

ADELINE DALEY

THAT Performance Merits Oscar

It isn't going to be easy, but I've got to restrain myself from turning cartwheels every time someone asks me, "How does it feel to have all seven of your kids in school?"

Because what often happens is that I will meet the type of mother who practically bursts into tears with mere mention that her little Mortimer is now enrolled in kindergarten. (And so does his teacher, incidentally.)

"Don't you feel LOST with all your children away at school?" she will ask me.

With practice I hope to force a tear to run down my cheek, just as Ingrid Bergman did in the movie "Casablanca," and then in a quavering voice reply, "I have learned to live with it. Fortunately, Jan's kindergarten class DOES let out at 11 a.m. so I'm only by myself for two hours. By 3:30 p.m. (and some

days as early as two o'clock) they're all back with me. Thank God." (Maybe I could get interested in some hobby to fill those lonely hours. Like cleaning the house.)

If you think I should receive an "Oscar" nomination for THAT performance, consider the soliloquy I have to deliver each time someone asks if I am prepared for the day when our kids will all be married and left home. (One only hopes.)

If one is to heed the advice printed in the women's magazines, all parents should brace themselves early in their own married life for the time when their children leave home. They suggest that the "poor" parents content themselves with travel, hobbies and recreation, once the children have left bed and board.

However, when I showed

the article to my husband I had to remind him to wipe that fiendish grin off his face.

Our oldest daughter's sociology book is also worried about us parents in a chapter entitled, "Preparing for the Empty Nest," which suggests that many parents suffer an emotional trauma when left to rattle around in an Empty Nest.

Of course, we have quite a few years to go before our nest is going to be vacated: about 1980 would be a conservative estimate. And by that time, I would imagine that with all the wear and tear, the nest will be ready to fall apart anyway.

I must confess, however, that the only "Empty Nests" I am aware of are the ones in magazines and sociology books. In looking around at

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