

CHARACTER EDUCATION SECTION

The Golden Star

DOLORES TENSUAN *

THURSDAY afternoon. The intermediate classes had just been dismissed.

Three boys stood on the corner of the streets merrily joking one another, as they enjoyed eating ice-drop.

"Li - way - way! Li - way - - - way!" shouted a twelve-year-old boy as he ran along the street with a bunch of magazines tucked under his right arm.



"There goes our classmate, Eduardo. He is selling 'Liwayway,'" exclaimed one of the three boys.

"Yes, indeed," said the other. "That explains why he was absent this afternoon. What a liar! I heard him tell Miss Roxas this morning that he couldn't attend his classes in the afternoon because he had to help his mother."

* Washington Elementary School.

"Is that so?" asked Pedro, the tallest of the three. "Come along, boys, let us run after him and mock him."

"That will be fun," agreed the other.

They all ran after Eduardo, all the while shouting at the top of their voices. "Li-way--way!"

Pretty soon they overtook Eduardo. One held him by the collar, another snatched a magazine, while Pedro gave him a box on the arm and said, "Selling Liwayway, eh, and yet you very cleverly lied to our teacher this morning."

"Stop, boys, leave me alone! Let me go! Give me back my magazine," angrily protested poor Eduardo as he wriggled away from their hold.

"No, Ed, we won't let you go unless you give us an ice-drop blow-out," threatened Pedro.

"Yes, do buy for us ten centavos worth of ice-drop, Ed. Anyway, you have made a good profit by this time," seconded Jose.

Just then the third boy saw the principal coming along. "Here comes the principal, Pedro. Let Eduardo go on his way!" shouts the boy.

The three left Eduardo who then peacefully went on with his selling.

Friday morning. After the opening exercises, Miss Roxas, the teacher in charge of Seven B, asked, "Has anybody

something to report about a worthy deed done by a member of the "Good Behavior Club"?

Nobody answered. Miss Roxas said, "Well, I'm sorry to know that no member gets a star for good behavior today."

Pedro stands and asks, "May I report on an act of misdemeanor done by one of the members, Miss Roxas?"

"Certainly, you may, Pedro, provided of course, that you don't mention names."

"Well, do you remember, Miss Roxas, that one of our classmates asked permission from you yesterday to be excused from his classes because he had to help his mother?" asked Pedro.

"Yes, I do. Why, what is wrong with that?"

"Nothing, Miss Roxas, except that he told a lie. He did not help his mother but did something else," said Pedro.

"He sold 'Liwayway,' volunteered Jose.

"Li-way---way!" mockingly shouted another boy imitating the manner Eduardo hawks his wares.

The class burst into laughter. Poor Eduardo bowed his head, bit his lips, and tried hard to keep back his tears.

The teacher looked sharply at the class and it was quiet again. She looked kindly at Eduardo and approached him.

Eduardo very shyly looked up and with tears in his eyes said, "Excuse me, Miss Roxas. I did not mean to tell a lie. I told you that I would help Moth-

er. I really helped her earn money by selling 'Liwayway.' Father is dead and what mother gets by washing clothes is not enough for us."

The teacher's eyes were moist and her voice was husky as she said, "I understand the situation very well, Eduardo. I am very proud of you."

Miss Roxas got a big golden star which was awarded only to the member who had done the noblest deed and placed it opposite Eduardo's name on the "Roll of Honor Chart."



QUESTIONS

1. Does Eduardo deserve the golden star? Justify your opinion.
2. How should we feel towards boys and girls who help their parents earn money?
3. Can you name persons who rose from poverty to fame and success because of their industry during boyhood?