

## LEAST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

The 12 members of the admissions committee at St. Paul's School in Concord, N.H., dutifully pored over the boy's record. One Spencer C. Thompson, 13, wanted to enter the third form (first-year high) next fall from St. James School in Maryland. His grades: English 95; history 85; mathematics 50; Latin 30. In a class of 14, the record showed, he ranked 12th.

"Spencer is rather delicate," wrote his headmaster, 'owing to a severe pulmonary illness two years ago but he seems to have recovered satisfactorily. He is too small to be effective in contact sports, but he greatly enjoys riding and swimming. The boy is certainly no scholar and has repeated his form twice. He does well in English, however and possesses an excellent memory. In fact he won the school prize for reciting poetry last year. He has also, I regret to say, a stubborn streak, and is sometimes rebellious in minor matters, although he usually conforms. He is at once backward and precocious, reading books beyond his years. He has a native shrewdness and is a manly little fellow, high-spirited and well liked, who unfortunately has not made the most of his opportunities here. I can recommend him to you on the grounds of general ability."

Spencer's other mentors were less kind. A special English teacher thought him "rather stubborn." His Latin teacher found him "most difficult to teach. He seems to have little or no understanding of the subject except in the most mechanical way. At times he seems almost perverse in his inability to learn. I suspect that he has received help from other boys in his prepared work."

All 12 of the St. Paul's committee voted not to admit Spencer C. Thompson. Only then did William A. Oates, director of admissions, reveal the truth: Spencer C. Thompson was really Winston Spencer Churchill. The record which the St. Paul's admissions committee had read consisted largely of verbatim transcripts of Churchill's first years at Harrow.

"We do this once in a while," said Oates. "Inescapably, we must deal with the record. After some time you think you know what you're doing. But we do get caught."



OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.