

ADMINISTRATION CLASSES.

HEADQUARTER DEPARTMENTS OF THE NAVY, ARMY AND AIR FORCE INSTITUTES.

The members of the British College of Nurses' Administration Class who were privileged to visit the Headquarter Departments of the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, White Hart Street, Kennington, London, on Thursday, February 22nd, 1934, spent an afternoon of wonderful surprises in learning something of the far-reaching benefits rendered to the Forces by this great organisation.

On arrival, we were most courteously received by Miss R. H. Crichton, Headquarter Superintendent.

Prior to our tour of these great premises, Miss Crichton explained that the Headquarter Warehouses of the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, are a centrally controlled canteen organisation which serve the Forces in all parts of the World (with the exception of India) in peace and war, whether on land or sea.

That the first introduction of women employees into Army Canteens took place during the Great War, when their services were largely used by the Navy and Army Canteen Board, the predecessors of the present Canteen Organisation. So successful did the experiment prove, that at the end of the War, many Commanding Officers insisted that their Canteens should still be staffed by women, and accordingly the system has been continued by the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, and has admittedly done much to improve the standard of the Institutes as regards efficiency, cleanliness and comfort.

The Headquarter Training Centre was the first department to be visited, where a class was in progress, being conducted by the Restaurant Superintendent who is qualified in Domestic Science. Here, suitable selected staff receive training to qualify them for the positions of Manageress or Cook, cooks in particular being given a complete Course of Cookery (theoretical and practical).

The period of training usually lasts from four to six weeks, according to the progress made by the individual.

It was pointed out that the women staff of the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes are employed almost exclusively in these Restaurants, that a married woman is not employed unless dependent on her own exertions for a livelihood, nor any girl under 18 years of age.

Staff in the service are generally promoted to the higher posts, but if a Manageress is appointed from without the service, women of good education, having a knowledge of business, and between 30 and 40 years of age, are chosen.

The great buildings of the Headquarter Warehouses, a hive of industry, are divided into various departments

where there is a staff of some 1,500. We passed the office where a large clerical staff were at work a significant factor of the huge trade transacted, and which was realised on arriving in what was termed the Bulk Stores, where general groceries are received, tested and despatched by the ton. In this department, sections are labelled with the names of countries in all parts of the Empire, for despatch of goods, an interesting item being a special mixture of dried fruit, for fruit salad, packed in dozens of 25 lb. boxes.

In the currant and raisin room the fruit is unpacked, electrically washed, the stalks trimmed off, and repacked.

The Catering Department: Boxes are designed to carry 60 cups, saucers and plates in a case; crockery of pretty and dainty design is despatched to all parts of Britain, and there is rarely a breakage.

The Tea Blending Department, a large one; first we came to the room for tea tasting, and we were informed that their expert Tea Taster is well known in the City. Tea is

very carefully blended, to suit the water as well as the taste, and we watched the process in the blending-machine, an apparatus which cost, including installation, some £5,000. After blending, the tea passes into an automatic weighing machine.

Numerous designs of attractive tea boxes filled with tea are issued for soldiers' wives for Christmas Trees.

In the Coffee Room, with expert skill, coffee is roasted. The N.A.A.F.I. whenever possible buys Empire goods.

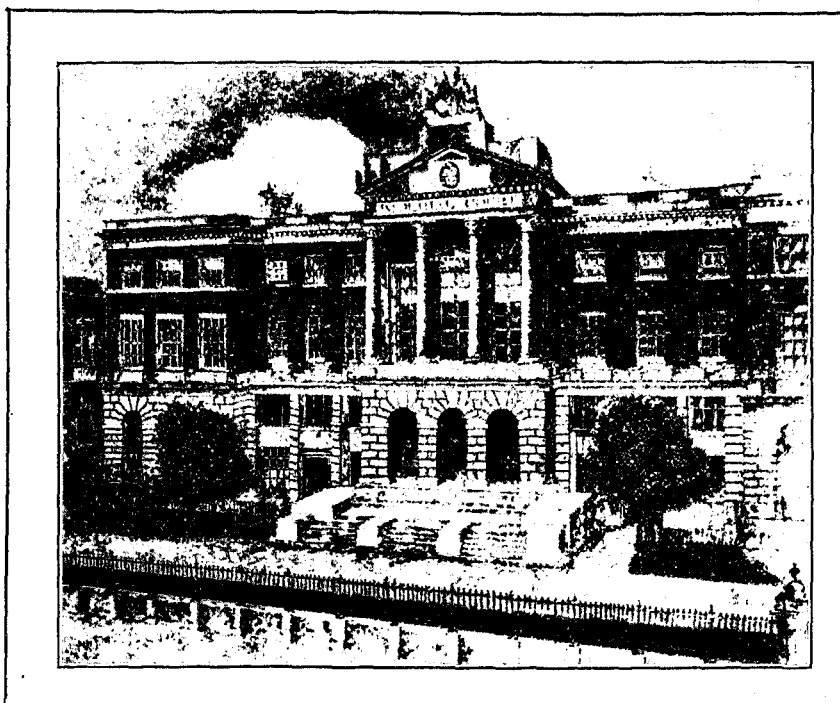
An important feature of the Warehouse is the Analytical Laboratory, where supplies are tested to ensure purity and quality.

In the Bacon Department, no trouble was spared to show the process in detail of Bacon-smoking, including preparation, packing and despatch, a very intricate process, and which is done on a vast scale. Forty tons of bacon, the equivalent of 800 pigs, are despatched from the department weekly.

In this short article it is not possible to give adequate description of the numerous departments, for we were yet to see the Printing Factory, equipped with most modern machinery, where all kinds of printing are done, from newspapers and magazines to Christmas Cards.

The Bakery, with all up-to-date machinery, and which supplies only London and the surrounding districts, was of great interest, where the preparation of some of the seventy and eighty varieties of cakes and pastries, despatched daily, could be seen. A night shift is employed for bread-making.

From the Equipment Department, all kinds of things are supplied—modern furniture (on which some of the profits are being spent to replace deal in Institutes), household linen, boots, shoes, brushes, etc., and sports goods. Cases of most interesting Sports Cups and Cutlery were on view.



IMPERIAL COURT, UPPER KENNINGTON LANE, S.E.11.
Headquarter Offices of Navy, Army, and Air Force Institutes.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)