

# Ink Blots Show Causes of Bad Behavior

Psychiatry

## Ingenious Test Aids Analysis of Personality

INK blots, ordinary symbols of carelessness, assumed new importance when they were discussed by S. J. Beck of the Boston Psychopathic Hospital at the American Orthopsychiatric Association meeting in New York. Specialists assembled to talk of the newest psychiatric methods in preventing and dealing with delinquency heard a description of ten carefully planned splashes of black and colored ink which have been devised to aid in diagnosing personality. The person tested looks at each blot and interprets it as his fancy, his intelligence, and his experience dictate.

The test is the first attempt ever made to get a sample of an individual's intelligence, his emotional slants on life, his behavior, all at once. A Swiss psychiatrist, Hermann Rorschach, devised the test, which Mr. Beck is now experimenting with to determine its usefulness in this country. The test appears to be a reliable indicator of abnormal personality types, he finds.

The ink blot test works well with problem children who balk at most tests and inquisitions, Mr. Beck's experiments show. The boy who plays truant for no reason that his family can fathom will freely tell the examiner about the flags, the cat, or the ice cream cone that he sees in the splotches, and the examiner gathers facts about him as he talks.

Lonely personalities of a type heretofore overlooked by specialists who deal in warped humanity were described by Dr. Karl Menninger, of Topeka. This type includes such characters as Lord Byron and Nathaniel Hawthorne, both of whom were driven by circumstances into terrible loneliness. Neurotics and psychotics choose isolation and are not really lonely, Dr. Menninger stated. But this other type of person has been so overpowered by childhood influences such as eccentric parents or physical blemishes

that he becomes incapable of mixing with the world comfortably. Psychiatric treatment works wonders with the less severely injured individuals of this type of isolated personality, Dr. Menninger said.

A plea that growing boys need intelligent help from adults at the critical times when they pass from the age of individual play to the gang age and again when they shed the gang and emerge as adolescents, was made by Dr. Paul H. Furfey, of the Catholic University of America, in a report of his studies with normal boys from six to sixteen years.

Dr. Furfey deplored the present tendency among psychologists to deny the existence of distinct periods of development.

Little boys in the individual age enjoy imaginative play and associate contentedly with little girls, he has found. At this age boys take no interest in clubs. Between eight and eleven years, the gang age begins with its enthusiasm for teams and

for clubs such as the Boy Scouts. Girls are no longer tolerated as playmates. Adolescence is frequently marked by the dawn of a love affair, but a more characteristic trait is the sudden distaste for boys' clubs of the scout type. There is a critical attitude toward authority. Team games are played but the boy demands uniformed teams, coaches, and good officials.

DISEASES that we suffer from as children may set a mark on our personalities, so that from that time on we are different individuals. This is clearly demonstrated by a case of two girls born as identical twins and thus having the same heritage, but who have become almost exact opposites of each other in character.

Dr. H. W. Newell, of the Virginia State Mental Hygiene Clinic, traced the histories of these two human beings who started out in life from practically the same start. He was told that one of the girls contracted infantile paralysis at two years of age. Her parents did not coddle their children, but went to the opposite extreme in encouraging independence. So they did little to help this handicapped child to "come back." Her physical disabilities made her slower at her studies than her more healthy sister, and the healthy capable twin enjoyed the favor and approval of the parents.

As a result of this one siege of babyhood sickness and the consequences of it, the twin who was sick now lacks self confidence and does not mix socially with other children. She feels herself inferior to her twin sister and is envious of the other's achievements. The twin who escaped the illness is a duplicate of the other in appearance, but she is the reverse of the picture in personality. She makes friends easily, is cheerful and self confident. In addition to personality differences, the twin who was not handicapped by disease has developed mentally beyond the twin who was sick.

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### The Answer Is

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