

Holy Fire Burns for 200 Years.

Deeply impressive and often strange are the many examples of perpetual fires and flames that are kept burning for a long period, as memorials to the great and as symbols of certain creeds and customs of religion and humanity.

The oldest known fire in the world is that in a Buddhist temple near Bangkok, Siam, which has been burning without interruption for two centuries.

A priest is always on guard to watch the sacred flame. Every four years a new flame is kindled, but this is always lighted in the great braziers from a brand of the old fire.

The life of a grand vizier in Persia was once saved by a Parsee trader, who discovered and exposed a plot to kill the royal official.

In inhabited lands within the arctic circle fires have been known to burn for years. This, however, is not so much a custom as it is simple practice based on resources of convenience and necessity because of the scarcity of wood or kindling of any kind to produce ignition.

Camping and Problem of Food.

There is no healthier sport than camping. During the warm and balmy spring and summer days, it is real recreation. To get out in the fresh air and sunshine, free from worry and care, enhances the health of anyone, be he office man, salesman or what not.

But due to the entirely inadequate means of food preservation and refrigeration found in the majority of camps, there is the ever-present danger of sickness from infected foods. The utmost care must be taken in order that this may be avoided.

The Bird Population.

The total bird population of continental United States, as estimated by biologists of the department of agriculture, is 4,000,000,000 to 5,000,000,000.

As to the breeds, it is pleasant to note that the friendly robin is most numerous. In the northeastern and central States, the only sections thoroughly covered in the bird census, out of 1,052,000,000 in all, there were found 82,000,000 robins.

Florida Lots Sold to Pay Back Taxes.

Miami, Florida.—Several thousand Florida lots, located in developments around Miami, are offered at auction at the county court house of Dade County for back taxes.

The publication of the list of properties against which the county and State hold claims took twenty-four pages of a Miami newspaper.

Rough roads cause considerable damage to the working parts of an automobile. Uneven roads are often unnoticed while driving as the body of the car does not shake with the axles and differential.

FOREIGN TRAVEL. HOLDS SURPRISES

Americans on First Trip Abroad Find Hotel and Train Customs Different.

New York.—Americans contemplating a first trip abroad are particularly interested in all the hints they can obtain on differences in mail, travel and hotel customs abroad, said a representative of the American Express company recently, when asked for some general information on baggage and other items connected with travel.

Division of service on trains into classes, since many years unknown in America, is universal in Europe. In most countries there are three classes and in some four. First class is everywhere used only by the very rich—and by Americans.

Through-out Europe tickets are invariably examined on entering the train platform or boarding the train, and must usually be retained and surrendered at destination.

Time tables, it was said, are not freely distributed in Europe, and it is sometimes difficult to obtain information about connections even from the station agent. On most of the Continent the 24-hour clock is used, the hours from 1 p. m. to midnight being known as 13- to 24 o'clock.

The fact that European coaches are divided into compartments is known to most Americans. Originally these compartments ran all the way across the coaches from one side to the other, and access from one compartment to the next was only by opening the door and swinging along an outside running board.

On European railways there are no separate coaches consisting entirely of reserved seats, like the pullman cars in America. A few lines in England run pullman cars, and of course all compartments in sleeping cars are on reservation, but in general the above holds true.

Usually a small fee is required for reserving a seat, and in some countries, for instance in Italy, the reservation protects the seat only until a few minutes before the time of departure. After that the seat belongs to the one who gets there first.

For sleeping, first (and usually second) class passengers on payment of an additional amount have access to sleeping cars much like the compartments in the newer American pullmans, where all bedding is supplied by the company.

To Americans the total absence of drinking water on most trains (except, of course, in the dining cars) proves an inconvenience, but the natives provide themselves with bottles of mineral water. Light wines or beer before

leaving and do not seem to suffer in the least.

Table d'Hote on Diners. Generally only table d'hote meals are served in dining cars. There are several sittings, tickets to which are issued by attendants, a convenience appreciated by Americans.

The amount of baggage carried free varies in different countries, as do the customs. In England most trains carry "luggage vans," or baggage cars, in which trunks and other heavy baggage may be carried, but in which there are no facilities for checking.

On most of the Continent only such baggage will be carried free as can be taken into one's compartment, and to be allowed in the compartment at all it must not exceed certain dimensions, so that it can go in the rack above one's head.

The advice often encountered to carry only hand baggage is due to the fact that many trains do not carry baggage cars, so that if heavy articles are taken they must often be left behind to come by a later train.

Americans are puzzled at the absence of any service parallel to the "express" in this country, whereby articles are forwarded under receipt and attended by messengers. Articles may be sent through the mails and by freight.

When it is definitely known at what hotels one will be, and on what dates, it is usually more convenient to have one's letters sent there. Otherwise it is best to use the foreign offices of some travel agency or firm.

Hotel customs do not differ greatly from those in this country. The "American plan" of operation is found far more frequently than in the land which gave it birth.

Contrary to the usual impression, it is only in England that the traffic goes to the left. Elsewhere, when it has any noticeable predilection at all, it inclines to the right.

Compared with America, there are of course extremely few buildings which have elevators, and those which do often have queer customs. In many apartment houses the elevators will carry one up, but if one wishes to descend one must walk.

Americans who use the European subways are surprised to find first and second-class coaches and smoking cars, with different rates and different tickets for the different classes.

On some lines season tickets are sold, good for an unlimited number of trips during the period named. As everywhere, the tickets must be shown at the entrance, where they are punched and surrendered at the exit.

In London most of the subways—"tubes," they are called—are deep underground, and so elevators from the train platforms discharge the passengers into shop-lined arcades through which they reach the street.

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PUSHING BACK U. S. DATE LINE

Scientists Working Out Gigantic Jig-Saw Puzzle in the Southwest.

Washington.—Scientists are working out a gigantic jig-saw puzzle in the Southwest, first searching over hundreds of square miles of territory for the pieces that nature has hidden through the centuries.

The story of this fascinating "game" is wrapped up in an announcement just made by the National Geographic society that its research committee has made an additional grant of funds to continue this summer the "Beam Expedition" work under the leadership of Dr. A. E. Douglas of Steward observatory, University of Arizona.

"No one knows the age of the interesting communal dwellings, America's first 'apartment houses,' that have been unearthed in New Mexico," says a bulletin from the Washington (D. C.) headquarters of the National Geographic society.

"Doctor Douglas found some years ago that trees in growing not only leave a ring for each year, but that often the character of the ring denotes the particular year in which it grew. That is, in an unusually moist season an especially wide or well-marked ring will be left in all the trees of the region subjected to the unusual conditions.

"Since the working out of this method the scientists of the National Geographic society's Beam expedition have been scouring the Southwest for specimens of ancient wood. Some have been discovered in the form of old tree stumps covered centuries ago by the sand and clay washed by some extraordinary storm.

"In every case cross-sections have been prepared and microscopic studies made. Many of the specimens, of course, have been found to cover approximately the same period of time; but now and then a lucky find has pushed the earliest known date line of the United States a few decades or generations farther back.

"Science has not completed this chronological puzzle, but working from both ends it has fitted piece after piece into place, steadily narrowing the gap of the unknown. It is hoped that before long a trustworthy estimate can be made of the ruins, so fitting America's early civilization into its proper relation to that of the Old world."

"Nicky," Polar Mascot, Survives Lost Master

New Philadelphia, Ohio.—With a record behind her that would discourage any conscientious mascot, Niccarowra, a cat, survivor of two Arctic expeditions, is the house guest of David Maurer, father of Fred Maurer, who was lost in a dash to reach help, when his party, the second Wrangell island expedition, was stranded in the Arctic in 1923.

She was mascot of the ill-fated Karluk, which was wrecked in an ice-pack in Camden bay in 1913. She was rescued from the Karluk by a sailor, and taken by Maurer on the flight across the dreary snowfields to Wrangell island in a fur bag on his dog sled.

Nine years later at the time of the second Wrangell island expedition, after Maurer was given up for dead, Nicky was brought back to her master's home here.

Alimony Thief's Suicide Laid to Red-Haired Girl

Two Rivers, Wis.—A red-haired girl set the stage for the final act in the muddled life of John Welsh, who crawled into the main street here, asked for a drink and toppled over, dead.

Accused of robbing his wife of \$55 alimony money, which she expected to use for her brood of seven children, Welsh, officers said, went to the roadhouse near here where he met a red-headed girl who robbed him. Making his way back to the city, Welsh sought seclusion in a barn just off the main street.

Somewhere he procured a razor and with blood dripping from gashes from his wrists, he crawled to the street. A passerby brought him a drink of water and he fell dead as he drank.

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