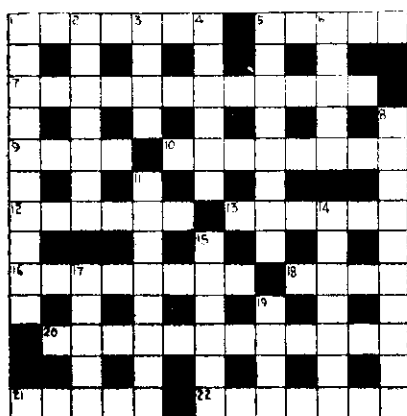


THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

(No. 207: Constructed by R.W.C.)



Clues Across

1. In place, but out of order.
5. He does love to swank, according to George Formby.
7. Enoch's constant interjection in the Heppidrome programmes (4 words).
9. What Oliver Twist asked for.
10. If you do this, you'll go downhill rapidly.
12. Part of insult and injury.
13. "Forsooth, a great arithmetician, One Michael —, a Florentine. . . ." (Othello).
16. Here you find Sis cross, as well as cutting.

(continued from previous page)

"Not at all," said Miss Batteraby. There was a pause. She had decided against a third round.

"Tell me," she said, "what is your position with the Manpower?"

Outside I hugged myself. I had almost forgotten my ace of trumps. The Manpower had nothing on me.

Inside there was a pause, this time from the other side of the table.

"I'm not sure," said the voice, doubtfully. Then another pause. Then, "I could go straight round and see them now and come straight back." There was a scraping of chairs.

"I don't really think you need bother, Mrs. Stuart. You see, you've had the experience of dealing with the public but you haven't had the commercial experience. So I'm afraid. . . ."

The door opened and a figure, eyes downcast, drifted out. There was a call of "Next please!" I entered.

I INTRODUCED myself. "Sit down," said Miss Batteraby, efficient in tweeds and pince-nez.

I volunteered my age, my address, and my previous experience of dealing with the public.

"I shall be quite frank with you, Mrs. Robertson," said Miss Batteraby. "We are looking for someone to take my place."

I turned on an expression which I hoped suggested the impossibility of finding anyone quite suitable, allied with the humble confidence that I might be the next best thing. It evidently went across.

Miss Batteraby continued. "You obviously have the experience of dealing with the public. What commercial experience have you?"

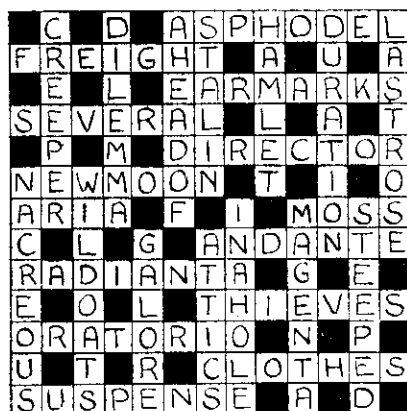
My six weeks looked a little paltry. "I was chief clerk in the office of a Dunedin insurance agency for some months."

18. Form of pest often found at the door.
20. So peach tarts are disasters?
21. Scoring sequence.
22. This needs less, Dad.

Clues Down

1. Pat's simple (anag.).
2. Are tall (anag.).
3. Town in Normandy, much in the news of late.
4. Reputed to be hard to find in 11 down.
5. P.S.—Alfred gives us the clue here.
6. Fragrance.
8. Mixture of poems and codes.
11. See 4 down.
14. Let Chas. make this bag.
15. Recast into cases.
17. I'm over age.
19. Heard on the Brains Trust.

(Answer to No. 206)



"Doing what type of work?"

"General. You know, clerking and so on. Oh, yes, and I worked a Burroughs machine."

"Are you used to handling cash?"

A definite "Yes" here. I have never owned a cheque book in my life.

"Tell me, Mrs. Robertson. Have you ever taken out a Trial Balance?"

My "No, but I could try," must have sounded inadequate. Miss Batteraby eyed me coldly.

"I'm afraid, Mrs. Robertson," she said, "that though you have had plenty of experience of dealing with the public you have not the commercial experience for a job like this."

The words woke an echo. I remembered the downcast figure of Mrs. Stuart as she crept from the room not 10 minutes before.

I rose.

"However," said Miss Batteraby, "I have your name and address, and if necessary, I can let you know."

It would not be necessary. I already knew.

She bent to the blotter in front of her. It was littered with names and addresses, each neatly encased in a little oblong of pencil. The tombstones of buried hopes. She drew an oblong round mine. I could almost see the R.I.P. underneath.

I WENT out with head high. On the bench outside the door was seated a smartly-dressed young woman. I caught her eye. She flushed guiltily. An eaves-dropper.

Halfway down the stairs I paused to recount my trumps. Had I forgotten to play one? Yes, the Manpower.

I turned.

Then a dreadful thought struck me. She hadn't even bothered to ask!

Lower now than the despised Mrs. Stuart, I slunk downstairs.



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