

ZYMOLOGY

Beer and Bread Have Been Companions Since Pharaohs

See Front Cover

BEEER AND BREAD have been companions on man's tables since the remotest days of antiquity. The Pharaohs of Egypt drank beer with their meals, and the kings of the Babylonian city-states maintained great brewing establishments in their palaces and temples, for the pay of their servants and the allowances of their harem ladies was partly in beer.

They had dozens of varieties of beer in Babylon, each with its own special name. The basic word for beer was "bi"; syllables were added to that to designate particular brands. Some of the names sounded like something gurgling from a jug; when Sargon told his cupbearer to bring a "dark one," this is what he said: "Se-bar-bi-gig-dug-gal!"

Dr. E. Huber of Berlin, who has written a monograph on the making and use of beer in antiquity, believes the Babylonians invented beer and that the Egyptians learned the trick from them. However that may be, they did make it out of the same materials: specially baked loaves of bread, malted grain, barley, emmer, wheat and water.

Babylonian "Sippers"

Drinking through a straw was a necessity in Babylonia, for their beer was served in crocks unfiltered, and you had to stick a drinking-tube through the junk floating on top to get the good beverage beneath. Several thirsty souls would have their tubes into the same vessel, so that the man with the best "pull" got the biggest drink. In Egypt,

however, the clear beer was decanted into serving-bottles and then poured into goblets. One fine Egyptian wall carving, reproduced on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, shows a Pharaoh enjoying a glass of beer with his wife. You know it's his wife, because she is wearing a queen's crown.

Egyptians even took beer with them when they died. Many of the tombs of kings and nobles contain models of brewers at work; and an often-repeated item in the lists of things the dead were supposed to have is, "A thousand breads, a thousand beers."

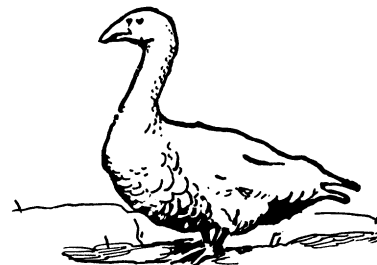
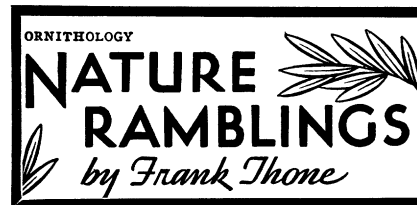
In All Lands and Ages

The knowledge of beer-making spread all over Europe in ancient times. The Romans found the Gauls and Spaniards drinking a "wine" made from barley, and the peoples across the Rhine and around the Baltic were even more valiant tankard-emptiers.

But even the peoples outside the barley-wheat lands have their beers. In southeastern Asia, which is a rice country, rice paste is fermented into a variety of drinks, of which the best known is the Japanese saké.

In the New World, the corn-growing Indians did not fail to discover the beverage possibilities of their grain. A Mexican god had special charge of fermented corn drinks; legend states that on a single visit to earth he brought his mortal friends nine distinct recipes for home brew!

Science News Letter, April 1, 1933



Wings for the North

GEESE, ducks, whistling swans, winging swiftly high overhead, scorning the middle latitudes in their migration from their winter feeding grounds to their summer breeding grounds far up in the Arctic, are only giving added testimony to the might of the sun as the visible ruler of earthly life. For they are on their way from lands of winter abundance, thanks to the sun, to lands of even greater abundance in the summer, thanks still to the same great source of light and warmth. The brief stops they make with us, yielding toll of their numbers to a few days of hunting season, are solely for the purposes of feeding and snatching a little rest. Then they are on their way again.

Why should these strong-winged migrants be so eager to reach the Far North, land of Eskimos, polar bears and walruses? Simple enough: they go where it is easiest to make a living, during the strenuous time of rearing their families.

The Far North is anything but a land of desolation during its brief but sun-flooded summer. The famous midnight sun is something more than a wonder-phenomenon for tourists. It is an employer of the green cells in plant leaves that keeps them working in double shifts all summer long, giving them no night of rest at all and forcing the production of available food for birds, in berries and seeds, roots and shoots, on a 24-hour schedule.

By the same token, this great vegetable food supply that is directly available to some birds becomes indirectly available to others through the simply indescribable swarms of insects that rise over the tundras during the intense Arctic summer.

Science News Letter, April 1, 1933

CONVENIENCE COUPON

for New or Renewal Subscription to Science News Letter

Send this coupon to Washington while you are thinking of it.

Science News Letter,
21st and Constitution Avenue,
Washington, D. C.

Please start renew my subscription to SCIENCE NEWS LETTER. I am enclosing remittance as checked: 2 years, \$7 1 year, \$5

Name
Street
Address
City and State

If this subscription is a renewal, check here

