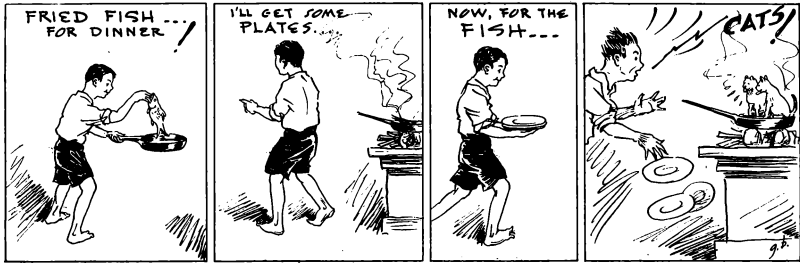


KIKO'S ADVENTURES-- He was a careless cook.

by gilmo baldovino



## Thoughts for the Young

By D. A. HERNANDEZ

**I**N your effort to develop in yourself a good character, remember that habits are not the only elements that constitute its foundation and its power.

Yes, you should form the habit of doing certain things in the right way, and unless you do such things habitually and not merely from impulse, you cannot be said to have a well-built or established character.

Habits should be so formed and should so impel you that you feel them to be as strong and as spontaneous as your inborn instincts. If you act politely from an idea you have been taught in school about the value of politeness, thinking of it everytime you find occasion to show politeness in your behavior, you have not truly formed the habit of being polite.

The best test or one of the best tests of politeness is seen when a person suddenly finds himself in a fit of anger. When one is excited by a violent feeling, his power of thinking is generally much hampered, darkened, or diminished. If, in spite of the violent feeling that possesses his mind, he does not utter harsh or insulting words, then he can truly be said to have formed the habit.

Such politeness is not merely a quality of external behavior. Such

politeness is decidedly not a result of cold calculation of what consequences impoliteness may bring upon oneself. Such politeness springs from a deeper sentiment of love, of respect, of humanity. Such behavior is the fine breath of inner goodness.

But most of our so-called habits are not rooted deep in the soul. Sometimes we do certain things in the right way only under certain circumstances. For example, we find children who observe certain beautiful forms of conduct in dealing with their teachers and forget them or even consciously violate them in dealing with others. We find, too, children who are polite to their teachers only as long as they are in their charge.

Just observe their rooms in school. Consider the diligence with which the pupils clean the floors and make them as shiny as mirrors. You can find no pieces of paper lying about. You step on the cold and slippery surface and feel delighted by the total absence of dust. We say that these pupils are daily forming the habit of cleanliness. We may suppose that they have formed the good habit when the school closes and they go home for a long rest.

But go and visit most of their homes. See how many of them

take delight in handling a broom and sweeping the floor and yard of their homes. See how many mothers and elder sisters have to do the work themselves while these school children, whom they tire themselves to death in order to send to school, do nothing but play.

Now, dear boys and girls, this is all wrong, and there is something wrong in the way they develop their character. And what is wrong? Here it is, and remember it. They have not formed in their hearts and minds those ideals from which our acts should spring, those ideals that give color and meaning to all worthy acts and deeds. The habits that they form or have formed have no root in their guiding beliefs, convictions, sentiments.

Doing certain things in certain ways with no better idea than pleasing their teachers and getting a good grade, they fail to develop ideals that will last throughout life. When a child has set before his mind a certain ideal of conduct, a deep and generalized feeling for what is right and good, his habits of action have such a strong foundation that they will never forsake him. He will never forget them. He will be as hard as stone in the face of the strongest temptations. More than that, he may not have the habit of doing a certain worthy act, an

## The Skylark

Words by  
J. Hogg

Music by  
Antonio Muñoz  
Tanjay, Negros Or.

*Andante*

Bird of the wil-der-ness, Blithe-some and cum-ber-less,  
Wild is thy lay and loud Far in the down-y cloud,

Sweet be thy mat-in o'er moor-land and lea!  
Love gives it en-er-gy, love gave it birth.

Em-blem of hap-pi-ness, Blest is thy dwell-ing place.  
Where, on thy dew-y wing, where art thou jour-ney-ing?

Oh! to a-bide in the des-ert with thee, Bird of the wil-der-ness.  
Thy lay's in heav-en, thy love is on earth, Bird of the wil-der-ness.

act that is still new to him, but he will perhaps inevitably form the habit by reason of that deep and generalized feeling for what is right and what is good, so strong and impelling in him.

Lacking in this fundamental element, your education will be almost useless. Nay, it may prove a real harm to you. Education may only show you more effective ways of doing what is not right and good.

And then you should remember, above all, that what is right and what is good are things that depend, not upon habits, but upon reason. You cannot let your habits perform

all your work. In the face of an entirely new problem, your habits may help you, but they may prove more disastrous to you. You should, therefore, not depend upon your habits alone. Habitual ways of doing certain things in a certain way may be right under certain conditions, but not under other conditions.

At your age this is perhaps hard to understand, but keep it in your mind and light will gradually come to you as you grow in years. Do not form the habit of reading and remembering things so easy that you do not have to think at all in un-

derstanding them. This is a very bad habit, for it means mental laziness and what they call mental flabbiness.

The main defect of our education, then, is failure to form those habits of action that develop from a certain fixed, well-defined ideal of conduct. Habits are just habits. There are no established ideals behind them, ideals that control them wherever they go, convictions that will inspire them and strengthen throughout life. Convictions are the soul of a good character. Habits are just tools with which convictions are made effective.