

Professor G. J. Spencer,
3815 W 9th Ave.,
Vancouver 8, B.C.

Shire House,
West Beith,
Tring, Herts.
7.i.1963

Dear Professor Spencer,

Many thanks for your letter of good wishes: it did not arrive Christmas (or at least, not before the Christmas holidays) and I been snowed up most of the time since Boxing Day, which is the reason why my reply is so much delayed.

It is very nice to hear of the fleas from albatross nests from Falklands which you are sending us, and there is some hope of getting something we don't have among them, though it is difficult to test how good the chance may be. All the few fleas known from the Falk are bird-fleas; they include Dasypsyllus stainesi (Jordan), mainly land-birds, Istrionius robertsonianus (Jordan) known only from a few females (one from a joint burrow of a penguin and a petrel and the other from the collector), Parapsyllus longicornis alpinus Jordan, and Penicus magellanicus Jordan, both probably specific to penguins (a whole genus is), though there is a record of magellanicus from a bird (Pachyptila). There are no records of any of these from albatrosses so at the least you have a new host-record.

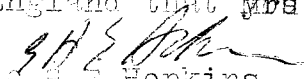
Your arrangements re Christmas mail seem not unlike mine --- my secretary (i.e., my wife) does the bulk of it and I do the odd bit. I can't manage to escape!

Of course you realize that now is the ideal time to get any Ms you may have determined as Miss Clay is working on the genus, but it will be difficult to get her to look at any other genus for the present, though perhaps she won't mind determining things from the type host. I have not seen her since you were here.

Being retired myself, I heartily agree with what you say about the difficulty of acquiring pennies in that condition. I have been lucky myself, but of course my grant is a fixed sum and does not rise with the cost of living. One factor I think you are overlooking when you mention that youngsters without experience come in on the salaries with which you (and I) ended is that our money was worth much more. I began, as Patrick Buxton's assistant in Samoa, on £400 a year, ^{or housing} and was delighted to get the start; I was married and it was a very tight squeeze, but it was even a bachelor could not do it at all. I agree, too, that they don't do things any better than we did --- if as much! Incidentally, here is a little oddity for you: I do not draw a salary for my work at the museum. Rothschild pays me a grant, on which I therefore have to pay tax at a "unearned" rate. BUT, it means that in the eyes of the law I'm not anything at all --- I am, therefore, eligible for a retirement pension in March! I'm afraid I find this rather funny, but I shall grab the money eagerly, having had to insure nolens volens when the scheme started. I'm delighted to get a bit back from government.

Many thanks for your good wishes, which I reciprocate. May I bring you all you wish for yourself, including the possibility of that return trip to England that Mrs Spencer is planning for

Yours,


G.H.E. Hopkins.



Professor G.J. Spencer,

3815 W 9th Ave.,

VANCOUVER 8,

B.C.,

Canada.

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Sender's name and address :

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