

The Free Press' Short Story

"TO VICTORIA BY AIR"

IRMA GLOW HAVER

ELINOR MARKHAM looked out of the car window as the train drew up to the station platform at home, and saw that the end of her journey was going to be another high spot. There was the whole family, and beside the most of the girls and boys of the crowd. Before she had time to investigate further, Tom and his chum, Billy Drew, had come aboard and taken possession of her luggage. She walked out before them very importantly, like the leading lady in the last scene of a play.

Tom was not usually demonstrative, but he got her hat-box on the top step and devoted his whole attention to helping her down, as if she were some other boy's sister.

"Doesn't she look like a million dollars? I leave it to you!" said he, over her shoulder.

"I'll say her clothes do, anyway!" chanted Billy, who was almost like a member of the family, and spoke accordingly. Elinor was too excited to get it. She ran eagerly toward her mother:

"Oh, Mother! Oh, Dad! I'm so glad to be home!"

"We are to have you. It seemed a long summer," replied Mrs. Markham.

"Checks, please," demanded Tom. "Bill and I will get the trunk and put it on the running board."

Elinor suddenly looked perfectly natural to everybody, and a general laugh bubbled out. Her face wore a familiar blank look which was easily recognized as that of a chronic forgetter.

"I've lost my purse!" exclaimed she, helplessly.

The boys dashed toward the already moving train. A grinning porter appeared at an open window, and an object flew over their heads into Elinor's lifted hands.

"One more hazard safely negotiated," announced Tom, in recently acquired golf parlance. "Probably, though, the check is all that's left in it!"

"Guess again, dear," laughed Elinor airily, as she passed out the important identification.

She smiled and nodded, and smiled and nodded again, and answered as many questions as she could disentangle from the jumbled conversation:

"How did you like the coast?"

"The coast's fine, but the prairie's better!"

"Did you see any whales or sharks?"

"From one of the boys."

"No. I missed the fish exhibit. I wasn't out on the real ocean."

"What a darling hat!" from a girl, of course.

"I'm glad you like it! They're splendid stores!"

It seemed longer than three months since she had stood here saying goodbye to these same people, much longer. The wonderful summer was over, and probably no other like it would ever come again, for first journeys, alone, have their own effaceable charm.

Most of the Markham connections were in moderate circumstances, but the Templetons, of Vancouver, were wealthy. Mrs. Templeton, however, had only married the money, and remembered being poor. She had a kindly habit of inviting some of the less fortunate relatives to visit them each summer. It had seemed to Elinor her turn would never come.

"I shall be an old maid before they get to me," she prophesied. She wasn't. She was just seventeen, which is a very good age to go visiting and receive new impressions.

The Templeton home was a beautiful place, with a small retinue of servants. The Markhams had no servants at all. The Templetons had spacious grounds and a gardener with a cottage of his own. At the Markhams, Tom mowed the lawn. The Templetons had several cars with a chauffeur to drive them. The Markhams had one Ford coach, and that was last year's model.

At first Elinor was greatly awed by all these contrasts. Then she was bitterly homesick. Then she made a swift and sensible recovery without reporting her illness in her letters, and fitted herself into the novel atmosphere of wealth and leisure, very creditable indeed for one so young.

Her Cousin Edith was also seventeen; but had not bothered much about her. To tell the truth, she was too much occupied with the troop of friends who surrounded her, the games she was always playing, the magazines she read, the parties she gave and attended, to have time to do so. Elinor did not blame her. She had friends to take her time at home. Edith was gay, she was courteous, she was sometimes even friendly; but she did not offer to go sightseeing in her own home city. Through her refusal to do so, the impressions became the deeper, because Elinor was left very much alone as she received them.

She returned to her own environment, strangely untouched by any feeling of discontent, with a new ideal, born of an experience known only to herself.

The Markhams had always lived, since Elinor remembered, in a small and happy in cool-breathed, ivy-wreathed Manitoba town, near the Assiniboine. It was a pleasant, unpretentious, middle-

western place, a component part of the utilitarian wheat belt. It had a stay-at-home population, and ordinary looking houses, along unpaved quiet streets. All about it were fertile fields and low, rolling hills, repeated over and over again. In whichever direction you chanced to follow a highway. The river itself, flowed monotonously along between low, commonplace banks, a broad, dull band across a plain green landscape.

"We haven't a bit of scenery, not a bit!" said Elinor, apraisingly to her best friend, Marcia Allen, who was riding home with them, and lived next door.

"I guess not, but I never thought of it before," agreed Marcia, without concern.

"In Vancouver there is scenery every way you look, and points of interest enough to last a year! You ought to see the ocean liners on the Sound at night! And the huge, huge trees! And the mountains! Oh, I wished so often you were there!" confided Elinor.

"I wish I could have been," replied Marcia cheerfully. "Was your Cousin Edith fun?"

"She was and she wasn't," answered Elinor, retrospectively. "She's only seventeen, the same as we are, but she's travelled so much already, that nothing at home impresses her much. She's been to Europe, and Hawaii and Japan! Just think, Marcia! She was amused when I was thrilled!"

"I'd have got mad at her," observed Marcia, promptly. "Well, I did something this vacation, too! Guess what?"

"Went to camp at the Lake."

"That wouldn't be anything so different. I did what we've wished we could do for years and years. I went up in an aeroplane at the Exhibition! It was only five dollars, and it was wonderful!" Marcia prolonged the word and divided it into syllables, for emphasis.

They were almost home. Elinor leaned abruptly close to Marcia.

"What do people do to show they're thankful for being delivered, Marcia?"

Marcia thought it was some new joke. She giggled.

"From what?" she inquired, prepared to bite to please the beloved returned traveller.

"From death," replied Elinor, solemnly.

Then the car stopped, and they ran together, up the wide, brick walk between the asters, to open the door for Tom and Billy, and the trunk.

For her own particular souvenir of Vancouver, Elinor had selected the Satsuma rose jar. She buried sixteen dollar bills among the fragrant petals of British Columbia roses, which she had collected and cured to fill it, and no one else knew anything about them. She did it the first moment she had alone in her room, on the day of her return.

One forgetter has a great deal of sympathy for another, and Elinor had honestly tried to find the owner of the aeroplane ticket which she picked up under the pine tree in Stanley Park, one of Vancouver's beauty spots, when she was twelve, taking snapshots for her kodak album. She found it on Tuesday. She consulted the "Lost and Found" in all the morning and evening editions till Friday, but the owner seemed not to deem it of sufficient importance to even merit a "Want Ad." Probably, she concluded, some tourist with plenty of money to purchase another, had dropped it. The date for the journey was stamped clearly, Saturday of the present week. Cousin Edith had a house-party of girl guests, who were busy with a tennis tournament. Nobody would object if she asked to slip away for one day. Nobody paid any particular attention to her goings and comings, as they did at home, especially while every one was so busily discussing the contests upon the courts.

To Victoria, by boat, with Cousin Edith, next week, she planned, would be fun. To Victoria by air and alone this week, would be a real adventure! Why not? Until Elinor tried to convince herself that it was right to pretend she had paid for the ticket, she had no idea how she had been inoculated at some past, with a wholesome dislike of deception. She could scarcely confide in Edith, who would only be amused, and ask, "What's the difference?" She had not time to write home. To appeal to her aunt for judgment on so trivial a question, seemed childlike. Surely she was old enough to decide for herself, and she would do so.

Tom, she remembered with a smile, flipped a quarter, when faced with indecision. That was silly. What did other folk do? Suddenly, surely, she knew. There it was, like a concise military order, as indelibly engraved upon her mind as "A. B. C."—"Thou shalt not lie."

Without further hesitation, she tore up the tempting thing and tossed it conclusively into the waste-basket. On Saturday night, when the news-boys were crying "Extra! Extra! Plane falls to reach the Island!" she was safe and happy in cool-breathed, ivy-wreathed Vancouver, instead—"Missing."

No, it wasn't a romantic way to show her gratitude for so great a gift as life,

but she had to do something beside just say it. Wouldn't you?

All the way home from British Columbia, on the long, long journey over mountains and prairies, through the hot days and nights of late August, she sat in the day coach, except for the very last trip home. All the way home, she ate frugal meals, hastily purchased, at lunch-counters, never once in the diner. All the way home, she never bought a thing from a train boy, except a paper or two. They looked as if they thought her a very cheap person, very inconsequential. She who had never earned money before, earned from herself, quite honestly, the sixteen one-dollar bills which were the exact sum that the ticket she found, and threw away, had cost the fortunate person who lost it. The amount of the refunds had been mentioned in accounts, concerning the accident. No wonder she was tired after she had unpacked and distributed her gifts, and been thanked and praised for her thoughtful selections.

From Mother, with her delicately-tinted scarf and odd, lacquered tray from the Orient, to Tom, with his bearded deer-skin gauntlets made by real Eskimos, everybody was delighted.

"Chinese blue beads are exactly what I was wishing for," said beaming Marcia. "How did you guess?"

"A pair of chop-sticks is what I needed the most!" proclaimed Billy. "I shall put them in my hope chest!"

They paraded about with their imported possessions.

"You look sleepy, Elinor. Didn't you have a lower all the way? I told you to make reservations, and be comfortable," said Mr. Markham while it was still quite early in the evening.

"I am tired," admitted Elinor, ignoring the question. "If you people don't mind, I think I'll go to bed, and tell the rest in the morning. Good-night, everybody!"

The homes of wealthy people, where the covers on your bed are carefully turned back by a maid who lays out your night things and leaves the light turned low, are pleasant places to spend a holiday, but a rather little room, with two dormer windows where enough moonlight shines in so that you can see to wait upon yourself if you do not wish to draw the shades on a summer night, is comfortable and dear after your travels. Elinor slept till the sun was far past the east. She did not even raise an eyelash when it glistened across her hair, suggestively.

"That's three times I've listened at the door, and not a sound," reported Marcia to Mrs. Markham. "In ten minutes, I'm going up again and walk on my heels."

The fourth time, she heard rustlings. She cautiously pushed open the door enough to peek in. Then she threw it wide and advanced with the breakfast tray before her like a vulture offering. Fruit and flowers were on it, and Madeira, champagne, and souvenir teaspoons, and fine china.

"The hot things I left in the kitchen. I'll bring them as soon as you're ready! Her voice had a lilt, gay as a robin's song."

"Such service!" praised Elinor, sitting up in her blue silk kimono, impersonating a lady of leisure.

Everything arranged to her satisfaction, Marcia curled up on the foot of the bed, with her plate of sliced orange, to make the breakfast seem chummier.

"I've run across the lawn about twenty times since sunrise," said she, with relief. "I thought you'd never wake up! Now tell me about Vancouver. I'm crazy to hear. Would you rather be your Cousin Edith or yourself?"

Elinor had to smile. She had never thought of that. "Trust Marcia to think up something original!"

"Well—" she began, rather at a loss. Then, "If I were she, she'd be I, and how would you like that?" she countered like a high school debater with a clever rebuttal.

"I can't tell without seeing her. She might be better and she might be worse," said Marcia, with diplomacy. "But what I really came for, is to hear the rest about the deliverance business. It sounded awfully tragic, almost like a movie, and right after you said it, we got home, and you couldn't go on." Tell me how.

After a moment, Elinor gravely told the rest of the story that no one else knew.

Marcia was thoughtful and silent when she finished, but not for long. She went to the desk presently, and lifted the rose jar quite gently. She held it close to her face, to get a breath of its fragrance. Then her eyes alighted with what all the girls called "her vision look," and away she went as fast as she could talk.

"I was wondering if I couldn't find a dish with a cover somewhere around the house and start a fund, too. It's too late for rose leaves now, but lavender, or mint, or anything smelly would do just as well, maybe with a drop or two of my Black Narcissus on them, out of that vial you gave me for Christmas. We could pay a fine if we wouldn't let ourselves be delivered! Then when a good cause came along, all we'd have to do would be to take some out to help it, as rich people do from bank accounts. Don't you see?"

Marcia's imagination always leaped blithely over every obstacle to the consummation of a purpose. She sounded as if those bows were permanently endowed, as indeed to her they were. Elinor was almost as amused as Cousin Edith had been at her thrills.

"We're all three seventeen," she thought, "but what a variety of seventeen!" she thought, "but what a variety of seventeen there are! Marcia seems so kind of young, but isn't she a dear thing? There was not a girl in Van-

cover like her. She's a regular inspiration!"

Then, all at once, her face sobered again. It is not numbered birthdays which make us older. It is rather the gradual intuition of life's meanings, which unfolds like a flower and is called character. She wanted radiant, unself-titled Marcia to grow up as fast as she did, and it seemed as if she wasn't. She would have to go on and tell another of those serious, innermost thoughts which we so dread to put into words for fear our very dearest friends may laugh at us because they do not understand. She began speaking, rather slowly and uncertainly:

"That plane, Marcia. The papers said it had three engines to use the air, and no equipment to save it when it touched the water. It seems dreadful, but it didn't. We—we ought to be fully equipped in life if we expect—"

The Inspiration sat up, with shining, comprehending eyes and finished the sentence:

"Yes, I know what you mean," interrupted Marcia. "We've got to have principles for sails! Brains and education and experience won't help us a bit when we come to seas of trouble, any more than three engines took that plane to 'Victoria by air!'"

Many infants are infested by worms which cause great suffering, and if not promptly dealt with may cause constitutional weaknesses difficult to remedy. Miller's Worm Expellers will clear the stomach and bowels of worms and will so act upon the system that there will be no recurrence of the trouble. And not only this, but they will repair the injuries to the organs that worms cause and restore them to soundness.

OVER THE GLOWING COALS

By Betty Barclay

Outdoor meals are meals to be remembered when prepared by experienced campers. Somehow, those glowing embers have a magic power to blend the flavors of common foods into a whole that enraptures.

Ham and eggs, bacon, and eggs, steak, fried fish, mud-roasted potatoes—all common yet all delicious. Then there is that delicacy roasted on a long pointed green stick of wood. The scouts thread over the stick alternate small slices of meat, potato and onion and call it Turkish Kabob. Southern chefs, elaborating a bit upon the outdoor dish, serve it inside as City Chicken. Adult campers often make this camper's delight in the open from small pieces of sausage, lamb or tender steak, tomato and onion slices or anything available that will toast and blend.

Thread alternate slices on a fork or pointed stick, turn and toast over glowing coals (no fire or smoke) until the meat browns—then hold farther away for slower cooking until done. It's a dish fit for a King.

In the hamper have a cold vacuum jug of well-sweetened lemonade, fruit punch or iced tea. You can not always be sure of the quality of water at camp or picnic sites. Such beverages will quench your thirst, and the quick-energy value of the sugar used as a sweetener is just what you want for a strenuous day in the open.

Take sweet cakes, too—the kind that will stand rough usage, such as hermits, or sour milk cake. Remember that sweet foods and beverages are fine for immediate fatigue relief after long hikes or drives. Here is a recipe for outdoor hermits that I am sure will please. A hermit and a glass of lemonade or fruit punch will come in handy if the camp cook seems a bit slow with that outdoor meal.

MUSICAL CLARA

"Clara seems to be very fond of music." "Yes, indeed. You'll always find her at the piano when her mother is washing the dishes."

PUZZLING PITCHER

"Sift flour, sugar, baking powder and salt together; add other ingredients. Then add enough water to make a paste. Roll out on board, cut with biscuit cutter and bake 15 minutes."

SMALL FLAT

"So you've been up to see the Browns. Is their new flat very small?" "Well, they've had to exchange all their statuettes for her-reliefs."

PLATINUM PLENTIFUL IN CANADA

Canada is now capable of supplying the world demand for platinum and its allied metals, according to a report issued by the Canadian Department of Mines. Cost of production of platinum and related metals in Canada is at present well below that of most producing countries. Canadian nickel mines, according to official statement, are capable of contributing 300,000 ounces of these metals annually, which compares with the present world rate of consumption of approximately 200,000 ounces. The Sudbury district is the chief source of the metals in the Empire, and the output from its mines places Canada next to Russia among world producers.

It is almost a certainty that additional discoveries of platinumiferous nickel-copper sulphides of the Sudbury type will be made in Canada, states the report. The resources of the Sudbury district are by no means fully explored, and in recent years little attempt has been made to develop new properties. The known reserves of platinum metals in the area are enormous. In Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and on the coast of Hudson Bay, discoveries of the Sudbury type have been made. In addition there are distinct possibilities of further discoveries in British Columbia of the Ural type of deposit that has placed Russia in the lead as producer. There are also possibilities of this type of deposit being found in the St. Elias Range in the Yukon, in the Mount Albert region of Gaspé, and same other parts of southeastern Quebec.

FULL OF HARDSHIPS



The Lady—I suppose that your lot is full of hardships?

"The Hobo—Dat's de proper word for it, ma'am. In de winter w'en de farmers ain't don' nothin' it's too cold fer me t' do traumpin' around, an' in de summer people's allers offerin' me work."

QUITE AMBITIOUS



First Hobo—Say, Pard, wouldn't it be great of youse could git all de-est an' drink youse wanted by jist pressin' a 'lectric button?

Second Hobo—It shore would of I had somebody ter press de button for me.

UNPARDONABLE ERROR



Boarder—I don't think the city water is at all good. It has a whitish appearance this morning and tastes something like milk.

Landlady—That glass contains milk, sir, and I trust you will remember that your board was due yesterday.

MUSICAL CLARA



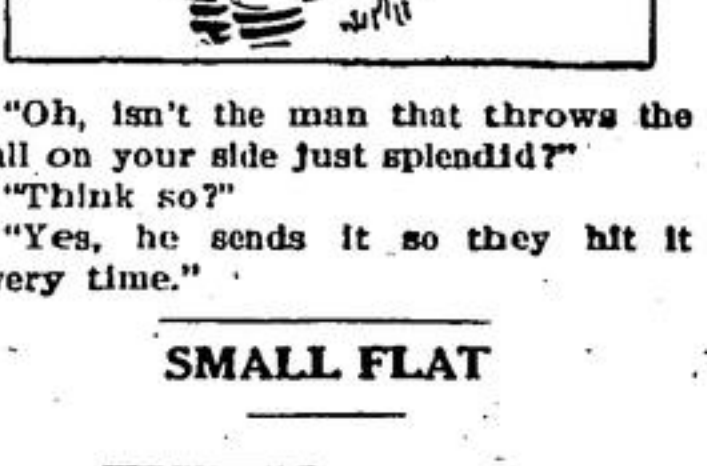
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A married man is one who has two hands with which to steer the car.

CORRECT ANSWER

Waggish Diner (with menu)—Chicken croquettes, eh? I say, waiter, what part of a chicken is the croquette? Waiter—"The part that's left over from the day before."

Relief from Asthma. Who can describe the complete relief from suffering which follows the use of Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Asthma Remedy? Who can express the feeling of joy that comes when its soft and gentle influence relieves the tightened, choking air tubes? It has made asthmatic affliction a thing of the past for thousands. It never fails. Good druggists everywhere have sold it for years.

Advertisement for Baby's Own Tablets, featuring a baby and text: "BABY'S UPSET STOMACH Relieved! Often in hot weather and occasionally at other times, little stomachs turn sour and acid. When I notice any sign of sick stomach," says Mrs. J. Alphonso Brown, Bayside, P.E.I. "I always give a Baby's Own Tablet." They quickly set things right, are very easy to take and quite safe. All common ailments of childhood including teething are promptly relieved with Baby's Own Tablets. 25c a package at drug stores.

Advertisement for Gilson Furnaces, featuring an illustration of a furnace and text: "As warm and healthy as a day in June! WHILE the Gilson 'Magic' has been primarily designed to give the maximum in heat from the minimum of fuel, to have that heat contain the correct degree of humidity, free from any trace of gas, smoke or dust, was likewise a big consideration. The result is an innovation in furnace construction. Toncan steel plate electrically welded into one smoke, gas, dust-proof unit—Toncan plate will not crack or open—heats three times faster than old style furnaces—large humidifier in front of furnace for easy filling gives correct moisture—conical grates—booster flues—and many other features are reasons why the Gilson Magic will save you one-third on your fuel costs and give you the greatest supply of warm, moist heat—as healthy as a day in June. Write today for free illustrated booklet 'The Supremacy of Steel.' Ask about our easy time payment plan." Gilson Heat Wave, Gilson All Cast Furnaces!

Advertisement for Long Distance telephone calls, featuring an illustration of a man and a woman and text: "WHEN you suddenly realize it's her birthday . . . and you can't tell her you forgot it . . . and you're miles apart Get to a telephone . . . a Long Distance call will make both of you happy. For forgetful husbands, and anybody else, the telephone is always ready. A Long Distance call now is as simple and easy as talking across the street. Look in the front of your directory and see how low the rates are—100 miles or so—for as little as 30 cents." Acton Stores can Fulfill Your Needs—Give Them First Chance