

## EDITORIAL

**T**HE FAMILY, GOD BLESS IT!—Why do some families have such a good time together while others seek elsewhere for companionship beyond the normal reaching out for friends? What gives a family the spirit that compels them, when misfortune comes to one, to stand up and take it together like a square of Gordon Highlanders, while others have their jealousies and self-seeking, even their family feuds? Why will some middle-aged men and women cross the continent to spend Christmas with an old father or mother, not out of a sense of duty but because they still enjoy the parent's company? Why do some individuals shrink from the ordinary stresses and strains of life while others meet far harder tests with confidence and courage? Why are some people outgoing and friendly while others are withdrawn and suspicious? Why are some men's ways in tune with the laws of society while others resent authority and outwit it if they can?

It may be only part of the answer to say that these individuals were so conditioned in their childhood, but it has been pretty well proven that many men and women live unhappy, maladjusted lives because of the way their childhood went. And to help parents who would like to know what they can do to set their children's feet in right and happy ways, the Department of National Health and Welfare has published a set of informative and readable pamphlets on Child Training to be given, free for the asking, through the provincial Departments of Health. Residents of Ontario should apply to the Publications Branch, Ontario Department of Health, Parliament Buildings, Toronto.

There are pamphlets in the set dealing with fear, temper, nervous habits, shyness, jealousy, destructiveness, lying and stealing, bed-wetting, stuttering, play and play-mates, preparing a child for school, and of course such hardy old perennials as discipline and obedience.

On the principle that prevention is better than cure, the authors suggest possible causes of troubles that may crop up in even very well-regulated families; and they have a happy, common-sense approach to the whole field of parent-child relationships. From these books we gather that the occasional rough weather in a child's life, the little frustrations and even the minor mistakes of his parents aren't going to wreck him, *provided the emotional climate of his family life is warm and sunny and dependable*. These authorities tell parents, when they know they are doing their best, to relax and enjoy their children; that to be over-anxious, too protective, too set on perfection may be as harmful as neglect.

The pamphlets would make excellent study material for a Women's Institute or for any parents' group. They would provide good source material for a panel discussion at an Institute meeting or a family night. Dealing, as they do, with the guidance of young children, they might provide the beginning for a series of programmes leading up to films on teenagers and the family, or to a session with a vocational guidance teacher or an authority on father and son farm partnerships . . . And they make illuminating reading for most fathers and mothers of children of any age.

*Ethel Chapman*