

living, with many interests and activities out of school."

"It's difficult to understand and it's also very easy to blame someone else for all of one's troubles. I hope that Miss Anderson realizes that some day. Right now she blames her mother for everything."

"What do you think is the heart of her problem?"

"Well, unquestionably the mother has dominated her life and subjected her daughter to every whim and wish. I hope that Miss Anderson will plan to have someone care for her mother so that she can be released for enough time to find relaxation and pleasure for herself. I hope that she develops some social life, that she gets back into studying and progressing in her professional work, and that she regains some of her old skill in working with children."

"Those are worth-while objectives and I wonder if she can meet them."

"I believe there's a chance," Molly said, as she started for the door.

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Clara Anderson returned to school and began to meet some of the problems which had confused her. "I had begun to think that I was different, that there was something very wrong with me because I have felt as I have," she said to Molly one day, "but you have helped me realize that everyone has frustrations and difficulties and that the important thing is not what happens to us, but rather how we *meet* what happens to us." New understanding of herself and her feelings and insight into her difficulties had come to Clara Anderson through Molly's friendly, personal interest.

Clara Anderson's personal problem was recognized by her principal when she walked out on a class of high school students. She could take it no longer. Like the good child who sits too quietly in the corner, the teacher who fails to exhibit such or similar behavior is frequently presumed to have no problems of personal adjustment. That such is not always true is revealed by Howard Y. McClusky, professor of educational psychology, University of Michigan, in his brief study of the personality of a teacher. Meet—

Mary Swanson—Teacher

Howard Y. McClusky

MARY SWANSON was a much better than acceptable teacher in a junior high school of suburban Grand City. She was already in her thirties and like most single women of her age viewed the passing years with apprehension. No one in her circle of associates knows her exact age, and many will tell you how adroitly she avoided the subject whenever it came up. She had enough insight to admit to herself and enough candor to confide in her friends that she wanted to marry and have a family. For several years she had been teaching other women's children and now she wanted a home and children of her own.

Before coming to Grand City in 1943 she had taught with much success in Mooreville. About two years before she gave up her position there she met and fell in love with

a young man who lived in the community. After several months of satisfying courtship they were engaged to be married. She was close to the fulfillment of her ambition of establishing a home—an ambition just as normal and plausible for teachers as it is for the members of any other occupation. But for some reason unknown to the writer's sources of information Mary Swanson's relationship to her fiancé ran into stormy weather and the engagement was broken.

She was doing a good job of teaching at Mooreville and as far as the school authorities and the community were concerned could have remained there indefinitely. But the breaking of her engagement disturbed her so deeply that she decided to leave the town of her disappointment. This decision led her

to the teaching of English in the junior high school of Grand City.

Friend and Teacher

Mary Swanson was a person of great drive. Her unflagging energy sought outlets in social affairs and an absorbing interest in the theatre. She liked people and often sought the company of her friends. She gave careful attention to the style and color of her clothes and consequently was regarded as the best groomed woman on the high school staff. No test or rating scale data are available, but apparently she had an outgoing type of personality.

At the same time she possessed a fastidious concern for order and an intensive determination to mold her environment and maneuver her associates into line with her desires. Those who knew her most intimately reported that she was a meticulous housekeeper and in managing her personal affairs was often "set" in her ways.

It was revealing to observe her behavior in the classroom. Here the picture is mixed. She liked young people and often exhibited great pains and inventiveness in devising projects to stimulate their interest. On the other hand, she ruled her classes with a strong hand, often resorting to severe and traditional methods of discipline. Apparently her favorite disciplinary measure was to keep part or all of a class after school to work on arduous assignments. There is some evidence, however, that her attention to discipline was compulsive. She often admitted to her friends that this was the most distasteful part of her school work.

In spite of her maintenance of external order in the classroom and her interest in young people, she was unhappy during the two years of her work at Grand City. She was trying to forget her broken love affair by seeking new opportunities to meet eligible members of the opposite sex. But no such opportunity appeared, and two more years slipped by without the development of a promising male friendship. Shortly after the end of the first year in Grand City she realized she was making no progress toward her goal of marriage, and decided to seek new territory. She stuck to her decision and at the end of the second year, refused a renewal of contract, and set out again for a different

scene of work. She writes to her friends that she is enjoying her new environment, and is actively engaged in a full schedule of out-of-school activities. But after six months in the new position, she is still unhappy in teaching and states that she intends to transfer to another location next year (1946).

Pupils Appraise

In the meantime, let us look at Mary Swanson through the eyes of her Grand City pupils. In early March, 1945 and again in April (1945) the members of the average and superior sections of the seventh grade were asked to write down all of the things which they could recall happening to them in school during the past year that had made them happy and satisfied. After taking all the time they needed they were then requested to write down the things that had happened in school during the past year that had made them unhappy and dissatisfied. They did not sign their names. It will be noted that the pupils were not asked to register their satisfactions and dissatisfactions about teachers but about the school. And as would be expected their responses covered the entire scope of school life, such as the curriculum, the extra-curriculum, methods of teaching, building, equipment, etc. But many responses referred to teachers and of all those singled out for special attention, the name of Mary Swanson appeared most frequently.

It is interesting, therefore, to examine the kinds of reaction associated with her name. In March, 1945 ten girls and three boys in the superior section of the seventh grade included Mary Swanson in their satisfactions, while one girl and three boys of the same section listed her in their dissatisfactions. A month later, eight girls and four boys of the same section expressed satisfaction with her, and only four boys indicated dissatisfaction. In March no satisfactions and only two dissatisfactions (boys) were expressed by the average section, and in April no satisfactions and only three dissatisfactions (boys) were registered by the same group.

An interesting feature of these results is the great reactivity of the superior section (mostly favorable), and the relative non-reactivity of the average section (slightly unfavorable). The favorable comments referred to her personal appearance and

friendly and lively manner, while the unfavorable comments indicated that she was too "bossy" and "fussy" and was inclined to lose her temper too easily.

Since the directions in March and April 1945 called only for reactions to the school in general and neither to teachers as such nor to any teacher in particular, and since in spite of the generality of this approach the name of Mary Swanson appeared so frequently in the responses of the pupils, the writer decided to explore the attitude of the pupils to Miss Swanson more intensively. After an interval of seven months, when she was already well established in a different community, the writer asked the members of the same classes in Grand City (now in the eighth grade) to give their reactions exclusively to her name.

A simple procedure of continuous free association was employed. The pupils were asked to write down all the words that came to their minds when they thought of Miss Swanson. After they had written for one minute they were then asked to indicate their attitude toward the words they had written by putting a plus in front of the words which were satisfying, a minus before the words which were dissatisfying, and a zero before the words which were indifferent. They were then requested to draw a circle around the plus if the word was *very* satisfying and a circle around the minus if the word was *very* dissatisfying.

Boys and Girls Disagree

Even after seven months the pupils reacted vividly to Miss Swanson. Out of the usable replies of 52 pupils only 2 indicated indifference. Of the remaining 50, 18 felt unfavorably about her while 32 felt favorably. The sex difference in reaction was striking. Twenty-five out of 32 girls reacted favorably while 11 out of 18 boys reacted unfavorably. With some exceptions it appears that the trend was for girls to like and boys to dislike Miss Swanson. Another striking feature of the results was that those who liked Miss Swanson rarely liked *everything* about her, and that those who disliked her rarely disliked *everything* about her. On the whole the "likers" and the "dislikers" saw the same qualities in Miss Swanson, but those who disliked her, gave major emphasis to the qualities which almost everyone disliked

while those who liked her gave major emphasis to the qualities which almost everyone liked.

Let us look at some of the specific words written by the pupils. On the unfavorable list appears such words as: *crabby, mean, angry, quick temper, stay after school, tough, tyrant, sour, trouble*, as well as references to such items as *home work, literature, etc.* On the favorable list appeared: *nice, swell, gray hair, well dressed, stylish, strict, pretty, intelligent*, as well as references to such items as *reports, spelling, language, literature, plays, etc.*

The complete response of each pupil is even more revealing. A few representative samples are presented in the following list: girl (13): *swell, English, cross, temper*; boy (13): *nice outside class, awful in school, marked low, really works you, nice looking, nice clothes, kept after school*; girl (13): *quick temper, cross, serious, nice, intelligent, pretty, stylish*; girl (13): *nice, cross, thin, neat, intelligent*; boy (13): *good teacher, mean, bad temper*; boy (12): *mean in school, nice out of school, crabby, didn't give you a fair chance, good looking*; boy (13): *angry, cross, sometimes nice, nasty, tough, terrible, etc.*

In a few cases everything about her was bad, for example boy (15): *mean, ugly, hard work, no rest, no games, no nothing, sassy*; and boy (13): *crabby, mean, stubborn, not understanding, a Simon Legree, glad she is gone*. In a few cases everything about her was good, for example, girl (13): *pretty, attractive, pretty clothes, nice disposition, nice to everyone, no pets*; and boy (14): *strict but we learned something, nice, always smiling, considerate, etc.*

A great deal more should be known about Miss Swanson before we can discuss the relation between her personality and classroom performance with any degree of finality. The writer makes no pretense at completeness of evidence or impeccability of interpretation. But certain trends appear in the data which give a fair amount of plausibility to the following attempt at explanation.

Clues Begin to Emerge

Here is an energetic, driving, restless woman with superior general ability and basically a friendly attitude toward people.

She has mixed attitudes toward her work and exerts a mixed impact on her pupils. But it appears that in one department of her life, namely, in getting along with other people, she shows one type of behavior in the classroom which she never displays outside. The words *crabby, mean, sour, quick temper, angry, tyrant, nasty* suggest the underlying theme in the dissatisfactions of her pupils. But these words never appeared in the conversation of her peers when they talked about her disposition. Even those of her pupils who complained most violently about her unreasonable severity and loss of control, admitted that outside of school she was "nice." This ambivalence is all the more striking when we keep in mind her genuine interest in her subject (English) and her apparent liking for young people.

What light does the data throw on these apparently different expressions of her personality? Does the explanation lay in part in the fact that she appeals much more to 7th grade girls than to 7th grade boys? Does the greater maturity of the 7th grade girls and their identification with a well groomed, attractive and youngish woman increase rapport in favor of the *woman-teacher-girl pupil* relationship and does the relative immaturity of the 7th grade boy and the absence of (to him) a worthy object of identification decrease the rapport in the *woman-teacher-boy pupil* relationship?

Again: to what extent does the difficulty lie in the discrepancy between an instructor of superior verbal facility teaching the most verbal subject in the curriculum (English)

and that portion of the class whose verbal abilities are meagre? Again: as indicated above, Mary Swanson confessed privately to her friends that discipline was the most distasteful part of her work. Is it possible therefore that in the management of the class she is compulsively trying to live up to a traditional standard of discipline which she thinks the school authorities and community require of her? Does she say to herself, "If the board of education and the parents want discipline in school, I'll show them what real discipline is even though I personally dislike doing it?"

But the contrast between the in-class and out-of-school behavior of Mary Swanson may be more apparent than real. There is much evidence that her bad temper and severe discipline are the classroom expressions of the personality trend which out-of-school is revealed in her "set ways" and persistent but subtle efforts to manipulate certain aspects of the lives of her friends. It is also probable that the driving quality of her personality exhibits explosive moments in the classroom in part because her threshold of control has been lowered by the frustration of her life plan.

In conclusion two points stand out rather clearly: *first*, the style of Mary Swanson's personality directly influences her management of the classroom; and *second*, her failure to find real satisfaction in teaching is associated with her failure to advance toward the fulfillment of her goal of marriage. A number of interesting implications flow from these conclusions which are beyond the scope of this article.

We do not usually reprint material from our preceding issues, but we feel that some of the statements made in reference to teachers by their pupils and students in our May, 1944 issue, deserve repetition. A brief "refresher course" revealing some of the attitudes of the children in the classroom is presented in—

Please Understand Us

• A teacher should be considered as a friend, not as an enemy or an "old bookworm." A teacher forms the students' opinion of her. If she is sweet and considerate, the students will be obedient and considerate of her. My opinion of school is an institution where students and teachers work together. Why not make

it this? It can be done with a little cooperation on both sides.

• My subjects seem hard for me and sometimes I think the teacher doesn't even know me and is grading by the cold facts in his grade book.

• There should be an understanding between

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