

## "JUNIOR JURY"

- by John Cumming, M.D. -

Last Tuesday we had the last of the series of broadcasts using children in the 11-13 year old age group and next week we will start out with an experiment in using the opinions of the pre-adult high school group as our source of material.

In the eight programs which we have broadcast we have tried to comment on many of the needs of children and the principles which we believe to be effective in child raising. Let me try to summarize some of these.

We have tried to emphasize constantly that there is a desire on the part of the child to be like his parents, which is reason for our emphasis that it is not so much what we say or do but what we are and how we feel toward our children which really matters most. This is the strongest influence on our children and is our assurance that they will not be too much different from parents when they grow up. Of course, this process which we call identification, this taking of a part of some other person as a model for oneself, goes on in relationship with all sorts of people such as school teachers, older friends and so on but never with the same intensity as it does in relationship to parents.

Next we have emphasized the need for approval and affection and the importance to the child of getting approval from those most important people, his parents. Parents feel these emotions toward their children but at times find them hard to express. The child who misses this important influence is likely to grow up with an inner conviction of badness, or lack of confidence which may handicap him in the future. Parents sometimes withhold their praise because they feel that their children may become conceited or boastful, neglecting to see in the conceited and boastful people around them the basic fear and uncertainty which they are compensating for.

The need for accomplishment came in for a lot of talk, too. Don't let's keep our children as children too long. There is a universal urge to experiment and grow and the frustration of this urge will always evoke resentment on the part of the child. We have emphasized the need for a gradual relaxation of controls as the child indicates his desire to enter new fields of experience, and we have warned of the necessity for guidance and for the setting of firm limits of behavior which are wide enough to allow the child a great deal of freedom of action.

The pendulum has swung both ways we have found that children who are not allowed to grow are hostile and rebellious and that children who were not ever "frustrated" were anxious and basically afraid. Let's try to find a middle path. With our affection for our children as our guide, we should not wander too far from the best course.