

Cross Society since the war but they had feared, being English, we might be stiff and starchy! She added that they were all pleasantly surprised to find us looking quite "jolly"!

That night we saw a performance at the Bolshoi Theatre—Romeo and Juliet—with the prize-winning ballerina, Ulanova. The red, white and gold theatre with its tiers of galleries was a dazzling sight, and the stage one of the largest in the world. The ending was unforgettable—Romeo with his arm upstretched bore the dead Juliet draped over his hand like a silken ribbon and on the tip of his toes slowly climbed the long staircase to lay her dramatically on her bier.

#### THURSDAY.

At a Polyclinic where 250,000 people attend yearly—including all the Moscow artists, actors and ballerinas—we were taken through medical, surgical, dental and ophthalmic departments. Of the 240 doctors, 146 had seen 25 years' service. One doctor with an attendant nurse is in charge of 35 families while 25 doctors visit patients in their homes.

Because the Directors of the University were waiting to receive us we had no lunch and were in fact 9 hours on our feet. The University is a skyscraper building of 39 floors. On its spire is a large red star which is lit up at night. This star is actually a room and contains a sofa, desk and telephone. There are nearly 25,000 students and 2,500 professors and leaders. Each of the 12 faculties has its own physician plus 2-4 specialists and its own cinemas.

#### FRIDAY.

At the Tubercular Institute of the Academy of Medical Sciences we were told of the considerable experiments going on with anti-biotics. BCG vaccination is obligatory. It is given orally at birth and repeated during school years. Children thus vaccinated are said to contract less illnesses of other kinds.

Afterwards First Aid Displays were given by local Red Cross Detachments in one of the City parks.

#### SATURDAY.

We spent the morning in the Red Front Chocolate Factory where Red Cross First Aid Posts were on every floor. All minor injuries are dealt with by the Red Cross members who also help with the teaching of hygiene among their fellow workers.

A Home for the Old and Disabled outside Moscow was extremely pleasant. Most of the inmates were over 70 and some spoke a little English and French. One erstwhile milliner from St. Petersburg called out "bye bye" as we left. The kitchens were beautiful, there was a large library and a really friendly atmosphere seemed to reign between the staff and the old ladies.

That evening we took a trip on the Metro. Every station is different. At Red Square there are enormous life-size statues in marble and bronze of famous Soviet citizens against which one could lean while waiting for the train. Pillars along the platform of Nova Slabodska (New Settlement) Station are of bright coloured glass in the national designs of the Eastern Republics. Botanska Zad (Botanical Gardens) Station is white marble and wrought iron, while on the ceilings and the platforms of the Konsomolska (Young Communists) Station are mosaics in gold, blue and red. At another station there were brightly lighted crystal chandeliers, so that one could almost believe one had got into a ballroom by mistake.

That night we travelled in luxurious sleeping cars to Leningrad.

#### SUNDAY.

More vast hotel suites and in one of my four rooms I had a grand piano. We visited some of the old palaces of the Czars, now museums, with their priceless objets d'art and beautiful pictures.

#### MONDAY.

At the Pediatric Institute and Training School for the study

of all aspects of Child Life, nearly all the 2,500 medical students are women. We saw thriving prematurely born babies in sunlit play pens. Babies from two months old were being exercised in gymnastics. However, the 1,000-bed hospital attached to this Institute looked rather old fashioned.

At a shoe factory, Red Cross membership was high and again there were First Aid Posts on every floor.

#### TUESDAY.

At School No. 364 there were 1,666 children in 44 classrooms being taught in two shifts. We were told Red Cross membership was voluntary and about one tenth of the pupils had enrolled. The Leader explained how the children borrowed books from the Public Library and took them into the homes of the blind in order to read to them. We were charmed with the youngest member a shy little girl, who was desperately trying to hide her inky fingers while explaining that her Red Cross job was to see that the hands of her classmates were clean!

#### WEDNESDAY.

It was snowing on Moscow Airport and while waiting for the plane I played chess with a Red Army officer. Five hours later we were able to bathe in the Black Sea.

We were met by the Red Cross of Sochi which boasts of 255 days of sunshine a year and 60 sanatoria. These are in fact like workers' holiday camps, where few people are really sick.

#### THURSDAY.

We toured a part of the Caucasus over mountains rising 17,000 feet into the snows, gems of lakes, lovely waterfalls and far below the vast expanse of the Black Sea, which is really dark blue.

#### FRIDAY.

We visited several sanatoria, where "patients" number between 250-300. In each building there are about 20 doctors and 35 nurses plus a large non-technical staff. There are rooms for various treatment, water, sulphur, mud, inhalations, mountain sunlight rays, being only a few of them. All kinds of recreations are catered for—football, tennis, and there are gymnasias, concert, cinema and dance halls. The emphasis is obviously on preventive medicine. These sanatoria were all beautifully furnished and everyone appeared to be enjoying themselves.

#### SATURDAY.

We flew back to Moscow via Stalino and later that day to Kiev. It was after midnight when we arrived there but a delegation from the Ukrainian Branch of the Red Cross had an official dinner arranged for us. This branch spoke proudly of running 52,400 First Aid Posts on the Collective farms.

#### SUNDAY.

Gloriously warm and sunny. We visited a General Hospital of 300 beds and 70 doctors. We discussed the worldwide nursing shortage. From what we could gather one means of training nurses in the U.S.S.R. was for them to attend Red Cross evening classes for five days a week for two years, and at the end of each year do ten days' practice in hospital. An examination was then taken for final qualification.

#### MONDAY.

We flew back to Moscow and had tea at the British Embassy with Mme Molotov and Mme Gromyko, both Red Cross supporters. Afterwards we paid a further visit to the Soviet Red Cross Headquarters and saw over their Tracing Department. This was particularly interesting as we were able to discuss some of the problems which concerned our two Societies.

#### TUESDAY.

On the way home we were greeted by Red Cross colleagues at the different airports. The Finnish Red Cross met us in Helsinki. The Swedish Red Cross looked after us that night

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)