

BOOKED for TRAVEL

WILD BLUE MONDAY & OTHER STORIES

MONDAY IN THE CLOUDS: We have begun this week in what we think is a very debonair way. On what might have been an ordinary Monday we flew off in a sixty-ton airplane in mid-morning, had lunch 20,000 feet over some place in New England, and were back in our office by the middle of the afternoon.

This strange adventure came about because Trans World Airlines chose such an excursion on which to display its new Super Constellation, an airplane which is as long as two railroad cars, weighs sixty tons, and has a wingspread of 113 feet, seven inches or enough to provide shade for four sport planes.

The new Super Constellations will be used on TWA's "Ambassador" service, a luxury run that will connect Los Angeles and San Francisco with New York in jig time and great comfort. Westbound flights are scheduled for nightly "after-theatre" departures, leaving Idlewild Airport at 12:30 A.M. and arriving in Los Angeles at 8:25 in the morning. It's going to be quite a rush from the theatre, which usually breaks shortly after eleven, Idlewild being about an hour from the center of town, and considering the midtown traffic and all.

Those who make it, however, will find themselves face to face with a buffet table placed in the aft luxury lounge of the plane, groaning with such comestibles as Galantine of Duck, Spiced Shrimp with Hot Sauce, Tiny Sugared Chewy-Chews, and Summer Mints. With the edge knocked off their midnight appetites, forty-seven passengers will then be able to recline in the latest of airline foam rubber chairs. Eight other passengers, upon payment of an extra bounty of ninety bucks, will be entitled to fold up in roomy berths which appear to be somewhat larger than the Pullman variety.

Those hightailing it for New York from the West Coast will leave Los Angeles at 9:45 P.M., arriving in New York at 10:40 in the morning. No matter which way you're going there will be one stop at Chicago. During the rest of the time the Ambassador will be whooshing along, four miles above where a man ought to be, at a speed of 300 mph or better. If that seems like shuffling with all the news of jet

convert its Super Connie engines to the turbo-propeller variety, which will give it a speed of 400 mph. Anyhow, should Chicago be socked in one unfair night after theatre, the Ambassador can fly 3,250 miles at 300 mph, four miles up without having to stop for a gulp of gas.

Our Monday luncheon trip took us the length of Long Island, which is mighty long if you drive it or take the Long Island Railroad, and we spent the moments before lunch counting the swimming pools along the North Shore estates. We were served an ordinary dinner menu, a slate which bears sixteen items, but long before the broiled filet mignon arrived we had run out of Long Island real estate, and so the pilot was forced to double back across the Sound, and head north.

Shortly we were over Lake Winnepesaukee, a body of water renowned in New Hampshire for its incredible size and spelling. We executed spirals around the brown top of Mount Washington, highest point in the Northeast—except for us at that moment—and then headed back to Manhattan.

We should like to report that the new plane is painted white on top to deflect the sun's rays away from the plane, that it has extra large windows for quick looks at the landscape when ascending or descending, and that its galley could serve a family of five for a week without restocking, and that doesn't include what it dispenses in snacks.

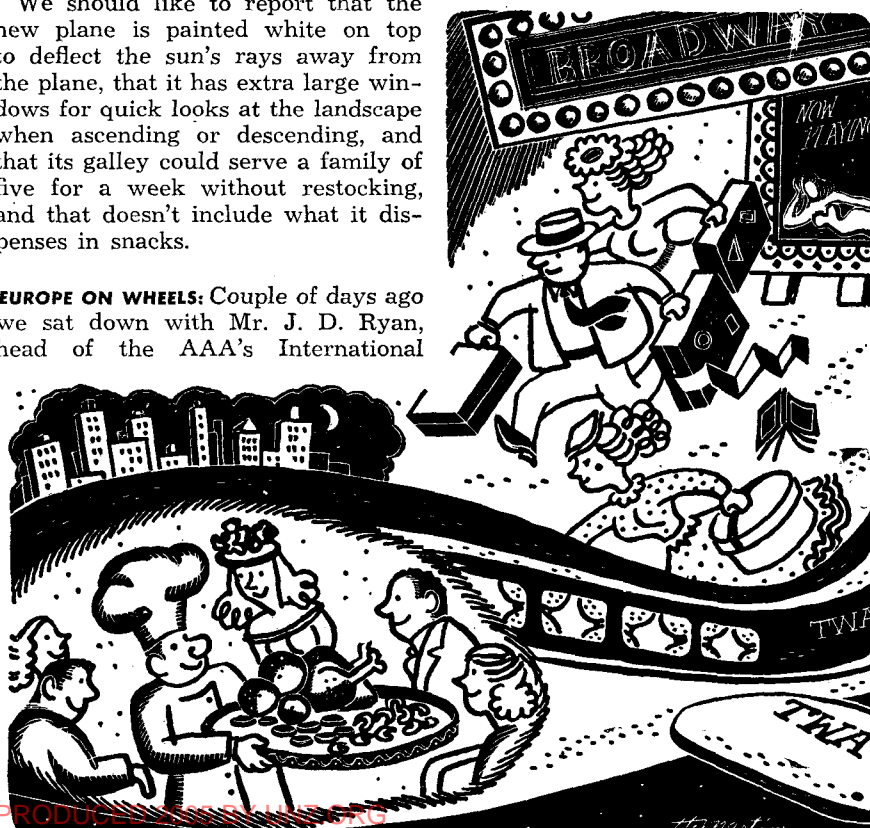
EUROPE ON WHEELS: Couple of days ago we sat down with Mr. J. D. Ryan, head of the AAA's International

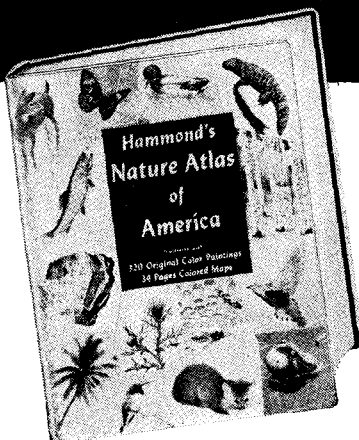
Travel Department, who told us the American people had found a way of beating the high price of things on the Continent. The European continent, that is.

He said an unprecedented number of Americans had 1) taken out international driving permits; 2) bought cars for delivery abroad; 3) shipped their own cars over, and were thereby able to avoid the big expensive centers. Hotels in large European cities charge 15 per cent for service and another 10 per cent for taxes. "Remember," Ryan bid us, "for every 1,000 francs spent for lodging you can count on 250 francs for tips and taxes. And then you can't get out of the hotel without tipping."

Having a car abroad, whether hired, bought, or transported from the U. S., will also permit the traveler to avoid multiple tipping for handling the same luggage. Ryan likes to point to the boat-train trip from London to Paris. "You tip at the hotel in London, then when the baggage is transferred at Victoria Station, again when you get to Dover, once more when you get to Calais, another tip for getting it off the train at Paris, and a sixth tip at the hotel. Six times those bags were handled. If you have your own car the baggage is handled maybe twice a day, and some of it will stay in your car."

The AAA had already shipped over 4,000 cars by the end of August compared with 3,500 during the whole of 1950, which was Holy Year. Half of



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these cars originate west of Ohio because of the saving that can be made up by families traveling across the country to Eastern ports.

About 5,000 foreign-made cars were sold in the U. S. for delivery in Europe this year, and the car-hire business abroad was never better. Everything was sold out last May for July and August, and the only chance of hiring a car from Ireland to Scandinavia to Italy was to wait for a cancellation.

From this Ryan reads the fact that American travelers have gone price conscious, and are seeking out the less expensive inns, a mode of travel only possible by car. Further, he believes that Americans no longer feel that there is a mystery to traveling in Europe. "Maybe the war did that. There's no mystery to it anymore. People are becoming more adventurous. They've found out you don't have to be a linguist and you don't have to travel around in the shadow of a personal guide."

Ryan thinks the move to the countryside is a good thing, and we do, too. He thinks that too many Americans have been contenting themselves with the large cities and have either run through the rest of the country in a train or flown over it in a plane. It is this department's idea that a conducted tour into the heartlands of Europe, touching on the big cities and concentrating on the lands' between might be a welcome relief from that badly-worn route from London to Paris to Montreux to Milan, etc.

"Getting the tourist out into the countryside is going to bring understanding to the small corners of the Continent," Ryan says. He is rather proud that the automobile is provid-

ing the locomotion for carrying American people into the untraveled hinterlands. Travel agents could accomplish the same thing in bulk with buses, and with combination rail and bus and car and air tours [see SR April 19, 1952]. We're for Harry's Bar and the Lapin Agile, but we think lot's more could be accomplished at Whistle Stop-sur-mer.

HARVEST MOONING: If there is a man or beast in the audience who has been skunked out of a summer vacation, about the best thing that's come to our attention is an autumn week on a farm. We wrote about Farm Vacations in this space when the idea was first formulated a few years ago. The movement is in high gear now, we are happy to report, and many farms continue taking guests into the fall. Indeed, a few are open all year around.

In the autumn the rural neighborhoods report a succession of church fairs, grange fairs, husking bees, and corn roasts all taking place in the leave-turning days. Once the harvest is in, the farmers relax too, and it has become practice for them to take visitors out hunting during the fall shooting season. The first frosts will also loosen the nuts on the trees and there will be lilliputian hunts for butter-nuts, hickory nuts, and walnuts. Rates run about \$35 per person per week, and it will cost \$20 a week for children. And hark, mothers and fathers! Are you in search of a peaceful Sunday? A Saturday afternoon bereft of screams, shouts, and the patter of heavy little feet? There are some farms that take children *without* their parents. No wonder the farmers need all that help from the Government.

—HORACE SUTTON.

Isaac Newton

By Eric Wilson Barker

STEMS break, wax melts—
A thorn of thought worked earthward through his mind.
Apples and gods and mortals all came down
By natural causes or by accident.
Some not unmixed with glory:
That sweet boy, who like a murdered bird,
Fell wingless from the sun.
Rain fell, snow fell.
The magnet at the centre of the earth
Drew stars and stones and red-cheeked apples down.
What wonders fell towards that sleepless mole!
What little birds, what great and exiled wings!
Ripeness hung still and heavy from the bough.
He waited for apocalypse to fall,
Feeling the lodestone like another moon
Drawing the earth-shaped apple through the leaves.

TRAVELER'S TALES

NEW WORLD CASANOVA: Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, born in Canada, joined the Iberville expedition to Louisiana and two years later was a member of Bienville's exploration party up the Red River. He is now the subject of Ross Phares's "Cavalier in the Wilderness" (Louisiana State University Press, \$3.50). During the next few years Louis engaged in trading, both merchantile and political, along the Texas (that is, Spanish) frontier, was taken by the Spaniards, and put his captivity to good purpose by courting the commandant's daughter. Theirs was a romantic, not a political, marriage. For much of the rest of his life (he died in 1744) St. Denis made his headquarters principally at Natchitoches (pronounce "Nakatosh," please). History—French and Spanish no less than American—has treated him as everything "from patriot to traitor, from saint to scoundrel," declares Professor Phares, who "sees him as a character of rather consistently fixed purposes and principles" and submits a lively, straightforward narrative in support of his case.

—JOHN T. WINTERICH.

LIT'RY SIGHTS: Readers who thumb for a ride will enjoy the affectionate journey Frank Swinnerton is conducting in "The Bookman's London" (Doubleday, \$3.50.) Local color and topography, writers' personalities and publishers, literary homes and haunts—these are the main interests of his informal meanderings through the space of London and the time between Elizabeths I and II. Although he writes with charm and accuracy about the literary men of earlier times, so have many other commentators; the chief value of his book lies rather in his first-hand reminiscences, or those he has heard first-hand, about writers and publishers. His position as writer and editor, along with his keen memory and enthusiasm, are all in his favor, as he shows throughout the very readable book. Some of his critical judgments may seem odd—his high opinion of W. W. Jacobs, for example (whose reputation today rests on a monkey's paw). But there is no harm in our being reminded that literary fashions, like skirt lengths, have their ups and downs. The great number of fresh illustrations in the book, including end-papers, helps to invoke the people and places sketched expertly in prose. A few years ago in these pages I greeted a collection of Mr. Swinnerton's essays with a loud razz; I am happy now to sound a loud huzza.

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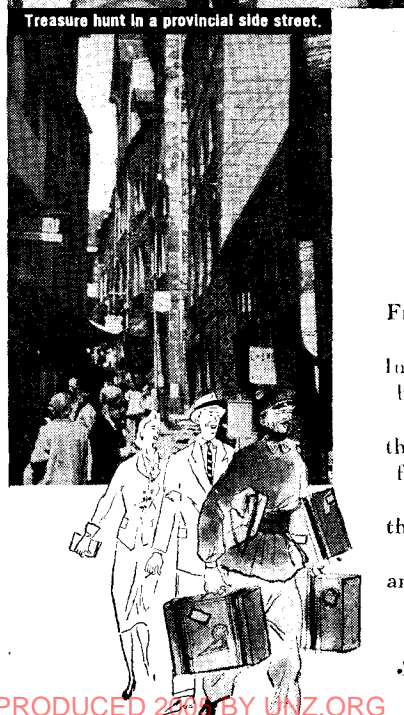
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