

Once, when we were becalmed three days out from Tenerife, on the voyage to St. Thomas, I went out in a boat to collect surface animals. Some of the house-flies, which were swarming in the ship, accompanied the boat on the excursion in sufficient numbers to be a pest, I suppose in expectation of reaching the shore.

House-crickets appeared in the ship towards the end of the voyage, and two of them established themselves in Staff Commander Tizard's cabin, to his great annoyance, as they were as noisy as at home. They were, however, caught with some difficulty. Centipedes, of two kinds at least, were also amongst the navifauna, and many species of spiders. Some of these latter were, however, deliberately imported on board by the navigating officers, in order that they might use their webs, if wanted, as cross-wires in their theodolites.

When the ship was moored at Bermuda, alongside the wharf in the dockyard, boards were placed on all the mooring chains as a fence against rats. Rats nevertheless appeared in the ship, and were all curiously enough of the old species, the Black Rat (*Mus rattus*). One night, as we were sitting at whist, Mr. J. Hynes, the Assistant Paymaster, suddenly started up with a yell, and danced about as if gone mad, clutching one of his legs with both hands. A rat had mistaken his trousers for a pipe or wind-sail, and had gone up.

The only plants which made their spontaneous appearance on the ship were Moulds. Whenever the ship entered damp latitudes everything in our cabins on the lower deck became moist, and mould grew thickly over boots and all other leathern articles. I grew mustard and cress with great success in my wardian cases before these were required for other purposes. I failed, however, entirely with onions and radishes, which I also tried to grow. The plant most commonly grown on board ship in the tropics is the Sweet Potato. It can be grown in water and made to climb up the wall of a cabin and afford a pleasant green.

Besides Dogs and Cats we had many different pets on board the ship at various times. First amongst these must be placed "Robert" the Parrot. The bird belonged to Von Willemoes Suhm. He and I bought a young Grey Parrot each at Madeira, from a ship bound from the Bight of Benin to Liverpool, with a cargo of these birds on board.* One of the Parrots flew into a dish full of boiling caustic potash solution in the laboratory and perished, and we had to draw lots for the remaining bird, and I lost.

"Robert" survived all the extremes of the heat and cold of

* See p. 36.