

occult practice is harmful in so far as it encourages an unwholesome flight from the persistent problems of real life. . . . It is against public interests for astrologers to spread their counsels of flight from reality."

Though no careful, extended, statistical study of the success or failure of astrological predictions, which might prove a decisive test, is known ever to have been made, statistical tests of the supposed broad influences of the planets and zodiacal signs have failed to verify these claims, the report declares.

"Until such correlations are established," the report concludes, "scientists can do a valuable service to society by pointing out publicly that the predictions lack every conceivable scientific foundation."

Science News Letter, February 1, 1941

ARCHAEOLOGY

Reveal Forgotten Wife Of Totalitarian Pharaoh

TOTALITARIAN Pharaoh Unas, who ruled Egypt in the twenty-ninth century before Christ, had a very completely forgotten wife, it is now revealed by archaeologists who have unearthed and entered the tomb of a Queen Nebet among royal burials in Sakkara.

The very name of Queen Nebet is unfamiliar to modern Egyptologists, but Zaki Y. Saad, leader of the explorations, has found convincing evidence in the tombs to conclude that she was undoubtedly the royal wife of Unas.

The empty tomb, pronounced richly sculptured, is adorned with a great array of inscriptions, adding to knowledge of Egypt's fifth dynasty. A portrait of the queen delicately holding a lotus flower is over a doorway.

Pharaohs in the fourth to sixth dynasties are known to have ruled Egypt as absolute monarchs by divine right, and to have held all high offices in the government in dictator fashion, including direction of the armies, legal affairs, and the highly important religious functions of the state. Pharaoh owned all land in Egypt, and was the only earthly inhabitant who looked forward to a heavenly life with the gods.

When the tomb of Pharaoh Unas was first entered in modern times by archaeologists in 1881, the royal burial had been robbed, and a few scattered bones are the only remains of this one-time powerful king.

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Evergreens

FAR NORTHERN lands, we are accustomed to assume without too much thinking, are lands of evergreens. When Kipling speaks of "dominion over palm and pine," it needs no explanation to make it clear he means the wide sweep of the British Empire from the tropics to the arctic seas. Evergreen trees and snow are always thought of together.

Actually, however, a census of evergreen species shows a steady increase in exactly the opposite direction, from north to south rather than from south to north. The greatest and richest evergreen forests in the world are those of the moist equatorial regions, like the valleys of the Amazon and the Congo.

The evergreen forests of the Far North are monotonously composed of only a few species of trees—frequently only one species for many hundreds of miles. The evergreen forests of the tropics comprise thousands of species, with hundreds of the most varied aspect crowded on one small island. Be it not forgotten that the palm, too, has evergreen leaves, and so has the breadfruit tree, and many of the figs, and the mango tree, and many another tree besides, so strange that even their names are unfamiliar to us.

The trouble with us is that we have become used to thinking of evergreens and the needle-leaved conifer trees as synonymous. This is far from being the case. The majority of evergreen leaves are broad leaves; pine and spruce and fir are exceptions rather than the type or the rule.

Even in lands as far from the tropics as our own southern states there are many species of broad-leaved evergreen trees and shrubs; several kinds of magnolias, live-oak, bay trees, holly, mountain laurel, rhododendron, palmetto—any good Southerner could extend the list to your pleasure and conviction.

While of course there is no way of proving it conclusively, it seems likely that broad-leaved evergreens do not invade the North because the weather is too rough. The whooping winds of northern winters would pull at the broad surfaces of their leaves like a gale at the rigging of a ship improvidently caught with all sails set. The heavy loads of ice imposed by glaze storms would be more than any limb, however mighty, could bear. The needle-leaves of the conifers, close-reefed against both wind and ice, are better adapted for survival in extreme winter weather. So the conifers rule the Far North, and the broad-leaved evergreen trees the South.

Science News Letter, February 1, 1941

ENGINEERING

Winter Scenes in Movies Made in Refrigerated Studio

WHEN you see a movie scene showing actors in the snow, suffering from the cold, their breath showing in clouds, you cannot be sure that it was taken in winter, or even in the mountains. Perhaps it was made in the heat of a southern California summer day, in a special cold studio which was described to the meeting of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers in Hollywood by R. Van Slyker.

Despite the heat from the usual studio lighting system, the studio temperature can be kept at 21 degrees Fahrenheit, with 85 degrees temperature outside. Under these conditions it is not necessary to use untoasted cornflakes for snow, which is the practise in ordinary "winter" scenes. Portable blowers grind 50-pound cakes of ice into powder, and expel it through special nozzles.

Science News Letter, February 1, 1941

INTERESTED? in Science



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