

ings. This has its justification in the fact that if the people want for their children better school facilities nearer their homes than the government can afford they should be willing to help procure them. We may also excuse the fact that our primary pupils have to buy the paper, pencils, crayons, and other supplies needed in their studies. The recurrent outlay which government provision of these consumable supplies will entail will be too big for our national treasury to provide without sacrificing other essential services.

But when the government virtually tells the primary pupils that it cannot take care of their health dental fee, when the government fails to appropriate sufficient funds for the purchase of textbooks so that many primary pupils have to buy them or do without, and when in the process of introducing necessary educational reforms, such as the changing of the language of instruction from English to the vernacular, the cost of providing the necessary materials, such as vernacular readers, has to be born by the parents of the primary pupils, as has been happening in many non-Tagalog provinces, free primary education becomes a farce. The people will find it difficult to consider the government's attitude to the school system as anything less than parsimonious while hundreds of millions of pesos are appropriated for wasteful pork-barrel projects.

In her Master's thesis, Mrs. Lucina G. Flores, a district supervisor in La Union, states that it costs ₱80.84 a year to educate a primary pupil in the division of La Union, and that the family shoulders ₱33.54 (about 51.5%) of this amount.¹ There is as yet no way of telling how typical of the whole country this situation in La Union is, but it certainly indicates a situation which makes primary education prohibitive

¹ Lucina G. Flores, *A Study of the Cost of Educating a Child through the Public Elementary Grades in the Division of La Union* (Dagupan City: Northwestern Educational Institution, 1955). pp. 110-111.

for the typical family with six members and an income of only ₱1.26 a day.²

No wonder, according to latest statistics based on a nationwide study, only *six* of every *ten* pupils entering Grade I reach Grade IV, and almost a million children of elementary school age (27%) are out of school, of whom almost half a million have had no previous schooling.³

This is partly the fault of the people themselves. If Congress diverts so much fund to the pork-barrel, it is because the people judge them, when they run for reelection, largely by the amount of public works appropriation they can bring their respective districts.

As a people we have not shown a reverent attitude toward our Constitution. We amended it during the term of office of the first President elected under it, to enable that President to serve for more than six years, only to regret it later and think of amending the Constitution again to restore the original provision on presidential term of office. We amended it again after the war, giving the Americans parity rights over the patrimony of the race, in order to secure financial aid, only to regret it later upon seeing even enemy countries get financial aid from the United States without having to sacrifice the natural and exclusive rights of their citizens to exploit their natural resources. We considered a colorful political personality in the first case, and material benefits in the second, over and above some of the cherished ideals embodied in our Constitution.

We must develop in ourselves a healthier attitude toward the Constitution, but we cannot do this unless we stop violating that Constitution in the very process of teaching the nation's children to respect it.

² Generoso F. Rivera and Robert T. Mc Millan, *The Rural Philippines* (Manila; Mutual Security Agency, 1952),
³ THIS WEEK (Magazine of the Sunday Chronicle, Vol. 12, No. 12, July 7, 1957), pp. 8-9.

Miss Winning, Heaven in Her Hands

By Miguela Solis

UNDERSTANDING among nations, between groups and between individuals, is the first, aye, the most urgent call of the nations today. There would have been no innumerable family conflicts, truancy, vocational inefficiency inter-group tensions, as well as international discords if there was adequate understanding. Results of researches reveal that at the root of every conflict or problem ranging from the simplest one to the most complicated, like global

wars is MISUNDERSTANDING. If misunderstanding is the root cause of most troubles, it is imperative that efforts be exerted to attain and maintain adequate understanding. It is the key foundation of wholesome human relations that play essential role in the successful accomplishment of group tasks. In the field of education, inadequate understanding of Filipino children is one of the recognized roadblocks to the successful achievements of our goals in com-

munity education. In line with this thought this article will dwell on the topic "Miss Winning, Heaven in Her Hands."

Two Types of Teachers:

When children meet their teachers for the first time, covertly they ask these questions: Is she nice? Is she sympathetic and kind? Is she willing to help solve my problems? Is she a good teacher? Many similar questions are posted quietly by the doubting minds of the Little Thomases. In a capsule the questions can be expressed this way: Who understand me better, Miss Winning or Miss Missing? Now let us look into the respective action program of these two teachers.

Underlying Teaching Philosophy:

First, let us see their respective underlying philosophy in teaching or their golden rule. Miss Winning's golden rule is: First, learn the child. Second, use what is learned of the child in providing teaching-learning experiences and situations based on his needs, interests, capacities, purposes and developmental potentials in conjunction with her community needs, problems and resources so that the child will achieve her possible optimum all-round growth in the various aspects of democratic living. In planning her work, Miss Winning has to take into full consideration the whole child considered in the various aspects of growth in the light of her cultural background and environmental influences.

On the other hand, Miss Winning has this for her golden rule. First, master subject matter. Second, teach subject matter or content to the child and have him master it. Miss Winning is so much concerned with the accumulated knowledges, ideas and facts of society without considering to what extent the child is in position to accept the mastery of this content. She considers the child as a receptacle, an inorganic thing ready to receive anything that is poured into it. What is poured may be too much or too little for the receptacle. She bothers a little or not at all on what happens after the pouring.

In contrast to Miss Missing's approach, Miss Winning considers the child as an organism — like a growing plant that should be given appropriate and sufficient nourishment. If the nourishment is too much, the organism may get over-fed or may die; if too little, it may be weak or anemic looking. Miss Winning sees to it that what he teaches are within the needs and capacities of children. She takes time learning each child and provides learning experiences for the possible optimum development of the child.

What to Know of the Child:

The second aspect in the operation is *What to Know or Understand of the Child*.

1. Universal Needs and Characteristics:

Miss Winning considers what makes the child like all other children. This is a question of *universal needs and characteristics of children wherever they are* — in the Philippines, in America, in Africa, in Europe — in any part of the world all children have common basic needs and characteristics. The universal needs and characteristics of all children may be divided into three groups. The first group refers to physical or bio-chemical conditions, such as air, adequate foods, liquid, rest, activity, clothing and shelter. All children play. They all cry when irritated and they all need rest, adequate food, shelter and clothing.

The second group of universal needs refers to status or social needs. Normally, life has to be lived in contact with others. It is important that early in life, children establish sound social status with their peers, with adults with whom they have contact like parents, teachers, and other members of the community. Social status is best achieved when there is affection, belongingness, recognition, response and security. Affection or love is a permeating power. With affection emanating from the teacher, there pervades a feeling of hope, faith coupled with confidence and personal worth among the children. It makes the people being loved and the ones who are loving have confidence in themselves, for they feel that being loved is being worthy.

Belongingness is indispensable for the development of sound status. The greatest disaster that will befall a man is not to belong to a group. The man who cannot claim that he belongs to a family, the single important unit of society, is the most unfortunate in the world. To supplant this misfortune he has to get married to form a group or must belong to a group say to a service club so that he will feel secure; for it is in group membership that the call of belongingness is provided. Sorakin, an internationally known sociologist, once said: "Who is the individual anyway unless he belongs to a group? The individual alone is nothing but an abstraction." Belongingness in a classroom can very well be provided by a teacher by making the children feel that they are important members of the school, ready to share their bit in the accomplishment of school tasks to the best of their abilities. This calls for recognition of the worth and achievements of every child. When we recognize even the least significant achievements of children, unknowingly, we create a stronger impetus for harder work and greater interest in learning. This is the pattern of action Miss Winning has in answer to the call of status or social needs.

The third aspect of universal needs is what is termed "ego" or "integrative needs." Every individual is a growing personality. The growth of per-

sonality depends on the continuous purposive interaction of the child with his environment for adequate adjustment. Miss Winning is very alert on the manner of personality growth because the personality has to be channeled to the direction of desirable patterns of growth. The first impression is the most lasting so Miss Winning will make the interaction intelligent and purposeful by seeing to it that in the process of growth she provides desirable learning-teaching situations and experiences by adequate development of self-direction, self-respect attained thru self-study. For example, if she wants the child to be polite, she exemplifies politeness in every way of her behavior. If she wants the child to use her hand in manipulative activities, she should manifest her love for work. If she wants every child in the classroom to talk in soft, sweet, pleasing voices, Miss Winning makes at all occasion to talk in this pattern. If she wants the children to be correctly dressed, to stand tall and sit correctly, she is at all times the example. Illustrations can be multiplied exemplifying the patterns of behavior that Miss Winning's pupils learn and live in developing sound personality.

2. Unique Needs:

Knowing the universal needs and characteristics, Miss Winning takes time understanding the uniqueness of every child. Children are alike in many ways, but they have characteristics unique unto themselves. Even identical twins cannot be the same in many respects. They may differ in general ability, in interest, in arts, in manipulative skills, in creative tastes, etc. Miss Winning tries to study the unique needs, interest, purposes, experiences, and values of the children, so that she could start them exactly where they are and build on their background of experiences. She uses her knowledge of universal needs and characteristics of children in the pre-planning of her work, but the unique needs and characteristics are used in the immediate selection, organization, implementation and evaluation of teaching-learning experiences and situations. This is how Miss Winning develops units of work. It may be pointed out here that Miss Winning interprets the unique needs and characteristics of children in the light of community needs, problems and resources. The tie-ins between the child and his community make what we may term a balanced approach in community education. Here the child is considered a vital part of the society and society's desirable needs, culture and resources as a basis for the sound growth of the child.

Miss Missing, ignores these unique needs; so her teaching is primarily based on universal needs and characteristics. Every child must learn the same thing in the same amount. All that concern Miss Missing is the content of teaching that she has outlined to be dished to the children on scheduled activities by the clock.

3. Child's Sparks for Learning:

Miss Winning's third aspect of knowledge of the child is the *sparks for learning*. A diamond or an amber has little sparks that glitter more than the rest of the whole. So with the child, he has qualities more outstanding than the others that we may call certain sparks for learning. Miss Winning assesses the child carefully and tries to single out these sparks for learning of each child. Has a child special gift in music, in graphic arts, in mechanical skills, in computation, in literature, in agriculture, or other special talent? Miss Winning brings these sparks to the fore and gives them due attention for proper and adequate development. She may take some of these sparks and of those that she could not handle she will enlist the cooperation of the Opportunity Class teacher. Our first Opportunity Class has been organized by the writer at the Pangasinan Normal School.

4. Danger Signals:

The child, like any organism, has ups and downs. Miss Winning is alert and sensitive to these downs for they are danger signals. More often than not a great number of teachers draw sweeping conclusions on children by calling them lazy, impudent, irresponsible, dullards, failures, good for nothing and many other similar personality degrading and belittling names. Miss Winning takes these apparent behavior patterns as symptoms, danger signals, of children's problems. She draws no conclusions that a child is lazy or impudent until she can study the aspects of growth of the child. If a child is lazy, she tries to find what are the causes of his laziness. She knows that all behavior is caused. She makes close observation of the child's behavior in the regular class work, in the school yard when he is at play, and possibly at home with the cooperation of the parents to determine more accurately as to the causes of laziness. She believes that no child is born lazy. To her, laziness is a signal that something is wrong. What is wrong has to be corrected. Then when she has determined the causes of laziness, possibly poor health, poor comprehension of assigned task, wrong teaching technique of the teacher, too difficult task, etc., she adopts remedial measures to eliminate the causes.

Miss Winning makes close study of each child in terms of the various phases of growth — physical, social adjustment, intellectual needs, aesthetic, moral-spiritual, creative ability, communicative skills, achievements, purposes and all the other aspects of growth; so that she can start where they are and can provide the most appropriate and adequate teaching-learning experiences. This is what she terms *Unitary Approach of Child Study*, studying the child as a whole in the various aspects of growth.

How about Miss Missing? What does she learn in the child? Well, Miss Missing tries to find out what

facts has the child mastered in the various subjects of learning — in Language, Reading, Arithmetic, Social Studies, Elementary Science, etc. This is all that concerns her. Mastery of subject matter is her key principle for the child's education. To her what is important are the three traditional Rs — the mastery of accumulated knowledges. To Miss Winning, her key principle in learning is *better life conditions*. Mastery of accumulated knowledges is important to Miss Winning but in addition to the three traditional R's she emphasizes the three modern R's — responsibility, reflection and wholesome relationships. In addition to this desired behavior, she develops positive attitudes, aspirations, ambition and hope for better life. Love of desirable living is significantly emphasized by her. To her, loving life is actually loving the Giver of life — the Power of all Powers which we humbly call God. In addition to these two basic learnings, Miss Winning stresses work education for the development of skills and habits of work which are essentials for the improvement of living. She also sees to it that child's development in terms of desirable knowledges, attitudes, aspirations, ambitions, skills, abilities and habits culminate in wholesome human relationships. For she knows that sound desirable accomplishments in life is to a great measure based on wholesome human relationship.

Ways of Understanding the Child:

The next question is: How does Miss Winning go about to understand the child? To understand the child Miss Winning considers the following:

1. *Know Thyself:*

The functions and responsibilities of the teacher to a large measure, are a projection of what he or she is. This makes it mandatory on the part of the teacher that her chief concern should be to make herself projections always of the desirable patterns of behavior. Knowingly and unknowingly, we inject our interests, aspirations, feelings, anxieties, ways of life, etc., to the teaching-learning experiences and situations. The impact of which is reflected at the behavior patterns of our children. For example: Miss Winning has observed that her children speak softly; they are polite, respectful, cooperative, and diligent little beings, because they are the replica of the patterns of behavior of Miss Winning. Whether we like it or not, our ways of talking, thinking, technique of solving problems and other patterns of behavior are revealed in the behavior patterns of our pupils. The teacher is either the pupil's idol or villain, depending upon her ability to understand children in the drama of school living.

Unless the teacher knows herself there is the big danger that the teacher's spontaneous self-projections may not be the desired and expected behavior patterns. It is very essential that these patterns should be desirable for these are the patterns adopted by

the learners. With our program of community education, the child usually spends $\frac{1}{2}$ of his working hours in the school with the teacher. Under this condition, the teacher should get deeply concerned in giving the child most worthy samples for emulation.

Miss Winning's understanding of herself is the key to her gaining of the desired competences in understanding her children. The fact that she knows that her patterns of behavior are reflected by the children's behavior, she sees to it that she behaves at all times, and at all cost *just right*.

In her interaction with the children, she detects from the children's behavior her weaknesses and her strengths. In this process of self-study, Miss Winning tries hard to correct her deficiencies and to foster her strong qualities. Miss Winning also uses a self-appraisal checklist wherein she determines to what extent she is meeting the needs of her children and to what extent is she maintaining wholesome relationship with them. Being alert about desirable patterns of behavior, certainly she will at all times be behaving in the desired patterns. "Understanding self is a key to understanding a child," is one of the major slogans of Miss Winning.

2. *Use of Practical Individual Assessment Devices:*

Miss Winning's second approach is the use of simple, practical but scientific techniques in assessing children's behavior. Some of these are directed and systematic observation of children through the use of behavior inventories, checklists, and rating scales some of which are prepared by her to fit them to local needs and resources. She utilizes the past records of the children as reported by previous teachers, as well as enlists the cooperation of the parents, playmates and others who are interested in the developmental growth of the child in order to get a more adequate profile of the child's behavior pattern. She also utilizes the pieces of work of the child which are spontaneous responses to situations in the classrooms and spontaneous reactions to contact with parents, teachers, and other beings. Pieces of work in art like finger painting, clay molding, crafts work, short composition and other child's product would be of much use in determining the child's interest, capacities, pent-up feelings, anxieties, fears, creativeness, as well as ways of reacting to problems that he meets. Let me give you an example in the class of Miss Winning. One of the children is specially good in clay molding — in making human head, human bust and the total figure.

One day this child molded a bust around 4 inches tall. It was a beautiful piece of work. When finished, he put the bust on top of a file of three books on his desk. I watched the child. He looked at the bust. He was serious; no smile; no twinkling of eyes. His classmates had all admiration for the piece of work, and so with Miss Winning. She had a goodword for it. She remarked, "Pablito, again you have finished

a good piece of art. If you will not take that home, we will put it in our class museum." Pablito had a forced smile and all of a sudden he pulled one of the books. The bust tumbled down and he got his book and pounded it to pieces. Miss Winning did not scold Pablito. She was very kind and said nothing. She was quiet. She kept her lips together. Pablito uttered these words: "Now you are out of my way. You will be forever dead." Everybody was quiet. They all said nothing. When Pablito was a little bit quiet and forgot what he did and Miss Winning could see that he was at his normal state, by indirect questions at the end of the school day she was able to get the cause of Pablito's action. He made the bust for the school principal who one time scolded Pablito in the presence of his classmates. Pablito told that there was no reason for scolding him. So to get even with him, he made his bust and broke it into pieces. This is the release of the pent-up feeling of Pablito towards the principal. He expressed it by crushing into pieces the beautiful bust he made for him. Some other projective techniques or devices can be utilized by the teacher, such as wishing games, nebulous pictures of clouds, use of ambiguous pictures by asking what is hidden in them; use of beginning of stories and ends of stories, and many other devices for unstructured responses. These are some of the simple techniques that the teacher should gain competences in order to understand the child more adequately. If children are allowed to express what they want to know; what they want to do; what they think, and what they can do, the teachers will be in a better position to select, organize, implement and evaluate teaching — having experiences. The teaching-learning processes will be more profitable and pleasant.

3. *Child Study Where:*

In the study of the child, Miss Winning sees to it that she studies them in their natural setting. Behavior should be observed and described in the classroom, playground, in church, at home, in the public playgrounds, in public vehicles and in all other places frequented by the child so that the child will be acting in his natural ways.

4. *Involvement:*

Miss Winning enlists the cooperation of all those people concerned with the child in gathering, organizing, and interpreting data on children. She knows that if she were alone, she could not give an accurate behavioral profile for each child. This is so because the reaction of the child may differ in different environmental settings. The child may act one way in school and another way at home to the same stimulus. So she sees to it that all concerned should share in the building of the profile of behavior.

In difficult cases, Miss Winning gets the assistance of experts, for instance, in health matters like testing vision and audition more accurately, and in de-

termining general health status of the child, she refers the case to the physician. If it is a case of personality adjustment, she may refer it to a psychologist or psychiatrist. In many cases, the teacher's ingenuity and love of understanding children coupled with adequate knowledge of practical child assessment techniques are sufficient. This is the way Miss Winning operates.

5. *Measure of Success:*

Miss Winning measures the achievements of her pupils in terms of desirable changes in their behavior, in their ways of life as expected in our democracy. For example, her concern is whether her children are gaining in better health; whether they are gaining in self-direction; whether they take initiative in helping the school carry its program of improved living; whether what they learn in school in terms of knowledges, attitudes, and habits of work are really carried at home and in the community in their day to day relationship with the members of the family, with their peers, teachers, and all others with whom they have contact. This is to her the substance of education evaluated not in mastered subject matter or content through rote memory.

Miss Winning loves the children. Her love is the strongest impetus for good work. Her love is returned to her in terms of functional desirable changes in the life of her children. This verifies the saying "love begets love." Her success is measured by love of children for better living as manifested in their day to day living. This is how she wins children — so she lives her name, Miss Winning.

On the other hand, Miss Missing measures her work in terms of rote memory, content for its own sake. She wins the content but she misses her children. The children hate the school. They want to run away from it. In due time, Miss Missing will miss all the children; so she lives her name, "Miss Missing."

Miss Winning reminds me of the excellent teacher described by Kahlil Gibran. He said:

The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple with his followers gives not his wisdom but his faith and lovingness.

He asks them not to enter the house of his wisdom, but leads them to the threshold of their own minds.

Understanding makes the difference between happiness and unhappiness; between efficiency and inefficiency; between great loss and great gains in society. Miss Winning, because of understanding, wins happiness, efficiency, and builds gains for our society. She wins the love, the respect, and the cooperation of all those that she has to work with. May we all be like Miss Winning and like her we will have HEAVEN in our hands.