

HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION

FRANCISCO'S LESSONS

(As Related by a School Principal)

ONE morning, not so very long ago, I started to walk to school—a very large school of which I was one of the principals. As I neared the playground, I noticed that something a little bit unusual was happening. You know a teacher very quickly senses anything that is not quite right among his pupils.

"*Manok! Manok!*" shouted some of the children who were playing in the school yard.

Certainly I understood very well that the word *manok* is the word for "chicken" in our native vernacular, but I couldn't understand why the children were shouting it. I looked around, but I did not see any chicken.

Just then I saw a boy run up to another and strike him in the face with such force that the boy who had been struck fell to the ground with blood streaming from his nose.

I hastened my steps. Of course I had seen playground quarrels before, but this one seemed a little different from the usual school-boy affair.

By the time I reached the actual place of the encounter, some of the larger boys had picked up the boy who had been struck, and had taken him, with blood still streaming from his nose, to the school nurse. I went in to find out what had happened.

"What happened to this boy?" asked the school nurse, as she washed away the blood from the boy's nose and stopped further flow. "What happened to this boy?"

"Somebody knocked him down and

bloodied his nose," replied Jose, who had witnessed the affair.

"Who struck him?" I asked.

"Francisco hit him, sir," answered Felipe.

"Where is Francisco?"

"Here he comes," he said, as two patrol boys came in with Francisco.

"Did you strike Tulio?" I asked.

"Ye-e-s, sir," stammered Francisco with downcast eyes.

"Why did you strike him?"

"He made fun of me, sir. And he was causing the other children to make fun of me, also. Tulio called me '*manok*', and then the other children shouted the same thing. I got very angry and hit him. I did not mean to hurt him."

"Just for that little thing you got angry and knocked Tulio down and bloodied his nose?" I asked. "You are not what they were calling you, are you?"

Francisco did not answer. I noticed that he had his right hand in his pocket. I was about to ask him to take his hand out of his pocket, when a boy whispered to me, "He has only three fingers on his hand, sir, just like the foot of a chicken."

"So that was the reason why he got angry," I said to myself. I began to see why the word *manok* shouted in derision by thoughtless schoolmates would arouse Francisco's temper.

"Come with me. I want to talk to you alone," I said to Francisco.

I took the boy to my office. In our private talk, Francisco related to me how he lost his thumb and small finger. Of course it was because of his carelessness

and disobedience. His father had warned him of the danger of playing with lighted fire-crackers. He did not heed the warning.

One evening while playing a war game with other boys, he lighted a large fire-cracker which exploded in his hand before he could throw it at any one. His thumb and last finger were injured so badly that the doctor feared that tetanus (lock-jaw) might result. The doctor amputated his hand, and the boy lost his thumb and small finger. This left him with only the three fingers on that hand.

Of course, boy-like, not until after the accident did Francisco realize the truth of what his father had told him—how it is not safe to play with firecrackers, especially lighted ones.

But the loss of his fingers was not all. He had more suffering to endure, for in the school thoughtless children called him "manok" because of his having only three fingers as a chicken has three toes. To the boy the situation became unbearable. I began to see Francisco's side of it, and I sympathized with him.

I talked kindly to the boy. I tried to make him realize that the more one gets angry when jeered by thoughtless persons, the more such persons will find delight in shouting their jeers. In that way I was able to make the boy see that

it was better for him to pay no attention to anything which he heard said about him by careless children.

"Yes, Francisco," I said, "that is the best way. You see you did not heed your father's safety warning, so you lost your fingers. It is always dangerous to play with large, lighted firecrackers. I hope you have learned your lesson of safety."

"I have, sir," interrupted Francisco.

"And now," I continued, "you must also learn a lesson in good citizenship. Learn to pay no attention to those jeer-

ing, thoughtless boys and girls, and do not let what they say make you angry. Do you think you can do that?" I asked.

"I will try, sir," the boy answered.

Francisco kept his word, and ceased to be annoyed apparently, when the undesirable name of "manok" was shouted at him by some careless youngster. In a short time the children who used to call Francisco

"manok" got tired of shouting the name at him, for they realized they could not make him angry. Presently it ceased entirely, and the affair was ended.

Francisco had learned two lessons—a lesson in safety and a lesson in good citizenship, although the former had cost him dearly. Perhaps this story, if told through *The Young Citizen* to many of the boys and girls of the Philippines, may help someone to avoid a painful ac-

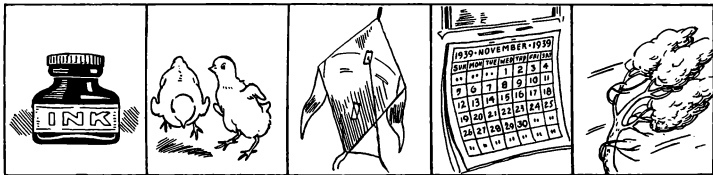
(Please turn to page 418.)



It is dangerous to play with lighted fire-crackers.

SOME RIDDLES FOR FOURTH GRADERS

(Answers from page 410)



1. Ink

2. Chickens

3. Kite

4. Calendar

5. Wind

THE KITTEN

(Continued from page 417)

Then I remembered how to talk kitten talk. Meow, meow, meow! I'll never play with the puppy dogs again."—*Adapted.*

SOME QUESTIONS

1. Did you like this story? Why?
2. Why were the duck, the goat, and the cow not able to teach the kitten how to talk?
3. Why did the duck, the goat, and the cow think they knew how to teach the kitten to talk?
4. When a cat is young what is it called?
5. When a duck is young what is it called?
6. When a goat is young what is it called?
7. When a cow is young what is it called?

DICK WHITTINGTON

(Continued from page 401)

17. What did the captain tell the King?
18. What did the captain do with Dick's cat?
19. What did the King give the captain?
20. What did the rich merchant tell Dick?
21. What offer did Dick make to the rich merchant?
22. Whom did Dick marry when he was grown?
23. What official did Dick become?
24. Who is the mayor of a city?
25. Did you like this story? Why?
26. Do you think Dick was a good boy? Why?
27. Was he a kind boy? How do you know?
28. Was Dick an honest boy? Why do you think so?

FRANCISCO'S LESSONS

(Continued from page 403)

cident, and at the same time learn the two valuable lessons which Francisco learned.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the lesson in safety which Francisco learned?
2. How did disobedience and carelessness cause Francisco to suffer?
3. What is the second lesson which Francisco learned?
4. Was it difficult for Francisco to do what his principal asked him to do?
5. What do you learn from this story?
29. Do you think this story occurred a long time ago or recently?
30. What kind of man do you think Dick became? Why?