

Favouritism

I AM going to deal with a breakdown in child management, one which will rarely be admitted by either the mother or father in a home where the thing is actually happening. It is favouritism. This sometimes occurs in a school where a teacher has a favourite. There is possibly not much harm done, for the group soon take it out of the favourite, and the favoured child soon learns that it doesn't pay to trade on the offered privileged position. In the home the favoured child is protected from any counter-action by brother or sister, and much harm is done if favouritism continues, unrecognised or not admitted though it may be by the parent.

Favouritism is happening in some of our homes. It may be the age-old situation where mother favours the boy and father spoils the girl. It happens sometimes that both parents favour the girl against the boy, the boy being corrected and disciplined, made to help with household chores, and being saddled with the major share of the blame for any mishap. There is nothing wrong with boys helping in the house, so long as sister has to do a really fair share. There is the reverse situation, of course, where the boy may be allowed to go off to play while the sister bears the burden of all the help required by mother. A mountain of ill-feeling and unhappiness can slowly grow where any favouritism is shown.

Brothers and sisters can become very jealous of one another. Now jealousy is a bad thing at all ages, upsetting personality and character development, and often appearing as a behaviour problem in young children. Troubled feelings may find expression in one child in deliberate attempts to hurt others—kicking, punching, pulling hair, biting or bashing playmates. Or expression is found in wilful destructiveness of things belonging to a brother or sister, or others. Unhappy feelings over which the child has no control are almost always behind such behaviour problems. Quite a common cause is jealousy, should a child think his parents love another child more.

You'll say it doesn't happen in your home. I know some homes where it is happening, but the parents seem unconscious of it. I'm sure they think they are treating their children alike and being impartial. The children have outings and picnics, attend pictures and parties, get presents of like value and generally appear to have equality. But the visitor can readily detect very real favouritism in the home management between the children, and you may be sure, no matter how a parent may strive to hide it, that the child instinctively knows whether he is favoured or not. Once there is an inkling of favouritism, the child gets confirmation from the tone of your voice, from your expression, from the handling differences as shown between one child and another, and from hundreds of little things that happen in the family circle. Some parents quite blithely let a child know that they really wanted a boy

This is the text of a talk on health broadcast recently from ZB, YA and YZ stations of the NZBS by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Deputy-Director-General of Health

instead of a girl, or vice-versa. Some even go so far as to say in the child's presence that he or she, the third or fourth child, was really unwanted. This is all wrong! The child, every child, must feel he or she was wanted in the family, was welcome whether boy or girl, and that both parents have equal affection for it, and as much love for it as for brother or sister.

If parental favouritism appears in parental conflict in any way it is very bad for the child. If one parent is jealous of the child's affection for the other parent, and outbids the other through gifts and attentions the child learns to play one parent off against

the other, but in addition feels insecure. There's no developing faith in the stability of the family unit and the child's secure place therein.

If brothers and sisters can grow up happily together, without any jealousy, they usually remain mutually helpful throughout life. They also easily develop equality within their own families. Here is a story from a medical clinic that musn't happen in your home:

"A little boy, about nine years old and the middle child of three, was brought to my clinic suffering from depression and anxiety. His mother said there was no favouritism and that she and her husband treated all the children alike, but the little boy told me,

"Bobby is Mummy's favourite, and Mary is Daddy's favourite."

"I said, 'What about you?'"

"Oh," he answered, "I'm nobody's nothing."

Please take care to avoid favouritism in your family.

Porter '56

FOR those people for whom anything goes which has Bing Crosby in it, YA Theatre of Music's programme on Saturday, September 1, is a must-listen date. The Old Groaner himself will be heard in the sound-track music of the latest re-make of Cole Porter's 1934 show, *Anything Goes*. This will be the second time through the reel for Bing, because he starred in the first film version, with Ethel Merman and Charles Ruggles as long ago as 1936. It seems that Bing, with the aid of his toupée, has worn better as a romantic lead than Ethel, because they have cast opposite him the piquant Renée Jeanmaire. According to *Time's* film critic, she "slinks intensely across the screen in black tights that seem to have been sprayed on, and makes throaty little cries of ecstasy."

Second leads in the film are Mitzi Gaynor and Donald O'Connor, who (again according to *Time*) are "so energetic that most of their dances seem inspired by St. Vitus." But who wouldn't go to town when they have such numbers to put over as "Blow, Gabriel, Blow," "I Get a Kick Out of You," "You're the Top," "It's De-Lovely" and the title song?

An announcement from

THE NEW ZEALAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Blowing your nose can be a HAZARDOUS OPERATION

—unless you do it the right way

The right way is quietly and gently—without compressing the nostrils, and with the mouth open. Simply use the handkerchief in the usual way, and grip the bridge of the nose only, leaving the nostrils free.

The wrong way can lead to trouble!

If you press the nostrils and blow hard you may spread and intensify infection by forcing the germ-laden secretions in the nose back into the Eustachian tube and start middle-ear trouble, acute earache, or possibly burst ear drums; or you may set up infected sinuses by blowing the secretions back into the sinus cavities.

NOTE ON THE USE OF A HANDKERCHIEF

If you have a cold use a large handkerchief, and for the sake of others always cover your coughs and sneezes. Don't wave your handkerchief about or shake it, and change it as often as possible. The use of paper tissue handkerchiefs which can be burned or destroyed after use is recommended as hygienic.