

**WAY  
BACK  
WHEN**

## And Where Do You Soak Your Pesa-dicky Dishes?

BY VERA MILLER



**NOW IS** the time for all good homemakers to clean the corners, coddle the butcher and teach the kids manners. Passover is here.

Remember when the pesa-dicky dishes had to be brought up from the basement along with the nicked porcelain pots? The basement harbored not only three dusty barrels, but revealed several other items Ma delegated you to remember to remind her to bring up after the holiday.

**THE SCIENTISTS** of today may have been the ones who helped Ma get ready for the holiday by helping to change the kitchen. At least those scientists concerned with underwater activity. Remember when the pesa-dicky dishes were set to soak in the bathtub? You tried to hold the sugar bowl under water until it started to push its way to the surface; or you stacked flat plates on the bottom of the tub and watched as they floated to starboard, then to settle in various sections of the tub slightly clinking as they fell on other pieces of china. It was even fun to try to set the glasses with the openings out of water and watch them slowly turn-ill-and sink to the bottom. And when the dishes were soaking, where did Mottel have to take a bath ("... because he's working he can't take a 'sponge'?") ... by the upstairs, of course.

### LIKE FRESH PAINT

And remember the new oilcloth for the kitchen table that smelled like a freshly painted room. And as the family members ... the girls ... became older, the cloth became fancier. It wasn't just cut at the dime store, fancy edgings were made with the rim of the saucer or with the pinking shears. It took about 3 days to change the pantry and the kitchen.

**FOR THE KIDS**, Pesach meant staying up late, marmalade fruit slices, fried matzas for breakfast, stomach aches, oversized Ball Mason jars filled with schmaltz; said schmaltz to be slathered on a piece of matza with onion and salt. Pesach also meant matza crimsel and above all, the sound of Ma klop-ping with the big wooden bowl in her lap making gefilte fish.

And Brotherhood? Pesach also meant chocolate rabbits, egg shaped chocolates and mounds of multi-colored jelly beans to be stored on the top most pantry shelf until after the holiday. Why? Because when you brought some fried matzas, gefilte fish or pesa-dicky kugles to the neighbors who lived across the alley, you were rewarded with a gay carrying basket and lo! your name spelled out in white icing on one of the treats. And how about

all you 'kids' who went through the dime store after Hebrew School to linger by the concession selling chocolate eggs and standing there and 'smelling' and wondering if this very act itself was 'treif'? Because, after all, it was a chometzdig smell. And later you broached the subject, "Ma, what would happen if Mottel (he was always the third person in absentia in such discussions) accidentally ate some chocolate during Pesach?"

**AND DURING** the Passover Holiday who ate lunch out? Remember when Ma made lunch ... Whether for Pa to take to the store or for the kids who went to high school, Ma always made the lunches. Calories Anonymous would flin if they saw what was consumed. Usually a couple of hard-boiled eggs with the waxed paper cone of salt, thick matzas softened in warm water for sandwiches into which Ma heaped 'thin' slices of meat (enough to feed six teen-agers today); also a whole tomatoe, a couple of matzas meal kugles ... and dessert ... a banana, a pear and for late—some nuts.

By the way, if you're thinking of dieting why not wait until after the Holidays this year ... or don't you like the beet and almond preserves and matza meal pancakes?