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Persevere and
Succeed.

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EDITORIAL.

PERFORMANCE RECORDS IN BREEDING.

In these days of trap-nest egg records, daily milk records, official tests of milk and butter-fat production, and concentrated attention on the speed records of fast horses, there is danger of much undue expectancy, and consequent disappointment in the breeding of prolific laying fowls, enormous-yielding cows, and sensational equine speeders. What is more natural than the ingenuous assumption that, by concentrating the blood-lines of extraordinary performers, still more wonderful performance will be assured? Wise breeders know that it does not always nor even commonly work that way. While like begets like to a certain extent, and within reasonable limits, this fundamental law is modified by the equally important one of variation.

Moreover, the performance of an individual may be wonderfully aided by such adventitious factors as unusually favorable environment, care, feeding, condition, training, and numerous other incidentals; and performance secured as a result of these may not be hereditarily fixed in any great degree. What is much more important, although frequently overlooked, is that sensational production of eggs or milk, or the making of great and repeated records of speed, result in severe drain on the individual animal's vitality, which may consequently lessen the degree of stamina imparted to its progeny, and decrease its chances of equalling the records of its dam and ancestors. Many a record-breaking individual, whose vital energy has been spent in production, has proven disappointing in its progeny. The interests of posterity are best conserved by moderate production, which, while developing, does not overtax the milk-making, egg-laying or dynamic qualities of the parent stock. It is a familiar maxim of breeding that the chances of producing a phenomenal individual are as good, if not better, from moderately high-class as from strictly sensational parents. Phenomena seldom reproduce their excellencies in equal degree in their offspring. Did they do so, what dizzy heights in breeding would we not long since have scaled? This is accounted for, fundamentally, on the principle of variation, and holds true in some measure among species bred for type, color, and other attributes; but it applies with especial force, we wren, in the case of those breeds in which excellence consists in performance, for the simple reason explained above, namely, that excessive production tends to exhaust vitality and stamina. The hen which has laid heavily all winter is not expected to produce a large percentage of fertile, strong-germed eggs in spring; the cow that has milked copiously right up to calving is liable not to produce a very rugged calf at parturition. The human father who overworks himself in youth or prime, ordinarily bequeaths an impaired vigor to his children. Nature exacts penalties for excess even to the third and fourth generations.

Records of performance, if used judiciously, should and will prove a great aid to breeders of live stock, but if relied upon solely, without due attention to constitution, vigor and wearing qualities in the parent stock, the tendency must be to produce a race of weeds. The ultimate attainment of every strain is limited by its inherited vitality, and the stream of production, while it may occasionally spout and sputter into extraordinary individual production, cannot, in the end, rise higher than the springs of vitality, health and constitution from which it is supplied. The wise breeder, then, will be admonished to seek, first of all, constitution, stamina and dis-

gestive capacity; and in stock of this description, to develop moderately and with judgment productive capacity, with a weather-eye ever out to discern and avoid the storms of indiscretion, which, if yielded to, will speedily cast him upon the shoals of restricted production and the rocks of weakness, sterility and disease. Let progress be gradual and sure.

CLEANLINESS VS. BACTERIA.

The article by Dr. Woods Hutchinson, entitled "Crimes Against the Cow," synopsised in our issue of September 10th, surely could not be read by any dairyman without exciting a resolution to reduce the myriad colonies of bacteria with which scientists tell us that ordinary milk is swarming. The staggering fact that milk retailed in city milk wagons and stores has been found to contain more bacteria to the ounce than sewage; that a teaspoonful may contain more microscopic inhabitants than the human population of New York; that 90 per cent. of them are introduced into the milk by ordinary common dirt; that the milk existing in the udder is commonly free of germs, and that it may be kept practically free of them by strict cleanliness, together with prompt cooling and bottling, while cleanliness and cooling alone, without bottling, will keep the milk for, say, eighteen hours, sufficiently pure for ordinary cheesemaking purposes, providing the milk is placed in a pure atmosphere; these facts should make us stop and think hard to see what can be done to make our milk and other dairy products more wholesome for adults and infants, and to lessen the danger of communicating infectious diseases, such as typhoid, scarlet fever, tuberculosis and diphtheria, the germs of all of which (with a partial exception in the case of tuberculosis) are introduced into the milk after it is drawn, never being found in fresh-drawn milk. Tuberculosis germs do not exist in fresh-drawn milk, except in cases where the cow has the disease localized in the udder.

The whole secret of pure-milk supply is strict cleanliness, combined with prompt cooling, and either bottling, or else some provision for keeping the milk in pure air. The primary provisions are clean cows, fed on wholesome food and pure water, housed in clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated stables, as free from dust and stench as possible; cleanly milkers, attired in clean clothes, and (if milking with wet hands) compelled to wash and dry their hands after milking each cow; prompt straining of every mess through a clean, frequently-rinsed strainer, followed by immediate separation, if intended for buttermaking, or prompt cooling, if for cheesemaking or retailing; clean milk utensils, washed with pure water, and then scalded or steamed, and exposed to sunlight. These simple, easy precautions, conscientiously observed, will reduce the bacterial content of our milk from millions per cubic centimeter, down to thousands. This means, of course, that the milk will keep sweet longer, though that is an advantage of lesser importance, for the lactic-acid-producing bacteria, while they give most noticeable evidence of their presence, do not affect the wholesomeness of the milk so much as do the disease-producing and putrefying bacteria which, in the innocent, opaque whiteness of the milk, work their injurious changes unseen, and too often unsuspected. Pure milk is the most natural and wholesome food of man, but it is, at the same time, the most susceptible to contamination and bacterial infection. Cleanliness is the watchword. Let us be cleanly and clean.

UP-TO-DATE DAIRYING.

Considering all the teaching that has been done in the interest of improved dairy practice, and more especially the striking examples in every State and Province of the results of applying sound, up-to-date dairy knowledge, it is astonishing how reluctant are the rank and file to adopt the new and better way, even experimentally. Experience has demonstrated conclusively that the silo is an important adjunct of the cattle barn, yet hundreds of thousands of dairy farmers in America are still without one.

Well-cured alfalfa hay has been proven to be, chemically and practically, better than clover, and almost the equal of wheat bran, for feeding along with silage, yet millions of farmers are without an acre of alfalfa, because they do not really comprehend this important fact, and have either put forth no effort at all, or else have made very imperfect attempts to grow it; and, failing, perhaps, in the first trial, have given up the idea, instead of studying intelligently the cause of their difficulty. So of other things all along the line.

We trust every subscriber who owns a cow or steer will read thoughtfully the article, "One Hundred Dairy Cows," describing an up-to-date dairy farm in the State of New York, devoted to sanitary milk production. The experience on this farm is strongly in support of corn ensilage, alfalfa (especially for soiling), and a more rational system of cow-housing, watering and general care. It is also noteworthy that the muslin-curtain system of ventilation has been found entirely efficacious in a stable where the King system, carefully installed, had failed to insure satisfactory atmospheric conditions. On this particular point, the experience of the New York farm is at variance with experiments conducted last winter at Guelph and Ottawa. Nevertheless, we welcome this latest piece of evidence that, under certain conditions, at least, the muslin-curtain system does succeed in maintaining a pure, dry stable air. It all goes to indicate that the success of any rational system depends largely upon how it is handled.

PROGRESS OR RETROGRESSION.

It is easier to balance a standing bicycle than to maintain a stock of knowledge and acute intellectual efficiency without continual effort to improve. The moment a man ceases to progress in his profession or business, he immediately commences to fall back. The advance of his competitors, combined with the tendencies to forgetfulness and inertia inherent within himself, will speedily put to the rear anyone whose constant aim and watchword is not "forward." The summit of success is held, even as it must be attained, by enterprise, industry, perseverance and skill. No farmer who has accomplished anything, and desires to maintain his standing, ever reaches the point where he can afford not to be an earnest, alert, open-minded student of his life-work. Reading of books and the agricultural press, personal touch with one's brightest competitors, constant watchfulness to broaden, quicken and inform oneself—these things are necessary to him who is unwilling to stand aside and leave to others the prize. The first rank to-day is the second to-morrow. Wide knowledge of one generation is regarded as comparative ignorance in the next. Efficiency that is not constantly augmented quickly pales into inefficiency and ineptitude. No man, be he breeder, dairyman, horticulturist, poultryman, or what not, dare be content to rest on his oars. We must keep abreast and ahead of the times.