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ODD OCEAN FREIGHT.

CARGOES THAT ARE CARRIED FREE FROM PORT TO PORT.

Involuntary Passengers That at Times Travel on Shipboard—Insects and Animals That Voyage All Over the Civilized World.

Many strange and weird things inhabit foreign bound ships in the form of animals and insects that are rarely suspected and never seen by the ordinary passenger. Most people are aware that the presence of rats on board ship is inevitable, whether the vessel be of wood or iron. Indeed, sailors consider them safe shipmates and sure signs that the vessel is seaworthy and not in danger of sinking.

The sight of rats deserting a ship is sufficient to discourage any sailor from going on board for a trip; but, on the other hand, too many rodents on board spoil everything. Numbers make them bold, and instead of staying in the hold where the cargo is stored they invade the sailors' quarters and even make their appearance in the captain's cabin.

But rats are not by any means the only strange visitors that travel in ships without the consent of either owner or captain. There are many insects that migrate from one quarter of the globe to another by means of the vessels which ply between distant ports. Indeed, the spread of nearly all kinds of living creatures has been dependent on the ships of civilized nations. Winged pests and blessings have been steadily carried to new countries by this means.

Not long ago a ship from one of the tropical countries was followed by a swarm of butterflies, which persistently hovered round the rigging of the vessel until the shore was lost in the mists; then the insects alighted on the masts and decks. A few disappeared in the night and were destroyed in the water or reached shore safely. Some of the others hid away in the cabins and hold of the ship.

After a trip of some thirty days the vessel reached England, and from their hiding places in the ship a few of these butterflies emerged and flew ashore. Thus an entirely new species of butterfly was introduced into the country. Cockroaches are too ancient an importation to be worthy of more than a passing notice. Grain carrying ships are overrun with weevils, and these grubs do an immense amount of harm to the cargoes.

Ships engaged in fruit carrying from warm countries are often visited by a miscellaneous collection of queer creatures. Concealed in the bunches of bananas there may be poisonous reptiles and insects that have traveled half round the globe. They may sting or bite the hand of some receiver of fruit or they may be killed before they have inflicted any harm. Sometimes, however, they escape ashore, and if the new country proves congenial to their growth and multiplication they may in a very short time establish a progeny that will eventually spread in all directions. Poisonous snakes of the tropics have thus been introduced into lands where none was ever known to exist before. Moths of a destructive nature constantly come to this and other countries in the fruit ships, and their spread is only a matter of time and opportunity.

They are visitors that cause no trouble to the sailors, who are very often not even aware of their presence on board, but they prove expensive to the farmers and inhabitants of the land where they become established.

Even flowers and plants from other countries bring with them new migrants in the shape of bugs, bees and other insects. Concealed in the blossom or curled up leaf of the plants, they remain dormant during the long voyage, but when they reach a land where climate and surroundings are conducive to their propagation and active growth they come forth to establish themselves in the land of their adoption.

Thus from the West Indies we have brought insects by the hundreds concealed in the beautiful Easter lily blossoms, and from all parts of the world strange insects hidden away in the cuplike bloom of orchids, which hunters risked their lives to secure, have been introduced in our midst to work destruction or add to our pleasures.

Not all visitors on our incoming ships are obnoxious. Some are of distinct value to our country, and their introduction in this secret way very often works out successfully problems of great public and commercial value. Most travelers to India and China will remember the revulsion of feeling with which they were seized on first detecting a scorpion or mosquito in their soup at luncheon or dinner. Some of the liners which are kept constantly for the traffic from Aden to Bombay and known as the Red sea boats are never free from these pests.

With the tramp ships that visit the south Pacific monkeys and parrots are the most common visitors. It is a very frequent occurrence after a "tramp" has not touched at any port for a week or so, for the sailors to find that their food is continually being stolen. They know at once that monkeys are on board. A vigorous search is instituted, with the result that at least one monkey is shortly afterward found, and sometimes half a dozen. These animals resist capture at first but soon accept the inevitable and become in a very short time great chums with the sailors. When England is reached Jack takes them ashore and disposes of them for ready cash to dealers in the neighborhood of the docks. Many of the parrots brought to the country have been visitors on "tramp" boats.

London Tit-Bits.

ODD HOTEL CHARGES

WAYS THEY HAVE OF LIGHTENING ONE'S PURSE IN EUROPE.

Items in the Bills That Are Not Appreciated by the Victims—One Place Where You Pay For Fodder Whether You Have a Horse or Not.

Most British hotels adhere to a stereotyped list of charges, though occasionally travelers come upon strange exactions in out of the way places. British hostilities, however, are far behind foreigners in the variety and strangeness of their charges. Nearly every European country has some curiosity of its own.

Many hotels in the Tyrol charge under the heading of "office" to cover the clerk's time wasted in looking up information about trains and attending to letters. In some parts of south Germany travelers are invariably charged for soap, whether they bring their own or not.

Some small country hotels in northern Spain supply their visitors with nightshirts, for which a charge is made, and all over the country fuggage not kept in the visitor's bedroom is charged a special storage fee. French provincial hotels are proverbially moderate, but there is a hotel at Dijon which charges all its visitors for "fires" in summer and winter alike.

Old fashioned hotels in Vienna make a charge for "brushing clothes," and visitors are expected to leave their external garments outside their bedroom doors on retiring. "Use of dark room, 1 florin," appeared in the bill of an amateur photographer known to the writer, who changed his plates in the bathroom of a big hotel in the same city.

Russia beats the world for strange hotel charges. In all but first class hotels bedroom towels are charged for, and visitors, after paying about 4 shillings for a bath, are required to pay an additional sixpence each per towel.

Country hotels supply beds and mattresses, but charge separately for blankets, sheets and pillows, the theory being that all sensible travelers bring their own. Where there are no railways, the posthouse keepers are allowed by law to charge travelers for "fodder for one horse," whether the horse be kept at the inn or not.

Heavy taxation sometimes leads to curious hotel charges. Many Greek hotels charge 10 lepta (a penny) a night for matches. In Italy, where the salt tax is outrageously high, landlords of small inns charge a halfpenny per head for salt. They also invariably charge a percentage on postage stamps bought at the inn.

"Use of toilet necessities" is responsible for 30 centimes (threepence) of most Corsican hotel bills. At Ajaccio some of the better class hotels charge for "table decorations," and any one who wishes to avoid this exaction should instruct the head waiter to put no flowers on his table. The item "lights in public rooms" appears beside "bedroom lights" in many Greek hotel bills.

In Sofia hotel keepers have to pay a special tax for the maintenance of the police force, and they extract this from their visitors by charging specially for hot water.

Most Bulgarian hotels charge a shilling to any one who comes in after 11 o'clock at night and to any one who comes down to breakfast after 10.

There is a hotel restaurant in Bucharest which widely advertises a Hungarian hotel as its great attraction, but charges sixpence for "music" in all its bills.

In Roumania, as in Russia, bedding is universally charged for. Roumanian country hotels charge a fixed price, according to the visitor's rank, a user-chant paying only two-thirds of the amount debited to a noble.

In northern Roumania a traveler's paying capacity is estimated according to the number of horses he travels with. The basis is one horse, and 10 per cent is added to the bill for each additional animal.

Servia, however, beats the world for the variety of its hotel bills. In all but the best class hotels table linen, bedding, writing materials, hot water, towels and "services of valet" are put down separately in the bill. A Belgrade hotel some years ago installed a lift, charging visitors a penny for every ascent or descent.

The rooms of Servian country inns contain nothing but beds and chairs and if the visitor objects to dress in the common lavatory he is charged extra for towels, soap, water and use of washstand.

But perhaps the strangest hotel charge on the continent is that of a big Copenhagen temperance hotel, which charges sixpence a day to every visitor who smokes on the premises.—Pearson's Weekly.

Absence of Mind.
The celebrated Lessing was remarkable for frequent absence of mind. Having missed money at different times without being able to discover who took it, he determined to put the honesty of his servant to the test and left a handful of gold on the table. "Of course you counted it," said one of his friends. "Counted it?" said Lessing, somewhat embarrassed. "No, I forgot that!"
At a public sale there was a book which Lessing was very desirous of possessing. He gave three of his friends at different times a commission to buy it at any price. They accordingly bid against each other till they had got as far as 90 crowns. Happily one of them thought it best to speak to the others, when it appeared they had all been bidding for Lessing, whose forgetfulness on this occasion cost him 80 crowns.

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