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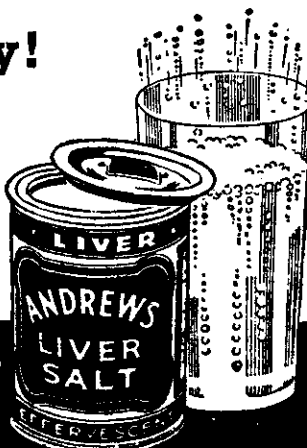
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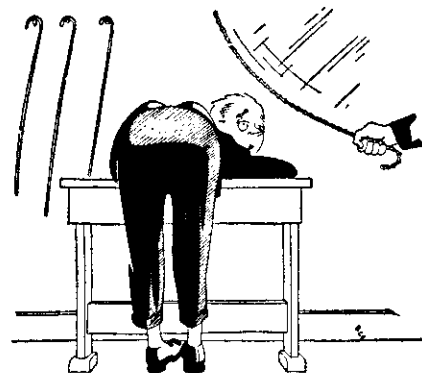
ANDREWS LIVER SALT



SHE TEACHES IN A BOYS' COLLEGE

A Woman's Views On A War-Time Measure

IN spite of their appreciation of the value of women in social and domestic life, neither Mr. Chips nor Ian Hay's avuncular housemaster would have welcomed women as their colleagues in the Masters' Sitting Room. But tradition is less potent in our New Zealand schools, and in any case, there's such a thing as wartime necessity. The result is that in many boys' schools throughout the country staff vacancies have again, as in the last war, been filled by women.



"... The female teacher's last resort."

"And what do the boys think of it?" I asked an acquaintance of mine who is one of two women on the staff of a well-known secondary school.

"They seem to take quite kindly to it. After all, most of those I teach are fresh from primary school and don't think there's anything strange about it. I imagine that six-formers, well soaked in the school tradition, might take less kindly to the idea. So far I've thoroughly enjoyed my experience."

"Did you come straight from teaching in a girls' secondary school?"

"No, I'd been teaching for some years previously in a district high school, with both boys and girls in each class. I was fairly well used to dealing with boys, so I don't find it very strange."

"What do you mean by dealing with them. Don't you send them to the headmaster for that?"

"Well, no, I haven't had to yet. At first of course the boys used to try to see how far they could go with me—I suppose some of the 'weak woman' tradition still lingers—but I think I came off best in any encounters we had. I have a very quelling eye, and if that doesn't work there's always detention. Caning by the headmaster is the female teacher's last resort, and it's very seldom necessary."

Prefers Them Mixed

"Which do you find more interesting to teach, boys or girls?"

"Personally I prefer a mixed class. Boys I find are more adventurous than girls, at any rate at secondary school age. Girls seem to go through an apathetic period in their first years at secondary school. The boys seem much less shy at venturing an opinion, and they just love answering questions. I think perhaps there's more competitive spirit among boys."

"Then I've found that boys are much keener on bringing things along. If I announce that to-morrow I'm giving a lesson on Maori weapons I find next day when I arrive at my classroom that the whole desk is piled high with spears and meres and flax mats which the boys have brought to school to show me. I suppose you could put that down on the credit side as pupil interest, but it's inclined to slow things up."

"Then you do find that teaching boys is stimulating?"

"Yes, I'll enjoy it for a year or two. But I think that the best teaching is done in a mixed class. You seem to need an entirely different approach to a problem with boys and with girls, and if you get this two-fold approach there's an added advantage to both sides. Even in adolescence there's a masculine viewpoint and a feminine viewpoint on most topics, and if you don't get them both your lesson is apt to be one-sided. I always feel, when teaching a class of boys only, that the feminine viewpoint, as represented by me, is apt to be swamped by the thirty-odd masculine viewpoints, as represented by the class."

What Worries the Boys

Miss — went on to talk of the other changes which the war had brought into the life of the school. The original buildings and grounds have been taken over by the military authorities, and most of the classes are being held in church halls and in classrooms nobly turned over to their use by other schools.

"It is possible that the physical inconveniences brought about by the war weigh much more heavily on the schoolboy than the war itself. There was some discontent at the beginning of the year because it looked as though cricket would have to be cut out altogether, as the school grounds were being used for military purposes. However, this died down when the boys found out that they would still have some opportunity for organised sport. They go back to the old school to play, and the leader of the crocodile duly presents an identity pass before taking his team inside."

Little Emotional Effort

"Do you think the war has had much effect emotionally on the children as a whole?"

"Very little. Individual children may be personally affected by their fathers or brothers going overseas and perhaps being killed, but there seems very little sign of that wholesale emotional fervour which seems to have attacked the British schoolboy during the last war, if we can judge by such books as Ernest Raymond's *Tell England*. Our boys are more concerned with their physical discomforts, which are considerable. The other day we had a debate on the question

(Continued on next page)