

Court Manners in the Cow Barn

Speak kindly to the gentle cow, and never, never tease her; Take off your hat; politely bow; do all you can to please her. Be sure your hands have been washed clean; be sure your nails are curried; More milk is drawn from cow serene than from the cow that's worried. —Mother Goose's Modern Maxims for Milkers.

"KICKING the cow has not been good form for some time in even moderately advanced dairy circles," says the Chicago Herald, "though the ban upon it probably originated more in practical than humane considerations. Painful experience warranted the conclusion that the cow thus approached was far more likely to kick the milker through the side of the barn."

"Of late years the cow-barn code of manners and morals has developed rapidly from the negative to the positive style—from 'thou shalt not's' to 'thou shalt's.' It has been discovered that the cow, long the poet's livestock emblem of placidity, has nerves, and should be soothed and not censured when she is disinclined to 'give down' her lacteal bounty.

"Not only pitchforks, milking stools, singletrees and fence stakes have fallen into disrepute as cow persuaders, bad language is also under ban. The cow physiologists and psychologists of the agricultural colleges seem to have conclusively demonstrated that the cow addressed in profane, abusive or even harsh language gives less milk for the same amount of feed.

"Even the tone of voice is said to make a difference. The ears of the cow, though less mobile than the mule's are still sensitive. They are irritated by strident squeals and rough gutturals. The milker who is gifted by Nature or has acquired by art the low, sweet, soothing, 'drawing-room' tone of cultured society is averred to find his reward in an increased yield of milk.

"Thus it has come to pass that the up-to-date code of cow-barn manners includes many things not dreamed in the cow philosophy of our grandfath-

ers. Not only must the milker's hands be clean, but the nails should be manicured, that they may not scratch or tickle. From the most up-to-date dairies the curry-comb has been banished as the instrument of the cow's matutinal massage. Its place has been taken by the vacuum cleaner.

"These statements are not humorous exaggerations. They are derived from most serious monographs issued from scientific experiment stations and from the rules laid down for employees by enterprising dairymen. A current news item records that a New Jersey dairyman has now provided a professional manicure to see that the milkers' nails are in order before they begin to milk.

"In logical developments of these advanced ideas we shall doubtless hear next that it is no longer in order to recite on entering the cow barn the old nursery rhyme:

"Come, pretty cow, let down your milk, and I will give you a gown of silk."

"These are realistic as well as scientific days in the dairy, and the cow should accordingly be promised something she could both use and enjoy. Perhaps this might be substituted.

"Come, pretty cow, I need the cash; for milk I'll give you a warm bran mash."

"Then, while milking, the milker might recite soothing selections from the poets in praise of the cow. The Vedic Hymns contain a large number of such poems. They are commended to the attention of the modern bucolic muse as sources of inspiration. Then when the operation is concluded the milker might recite Ann Taylor's lines:

"Thank you, pretty cow, that made pleasant milk to soak my bread," etc.

"However, anyone who has ever tried it must remain skeptical of the possibility of teaching a calf to drink without using language that would not be admitted to a family newspaper. That's a task like driving mules."

Why Discard the Grade Stallion

THE horse breeders of Europe have had good reasons for discarding grade stallions from their breeding operations and they should be generally understood.

The chief reason is that until a special type of horse has long been bred pure in one direction, neither stallions nor mares representing that type possess the power of stamping their character upon their offspring. That power is termed "prepotency," and it is the power lacking in a majority of low-grade stallions and insufficiently present in many high-grade horses.

Grade horses possess pure blood, but not enough of it to endow them with marked breed or individual prepotency, while many home-bred stallions, graded up from native or mixed-bred stock and possessed of five or even more top-crosses of pure blood, but not eligible to registry in stud books recognized by the Government, are not so certain of transmitting the characteristics of the breed of their pure-bred sires as are even comparatively short-bred, imported, registered stallions.

The reason for this is that the imported horses, and those bred in America from imported sires and dams, spring from stock produced in countries where all of the horses have, for many generations, been practically purebred, though possibly non-registered.

Breed prepotency is well illustrated by the fact that a bull of any one of the old-established hornless breeds, such as the Aberdeen-Angus, Galloway or Red Poll, has the power to beget hornless offspring from some 90 per cent of his horned mates.

These hornless grade Polls, however, do not possess like power, if retained for breeding purposes, and so well is this understood that, wherever hornless cattle are wanted, purebred polled bulls, rather than grade polled bulls, are employed. So, too, the purebred bull of special breed is (or should be) invariably used to produce cows for dairying, for each purebred Ayrshire, Guernsey, Holstein, or Jersey bull possesses strongly the breed prepotency to endow his offspring with the special capabilities for dairy purposes characterizing his breed.

In Scotland practically no unregist-

tered stallions are known for 15 years. The reasons for non-use are that it does not pay to breed from such horses, their stock being ineligible to record and as a rule inferior to horses of approved breeding.

The uniform experience of breeders and owners of Clydesdales in Scotland is that during the period of systematic breeding with the guidance of a pedigree record—that is since 1878—the average quality of the stock has increased in respect to uniformity of type, soundness of feet and limbs, and general wearing capacity.

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