

## Intermediate School Pupils Get Training In "Real Life" Situations

(Continued from previous page)

pered by the fact that I had forgotten the names of all the people to whom I had been so meticulously introduced by the hostess. My shame was the greater in that everybody else seemed to have remembered mine. I recalled Mr. Wells having told me that on entering the school each pupil was given an Intelligence Rating, a Dexterity Rating, and a Social Aptitude Rating, and recalled that one of the tests for the social aptitude was an ability to remember



"The cooks do most of the preparation":  
In the kitchen of the model flat

names and faces. The hostesses and the other guests all seemed to have a very high Social Ability Quotient.

### Table Talk

We sat down to dinner. Grace was said, the hostess rang a bell, and the waitresses appeared with the soup.

By this time I had regained my conversational feet a little, for by hearing other people addressed I had picked up two other names which I hoped to be able to work into the conversation somewhere. The hostess at the far end of the table introduced the topic of clothes rationing. I seized the opening. So did several others. I retired abashed.

But by this time conversation needed no coddling. We disposed of clothes rationing, started on tea, sugar, wool, the housing shortage. Lightly and briskly the conversational ball bounded from player to player. The solitary male guest concentrated on his soup.

By the time the meat came in I felt emboldened to manipulate the conversation for my own ends. I asked about the flat. It had been going almost a year now, I learnt, and was very popular with the children. Other pupils at the school paid ninepence for lunch, members of the staff a shilling, and this helped to finance the running of the flat. And every Monday morning the pupils who were to be guests at the flat during the week assembled at the table for manners drill.

"You see the flat isn't just for the benefit of the girls who run it," explained my hostess, "it's a training ground for the guests as well."

### Children Teach Parents

"And what do the mothers think about it?" I asked Mr. Wells when I met him after lunch. "Does much of it carry over into the home?"

"Yes. I meet several parents of our third form girls who tell me indulgently that they get all the new recipes and methods tried out on them. I'm not so sure about the social side of the business, but even though the girls can't play hostess at their home tea-table yet, I'm sure that when they have homes of their own they will remember the training they received in the flat here, and that they and their families will therefore be able to live more graciously than they might otherwise have done."

—M.B.

### More "Real Life"

THE running of the model flat is but one part of the many-sided social training received by Kowhai pupils. On the Friday afternoon I visited the school many of the third-form pupils were in the throes of "personality classes." As the pupils will leave school at the end of the year they must be prepared to face such situations as the interviewing of possible employers, the running of meetings, perhaps the organisation of a sports club, and accordingly such activities are rehearsed in the classroom. And, judging by the ease and complete lack of self-consciousness with which the children went through their paces, I should think that they would not be lacking in poise or self-confidence when they finally face such situations in real life.

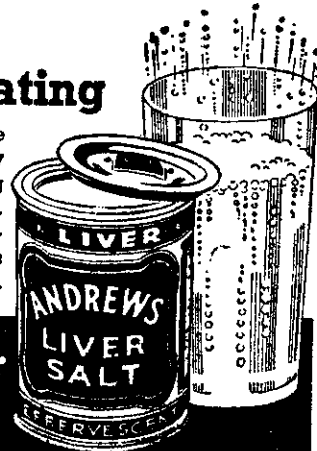
The first "scene" was a newspaper office, manned entirely by third-form girls. Behind an imaginary partition the Great Man's secretary banged a typewriter and murmured white lies about previous engagements into the telephone. Outside the partition, a lesser confidential secretary dealt relentlessly with interruptions, and wired ahead reports of those whom the Great Man had consented to see. And all the time enterprising girl reporters were rushing in and out, flourishing notebooks and ordering the Great Man's lady to Hold the Front Page, Have I Got a Story!

But although the players in such "real life" dramas may find real life somewhat different from its classroom equivalent, nevertheless I felt that they would probably carry over into the business world something of the enjoyment and gay insouciance which characterised Kowhai's "personality classes."

—M.B.

## Effervescing and Invigorating

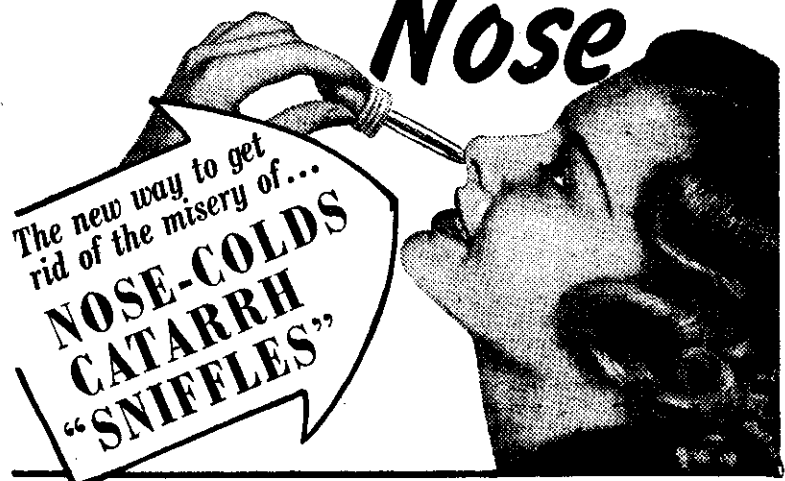
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