

Developing the Herd

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The successful breeder must have a clear and concise conception of the type he wishes to establish and with his ideal constantly in mind must cheerfully give unlimited time and thought to the characteristics of the animals he wishes to produce. He should have a clear understanding of the "scale of points" or characteristics that go to make up the perfect animal. He should not only be a careful and impartial critic of his own herd but should also take advantage of every possible opportunity to study the greatest individuals of the breed. He must be a man of courage and strong convictions, but big enough to admit the possibility of mistakes when made. He must be a close observer and a careful student of cause and effect. He must be steadfast in his purposes and not seek one ideal to-day and another to-morrow. Over and above all else he must enter into the spirit of the game with an earnestness and enthusiasm that will make the work a matter of joy and pleasure rather than of labor.

Having mentioned these few qualifications which we believe every successful breeder must possess, we will next consider in what seems to us to be their logical order, the means to be pursued in the successful development of the herd. In this discussion we will confine ourselves to the subjects that seem to us of the utmost importance, or in other words, to the things we believe every man must consider who wishes to realize any degree of success in the development of his herd.

The Sire That Heads the Herd.

With a herd to develop, we believe the first and most important subject to consider is the sire to head the herd. In some things we may make mistakes and still reap a moderate degree of success, but if we make a mistake in the choice of a sire we are sure to go backwards instead of forwards and thus lose an opportunity for the betterment of the herd. When we remember that the sire that is mated with a given number of females has as much to do with the character and value of the offspring as all the females combined, we can well understand that "the sire is half the herd." If the sire is more strongly bred than the females, he is apt to be more prepotent and therefore has more influence in determining the characteristics of the next generation than all of the females combined. Each well chosen sire that is mated with a herd should give at least fifty per cent of his character to the next generation so that the direct descendants of the fourth sire used in succession retains only a little over six per cent of the original blood, and nearly ninety-four per cent of the blood of that generation is of our own choosing. When we are thus able to transform the character of the herd in such a short time, the great importance of a proper choice of sires cannot be over estimated. If poor udders, sloping rumps, lack of butter-fat, or any other given defects exist, a sire that is subject to the same defects will make those defects more marked, but by a wise choice of sires these defects may be remedied.

Professor Eckles of the Missouri Agricultural College, in comparing the daughters of two sires that were used in the same herd, wrote as follows: "Counting the milk at \$1.50 per hundredweight, the income from thirty daughters of Lorne of Meridale would exceed that from the same

number of daughters of Missouri Rioter of \$6,467 in six years." In this statement, Professor Eckles does not take into consideration the great difference in the value of the stock but simply considers the milk at \$1.50 per hundredweight. Six years is a very short period for the average life of a cow and in a reasonably large herd a good sire should produce at least thirty daughters each year, so we believe it is perfectly fair to consider \$6,467 as the yearly difference in the earning ability of the two sires. During the past year, Mr. M. H. Gardner, our Superintendent of Advanced Registry, has given us the benefit of his early experience in the choice of sires, and the dairy papers of the country and the agricultural departments of the various States are continually urging the importance of using better sires. A good sire is a paying investment at almost any price, but a poor one is worse than an absolute loss even though his cost is nothing. With these facts in mind, the successful breeder will earnestly strive to have each sire that comes into his herd better than the preceding ones, and if he succeeds in this, he must move forward in the development of the breed.

Developing the Young Stock.

Among the other things to be considered is the proper development of the young stock. Good breeding will do much, but it cannot do everything and the man who wishes to see his herd improve year by year must give very careful attention to the development of the calves. Much might be said on this subject, but we will only touch on a few of the most important features. As a rule, the first feed of the new-born calf should be from the mother's milk, being careful that the calf does not over-eat. The young calf should be fed three or four times per day, receiving only about two pounds of milk at a feed if fed four times per day. The milk should always be at blood heat and fed from absolutely clean pails. If the pails can be scalded at each feed so much the better. Regularity in feeding is as necessary as cleanliness. At all times the calf should have a clean, dry bed and plenty of good, pure water. As soon as the calf is old enough we would keep good hay within his reach, and believe that a mixture of bran and oats with perhaps a little charcoal makes a very desirable grain mixture. They should also have salt within their reach. The milk should always be sweet and the change from whole milk to skimmed milk should be made very gradually. We believe that the milk as fed should be carefully weighed so that the ration may be gradually and carefully increased. We believe that most of the difficulty in raising calves is due to carelessness rather than to lack of knowledge. When the calves have reached the age at which they can consume a reasonable amount of grain, we believe in giving them a good generous ration made up of feed that will have a tendency to produce bone and muscle rather than fat.

Next to an abundance of good feed we believe in plenty of sunshine and fresh air. This is something that they should have at all times and under all circumstances. With double glazed sash and the King system of ventilation properly installed, an abundance of sunshine and fresh air may be had without making the building too cold. Damp and filthy stables should not be tolerated. We do not believe that it is wise to have the heifers freshen

at a very young age, but prefer to give them a reasonable chance for development before they are called upon to take on the burdens of motherhood.

In the care of the herd and the development of the young animals, constant watchfulness must go hand-in-hand with a thorough understanding of the business and the successful breeder must be a man who believes in doing things to-day, not to-morrow. He must give close personal attention to all details pertaining to the herd and must be thoroughly in love with his work as has been the great breeders of the past. Sometimes the hours of labor are many and nothing but an intense love of the work and a great pride in the results accomplished will give to the weary muscles power to go on and complete his work, but he must feel a personal interest in each member of the herd, and should look upon them with a feeling much nearer akin to love than he could possibly feel for a mere machine. I know of nothing that would give better returns in the care of the cow than gentleness and kindness, and I have sometimes thought that it was fortunate that every act of neglect and cruelty carries its own punishment with it. The unflinching laws of nature are such that no man can abuse the animals that are within his care without paying the penalty, for the highest degrees of success and profit never go hand-in-hand with neglect and cruelty.

Good Goods, Good Money.

It has been said in substance that if a man could produce a better mouse trap than any one else that the world would make a beaten path to his door, and if a man can only produce a little better stock than any one else the world will come to him. One of the richest men in Scotland on being complimented on his magnificent fortune replied: "I never tried to make a shilling. But I did try to make the finest goods in all the Kingdom and the money made itself." To a very great extent this thought applies to many of the transactions of this life and often the man who receives the largest financial returns is the one who really thinks least of the dollars to be had. I suppose that none of us can afford to be indifferent to the profit to be derived from our herds, but I am sure that the man who is not blinded by the glitter of the almighty dollar but who loves his work and seeks success for the sake of succeeding, will in the long run reap the richest harvest.

If a person wishes to establish a great herd that will take a prominent place among the great herds of the world and hold that place year after year, I believe that it is imperative that he should keep the best so far as is permitted by the proper mating of his animals. With a large herd many fine animals must be offered for sale, but I believe that we should not be tempted to part with the best we have by an unusually large offer. By this I mean that the price alone should not tempt us, and that in making sales we should consider the future of our herd as of more importance than mere dollars and cents. This course will, I am sure, result not only in a great herd but also in great profit.

No man can be associated with a pure-bred herd very long without meeting with losses and discouragements so that courage and perseverance are among the necessary qualifications of a successful breeder. It does not require very much ability to begin a certain task, but the real test of character is in our ability to hold on until the finishing blow is struck. We must know and acknowledge no such word as failure, but when the

difficulties arise, as they surely will, stand by the guns until the victory is won. Baron Rothschild has been quoted as having said that if the public should lose faith in his integrity for the short period of twenty-four hours that he would be bankrupt. This shows how far-reaching and vital is the faith we have in one another. The members of a herd may be great and they may have great records, but if the owner of the herd is lacking in honor and integrity much of their value is lost. If, on the other hand, great cows and great records are associated with an owner whose word is as good as his bond and whose character is beyond suspicion, we have the ideal combination in which the value of the stock is very materially increased by the reputation of the owner.

With animals that are well bred and carefully reared, we come to one of the most important, if not the most important, elements in the successful development of a herd. I refer to official and semi-official tests. Before the tests are made we have the raw material. It may be of great intrinsic value, but just what that value is no one can say until it has received the official stamp of Superintendent Gardner. With the help of the scales and the Babcock test he is able to measure the capacity of our cows and tell us as near as human skill can determine just what they can produce. They come to him in the rough and as an unfinished product. He classifies them according to their ability to produce, and his official stamp of recognition gives them a definite rank and to a large extent a definite value. The making of official and semi-official tests is so thoroughly hedged in by every possible safeguard and precaution to insure a fair and honest deal to all that no one can doubt the reliability of the tests made.

Comparison is the great criterion of the commercial world and through it men are able to choose the best of whatever they buy in the markets of the world. By the aid of official and semi-official records we are able to compare the merits of our cows with a degree of accuracy entirely unknown prior to the use of these tests. It is true that the conformation of the animal must be taken into consideration, but with the individuality and record combined, few mistakes should occur.

Look for the Pure Gold.

In our opinion, the breeder of Holstein-Friesian cattle who does not take advantage of the benefits to be derived from the official and semi-official tests is making the mistake of a life-time. I believe that such breeders are continually throwing ore that is nearly all pure gold onto the dump pile. Now and then they have the satisfaction of seeing some one make a small fortune from the material that has passed unappreciated through their hands, but how much greater would have been the benefits if they could have made the records themselves. A large record not only adds greatly to the value of the animal that makes the record but its benefits extend several generations, both into the past as well as the future. These records are not only of great value in aiding us to decide on the most desirable combinations of blood to make in breeding but they add value to our herds faster and surer than anything else that we can do.

A friend of ours who owns a high class automobile tells us that there is a strange fascination in driving a car that will plunge forward with such terrific power and speed at a mere touch of the proper lever. No doubt he is right, but is there not a

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