



seemed to be doing the same things to his gadgets as he had been doing, but they weren't talking much. There was nothing to tell the novice that anything was wrong, but all she wanted now was for the plane to turn round and scuttle back to Blenheim as fast as maybe. One thought of Amy Johnson, Amelia Earheart, Jean Batten, flying through worse than this on their own. But that didn't help very much.

The plane was going down in another lift. One had to try reason in order to squelch the rising tide of what one had to admit was a bad attack of the jitters. But reason didn't flatten those peaks or soften the harsh lines of the gullies. Philosophy then—if this is the hour its the hour—but that didn't help either. If this was the hour I didn't like it. Those mountain peaks looked so darned sharp. Man was no longer a god, vying with the birds, but an inquisitive little runt, poking his nose into matters which did not concern him and which were far beyond the scope of his limited understanding. Mountain peaks, time, space were not his playthings but his masters, who let him run a little way on his own and then show him just how inadequate he really was.

Then the plane dipped into a valley, climbed out of it, turned out and at last we were on the way back. "Poff" dropped his note, opening the window inch by inch, manoeuvring the plane all the while. As he threw the paper out, down we went in the lift again and just to help things along, at about 9,000 feet up, the door at my left elbow flew open again. I shut it again and made gibbering noises again. The cameraman turned and raised his other eyebrow. "Poff" didn't laugh this time, but discoursed learnedly on wind currents and the force which had been needed to turn the handle and open the door. I wasn't interested. All I wanted was to see something soft underneath us. A feather-bed for preference. I didn't even know if the feeling of fear which had possessed me for these few brief moments—or was it hours?—was justified or not. But apparently, up to a point at least, it had been. When we were well on the way towards Blenheim, the cameraman turned to the pilot and said, "Phew!" which, being interpreted, means, I should say, "Thank heaven that's over." As far as I could make out, the trouble was that we had been flying at 90 miles an hour and the wind had been blowing at more than 100, so that instead of making headway we were gently going backwards. The wind was too strong for us and had the plane been in the hands of a less skilled pilot, anything just might have happened.

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THE rest of the trip was in the nature of an anti-climax. We reached Blenheim and refuelled. Some luggage was put in the undercarriage. I noticed some printing on the door and saw that it was marked First Aid, but this seemed superfluous somehow.

On our way back to Rongotai the door flew open again. But I didn't mind at all. In fact I laughed merrily—ha ha. The sea looked so soft. It would have been a pleasure.

One more thought I had—that going there I had been too sick to be frightened. Coming back I had been too frightened to be sick. But as a cure for airsickness, next time, I prefer to try chewing gum.



National Film Unit photos

EROSION in the hills (which drove out former Molesworth settlers) can be seen in the top photograph. The second shows cattlemen resting in the high country; the other two show beasts on their way to the yards, and finally corralled and waiting for the branding-iron.

SCENES from the documentary film made at Molesworth by the N.Z. National Film Unit. The top frame shows the high country on the station, in which aerial reconnaissance is now used to save time in mustering. The frames below show cattle, horsemen, and dogs on their way to the stockyards at the station (a corner of the yards is seen in the bottom photograph).