High above the trail the stagecoach and pony express used to travel, a flying palace nightly wings its way from New York to Los Angeles. It's the "American Mercury," fourteen-passenger sleeper plane of American Airlines which crosses the continent from dusk to dawn—speeds you from ocean to ocean while you sleep. From the "sky room," a private room up front, to the six semi-private sections in its spacious cabin, it is the height of luxury—and no pun intended. Riding a sleeper plane is a novel experience for most persons, and believing you might enjoy an overnight journey by proxy, we told one of our staff artists to make the trip and do a little sketching between naps. He boarded the flying Pullman at Newark and before he was long in the air, saw the stewardess making up the "uppers" and "lowers" and tucking in her sleepy passengers. When he himself turned in, he found an individual ventilator and did his own air conditioning before falling asleep in the clouds.
There's no "box lunch" on the flying sleeper. Instead it's a six-course chicken dinner served piping hot from the flying kitchen—and there's real china and silverware.
This twelve-ton “Leviathan” of the skies boasts separate dressing rooms for men and women. You can read, smoke, sleep, eat, write letters, play cards or just view the scenery.
Over her private telephone the stewardess hears the pilot announce you're nearing Glendale, and sixteen hours after leaving New York, you land in California.