

Exhibition Birds vs. Mongrels

BY G. L. WOOD, POULTRY EDITOR

FROM the advent of the first trap-nest there has been more or less indiscriminate trap-nesting, and the records have had every degree of variation. When a mongrel hen made a good record there has been a big noise made that thoroughbred stock was not necessary to get eggs. But there have been a number of mongrel pens entered in the Eastern egg-laying contests and so far they have not made very enviable records for their owners, neither have they given the mongrel hen any prestige as a layer.

There has been the other class of entries who are proclaiming a specific egg laying type different from the standard of perfection in many details. These promoters are objected to by the fancier from the one standpoint that nearly all of the exhibition qualities are sacrificed in getting their layers.

Mongrel vs. Show Bird.

It has taken years to develop the exhibition bird to his particular type and color, and as a rule she has not been a bad layer. Sometimes she has gone into the contests and come out at the top of the list. The fancier will not eventually object to lengthening her body if it is found that she can lay more eggs with the additional length. But he does object to sacrificing her other qualities, which it has taken time and patience to develop, turning his favorite fowl into a mongrel.

Not all the egg-strains of the country are sacrificing their breed, but many are, and I would warn the man who invests his money in any particular egg-laying strain to learn whether the breeder has stock that still has its exhibition qualities intact. The bird as described in the Standard of Perfection will survive, and that authority will be revised to meet conditions when necessary.

Future Development.

There will be an interesting struggle for business between the man who sells layers of every shape and

color and the one who has developed or is breeding a laying strain of a standard variety, and who can go into the show room and walk away with the honors. The biggest win in any exhibition of the future will be with the layer who can land the blue ribbon.

Expert breeders are not behind the times in this respect and it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the ones who have developed the poultry industry are going to let others come in and get the cream of the business. Their theory for the exhibition hen as a layer has received a high endorsement from no less an authority than Professor T. E. Queensberry, director of the Missouri State Experiment Station, Mountain Grove, Missouri, under whose charge the best data of the laying hen have been developed. He says in part:

Show Bird Good Layer.

"It does not mean that you have to entirely disregard shape and color to breed a good laying strain of any variety. One of our contestants in the Buff Leghorn class from Michigan entered his birds in a good poultry show two weeks before our contest began last year. We now find that some of his highest scoring pullets and some of those which have won the highest honors in the show room, are also those which have made the highest records in the contest by laying the greatest number of eggs.

"His pen is fine in color and shape as well as leading when it comes to the egg basket. Of course, we all know that after a pullet or hen has laid a large number of eggs, it tells on their appearance for the time being, at least, but that does not necessarily mean that these birds will never be in show condition again, or that their progeny will not be birds good enough to go into the show room. We have been impressed with the show qualities and the beautiful shape and color of one of the New Zealand pens of White Leghorns. This pen comes from a breeder who has won in the contests of that country and is now also making good records here. We are quite certain of one thing, i. e., it is not necessary to breed a flock of mongrels for them to prove to be satisfactory layers."

Scratchings in the Poultry Yard

THOSE who become discouraged at a few failures will seldom succeed with poultry. Failures are often met in any line, and poultry is no exception to this rule. It takes persistence to make a success at anything.

Fortune seldom comes to the slothful person. Fortune moves on soon after the knock upon the door. Those who would have fortune enter, must open the door promptly. This is especially true in poultry raising.

Musty food, mouldy food, and tainted food of any kind should not be fed.

Selecting for hardiness should be the main object, health and vigor to be given the preference in selecting each individual. The weakest and most useless of a flock should be weeded out as soon as possible.

The best way to feed cabbage or beets to poultry is to suspend them from the ceiling in a bag made of one-inch mesh netting. In this way the birds can pick it and get food and exercise at the same time.

Mrs. G. B. Parks, of La Salle, Weld County, believes she holds the record in hatching chicks under hens. Four hens hatched 57 chickens from as many eggs. Three of the hens sat on 15 eggs each and one on 12, and every egg brought a chicken which lived.

It is a good plan to seed the breeding yards to rye in the late Summer. This furnishes an abundance of green feed all through the Fall, Winter and Spring. The yards should be plowed right now and sowed in late August at the rate of two and one-half bushels an acre. Wheat seedling can be sown in the same way but rye is more satisfactory. The chickens relish green rye and it stimulates laying. We have also noticed that the eggs from hens ranging on green rye are highly fertile and hatch strong, vigorous chicks.

When a bird is debilitated it needs something nourishing to build up the wasting tissues. There is nothing better than a raw fresh egg every morning until the fowl shows signs of recovery. Then change off to a little cooked meat with a little murrate of iron added to the drinking water. When it is noticed that a

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