that time many of the pupils were in the room.

Soon Miss Benitez entered. She had some packages which she placed on her desk.

"Come, boys and girls," said Miss Benitez in a pleasant voice. "I have brought some things for our room. During vacation I visited a number of places, and wherever I went, I thought of our school room. So I have some things which I think you will like."

Many of the children had gathered around the desk of their new teacher.

"Please, Miss Benitez, will you show us the things you have brought?" asked little Maria.

"Yes, indeed," replied Miss Benitez. "We shall unpack some of them right now."

"Miss Benitez," said Romualdo, "where did you go during your vacation?"

"I went to a number of interesting places. First I went down to see the southern islands in the Philippines. We people who live up in Luzon do not get down there very often. I have brought you some articles from Mindanao and Jolo and Negros and other places in the southern islands. I spent some of my vacation in Teachers Camp up at Baguio. I have brought something from the Mountain Province which I think will interest you."

"What a splendid vacation you must have had!" said Roberto.

"Yes, I did," replied Miss Benitez. "I have not yet told you that I also was in Hongkong for several weeks visiting friends. Of course I got some interesting articles in Hongkong for our room. But now, let us open

these packages and see what I have."

First Miss Benitez showed them several wood carvings which she had brought from Baguio. One was a carving of a carabao with a boy sitting on his back. It was very cleverly cut out of black wood.

From Jolo there was a bright colored piece of cloth to be used as a cover for the reading table in the corner.

"Here is something else I got at Jolo. Some large mother-of-pearl shells. But-



tons are made from shells like these, and magnificent pearls are found in some of them. See how beautiful they are on the inside," Miss Benitez said to the interested children.

"These faces came from Zamboanga," she said as she showed some large coconuts, the husks of which were carved into grotesque masks.

"I got these in Negros," Miss Benitez went on as she showed a basketful of interesting shells of many kinds. Juliana held one of the largest to her ear, and heard something which sounded like the faint roar of the sea.

"But look at this lovely little Chinese painting," continued Miss Benitez. "It is from Hongkong, and is painted on rice paper. And here are some curious Chinese locks from Hongkong. They will interest the boys."

The children were delighted with what they had seen.

"I will show you the rest of the things and tell you about them later on," said Miss Benitez.

The next day the lessons of the class began. It was easy to see that already the children liked Miss Benitez very much.

After classes were dismissed in the afternoon a group of the pupils of this room got together under a large acacia tree out in the school yard. They were talking about Miss Benitez.

"She is just lovely," announced Josefa.

"I like her fine," said Valeriano.

"Let's do something nice for her," suggested Eustaquia.

"What will it be?" asked Salud.

"I'll tell you what would be nice," said Francisca. "Suppose we make her a scrapbook. I will get a suitable book

from my father's store, and each one of us will put something in it which will tell of our vacation."

So the children met after school the next day, and began at the work table to make a vacation scrapbook for their new teacher.

Each pupil was to have a page in the book to show something done during vacation days.

With scissors and paste they were very busy for several days. Miss Benitez never guessed even once that her pupils were making a present for her.

By and by the book was done. Maria had painted a picture of a farm house and a large mango tree nearby to show where she had spent her vacation.

Juanito had pasted on his page some small photographs he had made with his kodak. There was a picture of Mayon Volcano which he had visited, and a picture of a sailboat in which he had gone fishing. Down in one corner of the page was a picture of Juanito himself in a boy scout uniform.

Josefa wrote on her page about her trip to Antipolo, and illustrated her story with a picture of the famous church there.

Francisca fastened to her page some pressed flowers which she had collected on a trip to the waterfalls at Pagsanjan.

There was a page of pictures of vegetables cut from a magazine to show what Pedro had done during vacation. There was also a page of sketches of birds which Juliana had studied about in her spare time. Under each sketch was written the name of the bird.

Tomas had a page of postage stamps from the collection he had made during

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## A VACATION STORY

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vacation, and on her page Dorotea had pasted some post cards received from friends who went away while she stayed home. Urbana had drawn a picture of herself taking care of her little baby sister.

There were many more pages, and each one told a story of what some pupil had done during the vacation.

Dorotea's mother gave them some red silk cord with which to fasten the book together after holes had been punched in the leaves.

How surprised Miss Benitez was when the children gave her the beautiful book. She put it on the reading table in the corner where every one could see it.

"Thank you, boys and girls, for this lovely book," said Miss Benitez.

"Thank you, Miss Benitez," said the boys and girls, "for the interesting gifts you brought us, and for being such a nice, kind teacher. We will do our best to be good pupils."

Do you think the new teacher liked her new class?

## A REVIEW

- Did you like this story? Why?
- Do you think Miss Benitez is the kind of teacher you would like? Why?
- What shows that Miss Benitez was interested in her class?
- What three trips did Miss Benitez make during her vacation?
- Name the important southern islands of the Philippines.
- Fine them on the map.
- Where is Baguio? Find it on the map.
- Where is Hongkong? Find it on the map.
- What did Miss Benitez bring from Baguio for her class?
- Have you seen a carving like the one described in this story?
- Are many of the Filipinos who live near Baguio skillful at carving?
- What two things did Miss Benitez bring from Jolo?
- How do you think the cloth was woven which she brought?
- Are mother-of-pearl shells which come from Jolo valuable? Why?
- What things are made from mother-of-pearl shells?
- What valuable jewels are sometimes found in mother-of-pearl shells?
- Have you ever seen grotesque faces cut from coconut husks?
- Would you be interested in a collection of shells such as Miss Benitez brought from Negros?
- Did you ever put a shell to your ear and hear a sound like the faint roar of the sea?
- Have you ever seen a Chinese painting on rice paper?
- Have you ever seen any Chinese puzzle locks?
- Why do you think the boys and girls wanted to make a "vacation scrapbook" for their teacher?
- What was their plan?
- What was on Maria's page?
- What was on Juanito's page?
- How did Josefa make her page?
- What did Francisca do with her page?
- How did Pedro show what he had done during vacation?
- What was on Juliana's page?
- What did Tomas put on his page?
- What did Urbana place on her page?
- Can you think of some other ways of making pages in the "vacation scrapbook" which are not mentioned in this story?
- Do you think your teacher would like to have you and your classmates make her a "vacation scrapbook"?
- Why not plan to do it, and surprise her?
- Would it make her happy? Try it and see.
- Tell one thing which you can do to make your school a happy school.

## CROSS-WORD PUZZLE

*(Answers to puzzle on page 213)*