

(Continued from previous page)

we regarded them with more horror and pity than we did the ten-day-old corpses.

It was not because they were covered in sores from malnutrition; but they were people, apparently sane, in whom the normal emotional reactions were no longer taking place. We asked them: "Isn't it terrible for you to have to go on living here, even for a few days, till the official investigation is complete?" and they said, "But why? The food is wonderful now. It is like living in a first-class hotel." That is what happens to you after a year or two of torture interrupted by murder. You do not die of horror—you accept it. Yet, in spite of all these horrors and crimes, nothing has succeeded in dimming or quenching the vitality, the health of the Russian people.

Russia, to-day, is the most exciting country in the world. You feel close to the pulse of life, and it is beating very strongly; there is none of that frustration, that contradiction, that comes in a country when dreams are not related to action, or vice versa. In spite of all their privations they are the least frustrated of any people I know.

Drake and Hawkins Were Like This

I remember in the Crimea going to the headquarters of a general. We arrived absolutely unexpectedly, so there was no question of anything being prepared for us. His waiting room, though it was only a tin hut, was one of the most charming sights I have ever seen, bright with bouquets of lilac, laburnum, tulips and irises, all arranged with a skill and taste that a West End florist could not surpass. While we waited two soldiers entertained us, one playing the concertina and the other singing and dancing.

The general's room was also full of flowers. He, himself, was a man of about forty, sturdy, fair, not unlike a Devonshire man, and, like most Red Army officers, he was of peasant origin. He was a man of tremendous natural authority, and had a kind of innate maturity and confidence which lay in himself and had nothing to do with his rank.

I do not know what made me think it, but listening to him, and looking at him, I thought, "Now I know what Drake and Hawkins were like. This is how we looked four hundred years ago." Every time I have seen the Red Army I have been overwhelmed by this quality, by this life and light and confidence that they all have.

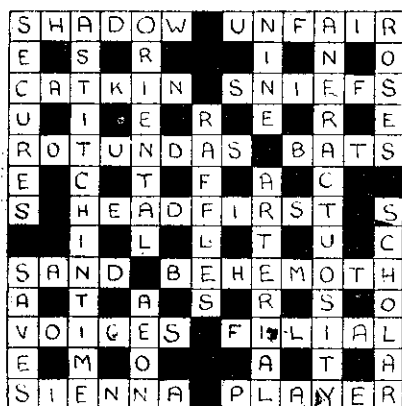
Poetry is greatly loved in Russia, and poets are attached to the Red Army. Once, after a Red Army dinner last summer, when so many toasts had been drunk that I had lost count of them, a poet got up and recited his own verses. He looked just like Byron, and it was terrific. The Russians are not a reserved people like us; they do not admire our sophisticated art of the understatement, and poets still recite in the heroic style.

So, perhaps after all, in thinking it over, my chief memory is not of the battlefields, but of the people and poets, the peasants and workers and artists of the Soviet Union.

When one leaves Russia by the southern route one flies over the Caucasian Mountains, those mysterious mountains which were the source of many of the legends of the ancient Greeks. And I thought that things have not really changed much. For me, at least, even after having lived there a year, the Soviet Union is the legend of this century.

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

(Solution to No. 246)



Clues Across

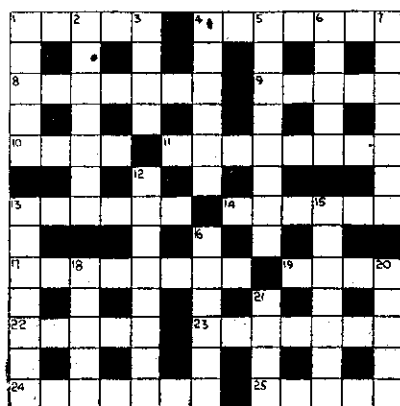
- The twenty third is the best known; the hundred and seventeenth the shortest; and the hundred and nineteenth the longest.
- There's lots mixed in a pie for a Spanish coin.
- The vehicle in front of the English river provides a drinking bout.
- Constituent parts of a complex whole.
- Light shoe of ancient comic actors.
- An interpreter in the Near East.
- Home town of the three wise men who went to sea in a bowl.
- Lassie was one.
- The little devil is followed by concord.
- This musical 18 down could be a riot.
- Have a care for this kind of palm.
- A very famous walk.

- Corrected, and, even when beheaded, it's improved.
- This official sounds like the end of a bad dream.

Clues Down

- You need space for these steps.
- The couple is upset over the baby's bed.
- She was invited to come into the garden.
- When you see the author of "Annabel Lee" make an attempt, the result is what he wrote.
- So urgent a fish?
- Widespread dislike.
- Extract.
- Secures help to be contradicted.
- I'm in the opposite of disgrace as it were.
- Theft which is frequently petty.
- It's old (anag.).
- Portion.
- Article in conjunction is not the same.
- Officiating priest of mosque.

(No. 247: Constructed by R.W.C.)



JUNE COUPON CALENDAR

Ration Coupons available in each week

WEEK	MEAT	BUTTER	SUGAR	TEA
May 28 to June 3	30 & 31	31 &	29 to	29 to
June 4 to June 10	31 & 32	32	32	32
June 11 to June 17	32 & 33	33 &	33	33
June 18 to June 24	33 & 34	34	to	to
June 25 to July 1	34 & 35	35 & 36	36	36

Available until July 8th

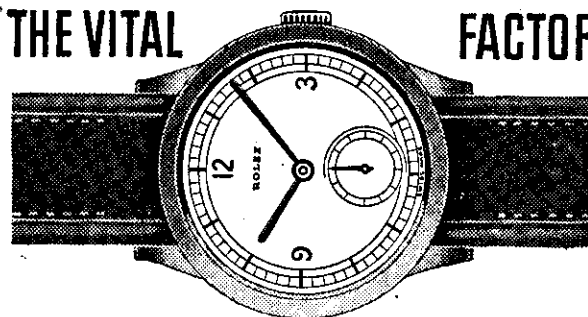
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