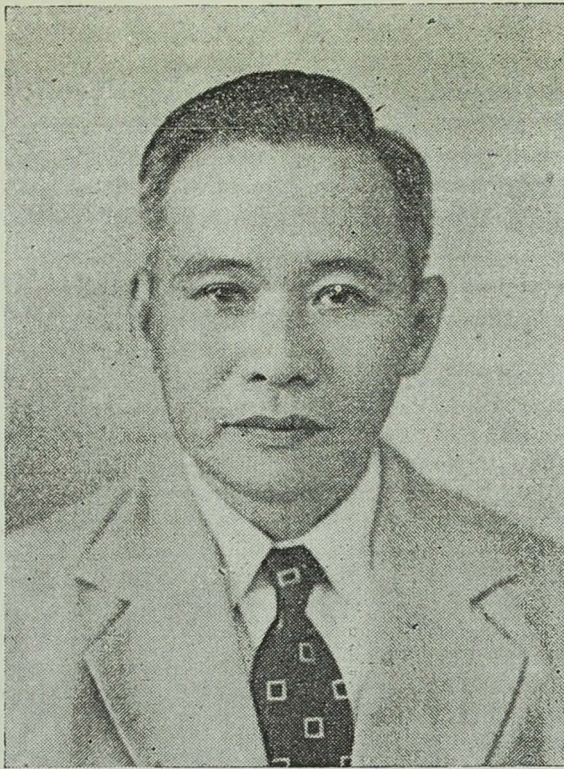


Beloved
Boss
(And Hope)



of
57,000
Teachers

ESTEBAN R. ABADA

Philippine Educator

Under his control and supervision, as of July, 1946, are 11 normal and technical schools, 188 secondary schools (including general, secondary trade, secondary agricultural, and rural), and 11,904 elementary schools, with their force of 56,851 teachers and their enrolment of 3,257,868 pupils.

He was born in the town of Saravia, Negros Occidental, on March 15, 1896, or about two years before Commodore Dewey battered the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay. He received his early schooling at the public school of Kabankalan, Negros Occidental. Later he came to Manila to enroll as a student pensionado at the Philippine Normal School. He was president of his class.

He became an elementary classroom teacher soon after graduation from the normal school in 1915. A little over a

year afterwards he was promoted as an elementary school principal, and in still another year rose to be a supervising teacher.

He arrived in the United States in the fall of 1919 as a pensionado of the Philippine Government. He obtained a Teacher's Life Certificate besides an academic degree (A.B. with distinction, University of Michigan), and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Like many others of his countrymen who have been to America, he developed a gen-

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time faith in democracy and an abiding admiration for the American way of life.

After his return to the Philippines in 1922, he was assigned as a secondary school teacher. Two years later he became a high school principal, in 1927 a division superintendent of schools, and in 1939 the administrative officer of the Bureau of Education. By this time he had seen service in various parts of his country. During much of the Japanese occupation he stayed on his farm in Mindoro.

He is a member of the National Council of Education, the Board of Regents of the University of the Philippines, and the Government Radio Broadcasting Committee. He has likewise something to do with the preparation of regulations governing the selection of Filipino pensionados for the United States and other foreign countries.

In his book *A Decade of American Government in the Philippines*, Dr. David P. Barrows of the University of

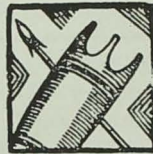
California said: "American claims of contributing to the world's experience in the governance of empire lie in the personal and political liberty guaranteed to the Filipinos and in the success of popular education." Unfortunately, because of the war, the cause of popular education in the Philippines suffered a tremendous setback. At the time of liberation approximately 85 per cent of the school buildings in the country were found to have been destroyed or damaged. In many places school equipment, materials and supplies, let alone textbooks and supplementary readers, had virtually disappeared. And on top of all these difficulties, school children by the thousands sought desperately to gain admission in the public schools.

These were among the problems that faced Esteban R. Abada when he assumed office as Director of Education on June 27, 1946. They are his problems still.

BIG MEN'S

ESTEBAN

Director



PROBLEMS

R. ABADA

of Education

This convention has been called in order that superintendents can exchange ideas and opinions on our educational problems and agree upon specific and workable proposals for meeting them. I will not impose upon your patience and intelligence by a needless oral recital of our common problems. They are suggested on your copy of the convention agenda.

Neither is there any necessity for a long exposition of the magnitude of your task. For the circumstances have made our problems inherently big—big beyond words. The heavy hand of war

struck at our schools and left them in ruins. School equipment and supplies which it had taken us years to acquire or stock were wantonly destroyed or looted; books and records were put to the torch.

Other complicating factors added to our difficulty. When the inevitable wave of inflation came, teachers who survived the struggle and rejoined our ranks were again harassed by economic insecurity on account of abnormally high living costs which they had to meet with stationary, inadequate in-

comes. As a result many have left the service for more remunerative work elsewhere. Such turnover in our teacher personnel has become alarmingly frequent and large, and we have been compelled to recruit inadequately trained persons to carry on educational work.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation, the government has taken steps to alleviate the lot of public school teachers. New elementary teaching positions—8,380 in all, each at a basic monthly salary of P80 — have been created for additional classes. Qualified and deserving teachers may now be promoted to these items. Two hundred new national positions for supervisors have been provided for at P1,800 each per annum. Bonuses for secondary school teachers on the provincial rolls have also been allowed. B.S.E. graduates who are only junior teacher eligibles may now be extended regular appointments in the secondary schools. Other plans to give teachers freedom from fear and want are now under serious study. Among those are (1) the restoration of the teachers' pension system, (2) the establishment of a Teachers National Cooperative Association and of a Teachers Building and Loan Association. It is hoped that these measures will help bolster up teacher morale which is reeling under the impact of the hard times.

Instructional, administrative, and supervisory problems have become very acute. On top of the inadequacy of teacher preparation there is the problem of overageness among many of our pupils and students, accentuated by the lack of textbooks and other teaching materials. Because of the difficulties

and the prohibitive costs of transportation, some of the functions of administration and supervision have not received so much attention as they should

There may also have been noted a disturbing slack in the morals of our people and, in a few cases, a consequent distortion of those age-old concepts of public duty and official integrity which have hitherto kept our service upon a high moral plane.

Another significant factor that has increased the magnitude of our current educational problems is our new-found national freedom. The birth of a nation brings in its train new problems and new demands. It is only natural that the agencies of public education, our bureau among them, should assume its due share of the responsibility of meeting the requirements of our new national life. Ours is the obligation to find out in what new directions lies the mission of the schools under our charge, and to perform the added functions with undiminished zeal.

As a group, we are thus faced with one of the greatest challenges of our time. The odds are, on the surface, against us. But superintendents are tried, experienced men. You have ample reserves of resourcefulness and you have not been known to shirk responsibility. You shall not fail our country in her hour of need. I am, therefore, confident that we shall be able to solve many of our problems in the same give-and-take, democratic fashion that characterized our pre-war conventions and conferences. Thus may we hope to contribute our share to the common welfare and to the success of our young Republic.