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TO LONDON AND BACK WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

Mrs. Fraser Tells Us Some "Little Things"

Was away recently, the newspapers kept New Zealand informed of all the important things that happened during his travels. Cables and paper were not spared, though, for any of the unimportant things, and soon after the party returned, The Listener decided that Mrs. Fraser might be persuaded to talk about the little things, from the comforts and discomforts of wartime air travel to the ordinary everyday observations in post-D-day London, from the snatches of conversation in



MRS. P. FRASER She didn't go shopping

hotels to the occasional moments spent by the radio. We might have had our interview a few days earlier if Mrs. Fraser had not had a very bad cold when we first approached her. But the other day our representative sat with her by the fire in a room which has one of the best harbour views in Wellington, and the conversation that took place was something like this, with the difference of course that a pleasant Scots accent is one of the attractions of Mrs. Fraser's speech:

"WELL now, what is it you want me to tell you? I don't think I'm any good at this sort of thing. I think you'd better tell me what it is you want me to say and then I'll tell you if it's all right!"

"Say we start at the beginning—you flew across the Pacific; what was that like? How did you pass the time?"

like? How did you pass the time?"

"What was it like? Well, you know these bombers — they're very noisy, they're not lined at all. Just everything ripped out of the inside and seats put in. We were made comfortable of course, but the noise! And you couldn't sleep, because there were no bunks or anything like that. You couldn't see out either, because the windows are so high up; but it would have made no difference if you could, because there was only the water. So you just had to read and think till you came to

"And you flew across the States, too?"
"Oh, yes. That was different of course.
We had to fly very high over the
Rockies, and there was oxygen if you
vanted it. Some had a touch of oxygen."

"What about Washington? Where did you stay when you were there?"

"My husband and I were at the Legation, the rest stayed at the Stadler Hotel. But you know all that."

"Yes, but you've been there and I haven't. Perhaps you noticed something about the housekeeping difficulties . . .?"

Across the Atlantic

"You don't notice these things at all unless you're housekeeping yourself. We didn't have ration books for the short time we were there, and I don't remember noticing a shortage of anything in America. There were supposed to be certain meatless days, but I didn't notice them or else I don't remember. I like to live and take notice of the interesting things that are going on. Where are we now? Washington. Oh yes, then we flew across the Atlantic, in a Liberator this time. We could have waited for a few days to go in a regular plane, what they call the Clipper, but my husband wanted to get there a few days before he had the conferences, so we had to go in a Liberator. That was a long, long journey. We had to have special clother absentic line. to have special clothes, sheepskin-lined boots, uniform and so on, a helmet, and an oxygen mask. You can't sleep very well because you keep wondering whether this thing's going to fall over or not."

"It sounds dreadful."

"Oh no, don't say it's dreadful! I wouldn't like you to say that. They were so kind, the crews. They were wonderful fellows, all of them, and they did their very best to make us comfortable. I wouldn't like them to think it was not appreciated."

There was a pause, and then somehow we were talking about London.

"We know about the official engagements you had; but did you go shopping at all?"

"Well, I was fairly busy, but, even if I'd had the time, it wouldn't have been fair to go out buying up goods, because they're very short of things themselves. The one time I did walk through a shop was when some of our boys were having tea on the roof of a big draper's shop in London and they asked me to go along and say a few words. It was a big shop, and on the roof they had a garden, with quite large trees growing, and fountains-I'd never seen the equal of it. I walked through the store with the boys—they were doubtful—but when they got on the roof and saw all thiswell! I didn't buy anything myself, but the boys, they were all after a present for Mum. That was just about the only day I was in a shop.

"But oh, I'll tell you something. You come from a radio paper; you'll be interested in this. It was absolutely amazing! When I was in London, everyone I met,

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