

HOME AGAIN

The hardest thing that came to me during all the long holiday was to say good-bye at the last, and I haven't recovered from the shock yet. The ride home was chiefly notable for the variety and abundance of car dust and cinders which I gathered to myself during the five nights and four days of travel. The heat was terrific, and my dreams (when I slept at all) were of a large pool of cool green water in which I was just about to plunge when I awoke. I had a short stop-over at Saskatoon, where I did succeed in getting a hot bath and a manicure; and at Winnipeg I had a shampoo.

The tedium of the journey was relieved somewhat by the companionship of a young man who was my fellow-traveller from Saskatoon to Chicago. He was agreeable, cheerful, and entertaining, and we became good friends, particularly after I had told him that my three brothers wore the same Masonic emblem which decorated his watch charm. We went to the dining car together, which was very pleasant for me, but when he offered to settle for my check as well as his own, I refused, persistently, and successfully. When he finally said good-bye on reaching his destination, I was sorry to see him go, in spite of the fact that his parting salutation to me was: "You are certainly the most obstinate woman I have ever met." I assured him cheerfully that that sounded like an echo of something I had heard in Boston, but of course I didn't go into particulars, because I wouldn't want anyone to get the impression that there was any foundation for such a charge; the fact being that if there is any one quality for which I am conspicuous, it is my docility. I am the most pliable thing that ever was, only people haven't found it out!

The monotony of the trip was further broken by the fact that our porter found a silver cigarette case in my berth one morning when he was shaking out the blankets. I sat in the section opposite waiting for my berth to be made up, and he handed me the case with a face absolutely devoid of expression. I gravely shook my head and assured him that it did not belong to me. He murmured something to the effect that he'd like to know how it got there. But in spite of my docile disposition, I was determined not to be the owner of that cigarette case, even to please an accommodating colored porter. In about ten minutes thereafter, I observed that the young man who occupied the berth