

WAY
BACK
WHEN

'Bewty' Parlor's An Experience

BY VERA MILLER



IN THE spring a woman's fancy turns to thoughts of—beauty. At the Beauty Shoppe of today you can now get clipped, colored, tipped and tailored. Seated in a sea of color-toned walls, bustling assistants and exuberant females, you try to relax. Looking at wall pictures reflecting the profled \$30.00 an hour coiffure models, you picture yourself not with the chestnut brown hair your spouse admires, but with bright hair highlighted by tips of golden glory.

The dairy people aren't the only ones who offer "half 'n' half." This is available in all beauty shops. Of course, you're not the only one thinking along these lines. Take a look at the customers. Aluminum stalagmites spike miladies' heads; the beauty operators' answer to Nature's underground display. You make your final decision—that is, if you can stand that four year old wandering around disturbing the peace and quiet of the inner sanctum of beauty.

REMEMBER the "Bewty Parlor"? Not too many kids were left at home in the days of the Bewty Parlor. That's exactly what it was. The parlor. In the front room a few noisy second-hand dryers were set up on their chipped black pedestals to leave their mark months later on the orchid walls. Linoleum was put on the floor, and near the window in the adjoining dining room was a table with a 3-way mirror. The kids were not only not left at home—they lived there!

IT'S HER HOUSE

The operator was not Miss Adriene, Miss Dottie or Miss "Whatever"—it was Mrs. let's say—"Rosenrich." It was Mrs. Rosenrich, it was her house, it was her parlor, they were her children and you were her customer. If you had your appointment on Wednesday and it was in the winter, mingling with the smell of the marcelling irons in their metal cradles; there was the aroma of "fleishideke borscht" and on Friday, it was the aroma of chicken soup or whatever was roasting in the oven. If you brought your children, they were dumped with the rest to play in the back of the house.

REMEMBER the thick green goo that was used to set hair? Remember waiting for the irons to heat so the waves would be set-in to last until the following week? Remember the row upon row of waves set in with the back of the heavy comb and a twist of the wrist? This was sure to last for a week and for sure at the end of four days to look "natural." After

all, 35 cents for a wash and set was no small thing.

Maybe you recall the beauty parlors ringing the Humboldt Park area or the houses around the park areas of the city. In the house, the parlor was the starter. As business progressed, things were usually switched. The back part became the beauty parlor and the front section the family area. When the children were growing up they needed better conditions to entertain their friends, so nine times out of ten, the back door became the entrance to the Beauty Parlor.

WHEN the children were older, there was an investment in a small closet-like store and it was the fashion, as today, to follow your operator. Northwest, north, west, south . . . she went, you went. The family learned to expect a salmon patty and mashed potato dinner every week when distance was involved. This was an all day affair. Instead of the now popular next-day comb outs, the hair was matted down, tightly closeted in a net cage and—intended to last.

CUT FULL ENOUGH

A Bar Mitzvah, a shower at Cafe Royal, a 25th wedding celebration at Golds, this was cause for appointment reshuffling so the set would be given before the great event and yet last the full two weeks. Even dresses for the occasion were bought at L. Star with the prime thought that the neckline should be cut full enough to go over the head and not muss the "set."

THE AMOUNT of hair pins used on a set was phenomenal. Today, liquid spray does the job. Then it was hair-pins. Hundreds of hair-pins! Hair-pins by the trillion to be collected after a "she-rele"; there was ever complete family togetherness to be alert for a hair pin just about ready to slide off Ma's ear and into the folds of the new crepe dress; and the hair pins collected from the corners of the house to be put in the china jar on Ma's dresser to be returned to the beauty parlor.

Or, maybe you remember that day when Ma walked in with her brown hair? Complete with brown scalp?