Think Togetherness
Is A New Invention?

BY VERA MILLER

Two women met on Morse avenue. Both were carrying shopping bags from the grocery store. One had two little boys with her. During the exchange of niceties and polite inquiry into the health of the daughter of various acquaintances, the two little boys, aged 3½ and 5, were too-writhing and trying the ancient art of getting a mound of ants back into the sidewalk crevice.

As is well known, if you step on an ant it will rain tomorrow, and no one wants to be blamed for that. Finally, the time of leave-taking: and one woman turned to the other and said, "Sadie, I should like for you to meet mine ainelik. This is David, the doctor, and this is Steven, the lawyer."

As in yesteryear, each male is born "a something." You've got to be "something." Only the method of accomplishment in the family differs; the end result is usually "successful." No matter what talent finally emerges, everyone agrees they saw it all the time. Today, parents face the realities of life. David goes to nursery school. On the day of registration, the nursery school is open for business, and the answer to the three pages of questions is to understand that the child will be understood. David has taken his first formal step toward becoming the scientific genius of the family.

Questioning further reveals that he showed great scientific leanings in his aptitude for Pie-Skool toys, eating habits, toilet habits, and the fact he was raised on Dr. Spook. (Mixing bleach and Oxylod) at the nursery school toilet further substantiates this before the interview is over.

This is the beginning of togetherness between David, the home, and his educational future. David's parents discuss his various subjects and control his attitudes and those of his teacher.

During the semester the teacher must stay at school on the night of open house. The moulding abovely the blackboard is hung with various talents representative of the group, and should David excel in arithmetic and by chance have a spelling paper displayed, immediately. "David, I wish you would have written the problems in ink," the teacher as to why his mathematical prowess is not on display so as to encourage his scientific leanings.

During the final exam in geography, "David, it seems you have not been concentrating solidly from 9 to 3. This togetherness continues on through high school and oft times spells the difference between TV or no TV for the week."

Remember when Ma and Pa went to school? Once, to make their mark on the kindergarten attendance card (or to painstakingly write out the full name), and then to attend the privilege of going to school. In these days galloped off to school when there was a problem? Any misdemeanor meant the older brother or sister was called to school. Punishment was meted out by the older child. Of course, unknowingly to Ma and Pa. Dragging the luckless child by the elbow, you walked up the gray back-porch stairs, wiped the laced-to-the-ankles shoes on the well-worn torn rag mat and called out: "Ma, the kids in the next block were picking oranges; you kids are picking 'kums on the next block."

Much eye-wring, much tea drinking from the hexagon-shaped glasses and a couple of poppy-seeded round cookies while the guilty one was nighingcaled to complete recovery. This sort of made up for the pounding received in the alley or behind the hardware store.

When the eldest was embarrassed by having to go to the younger family member's room, no child psychology was employed to learn a more organized one. The eldest, judge and jury, solved the problem.

Disgrace of school misconduct must not be entered into the home life. Besides the klops in the alley, the thought of no reprimandings from Pa and Ma was usually the white in which the younger one had to walk the street on the other side of the street.

Nowadays a student is absent when and if there is an appointment with the orthodontist, a virus infection, where the rag weed is in bloom and when there is a reaction to penicillin.

Remember the absence-excuses of way back when? You were absent because you had to "help in the store," or if the folks had to stay at the store and you were the only child in the family needed tending to, or when you went to the clinic to get a new tooth, it was a broken shoulder blade.

Absences were excusables to attend a funeral. Absence was a time when the teacher could not attend the store to offer Ma and Pa convenience, and as you stood there hoping, praying, you thanked the powers above that Ma and Pa would not show a reproach of disinterest by questioning the teacher's thinking behind the offer of condolences.