

GENETICS

Urges Breeding for Animals But Not For Human Beings

Secretary Wallace Considers That Emphasis on Show Points Parallels Discarded Ways of Corn Judging

BREEDING methods that have greatly improved the per-acre yield of corn will presently be applied to farm animals with equally beneficial results, Secretary of Agriculture Wallace prophesied in the Spragg Memorial Lecture, delivered at Michigan State College.

Secretary Wallace himself pioneered the large-scale application of Mendelian genetical principles to corn breeding, in a day when corn judging was based solely on the production of big, handsome individual ears, regardless of yield per acre. Though he was only a young man, he persisted—in the face of skepticism on the part of his seniors—in producing inbred strains of corn genetically pure for the particular high-yielding qualities he desired, and then crossing them with other pure lines.

This obtained the double advantage of combining the specifically desired qualities and at the same time endowing the offspring with the biological quality, still not well understood, known as hybrid vigor. Millions of bushels of corn are now being raised in the Midwest by the Wallace method, and the use of the hybrid strains is still spreading rapidly.

Breeding of farm animals, such as

dairy cattle, egg-laying chickens, and meat animals, lags far behind corn breeding, Secretary Wallace declared. Selecting breeding stock on the basis of showing "points" is on a level with the old-fashioned methods of corn judging by individual ears. Performance tests based on egg-laying and butterfat-production records are somewhat better, but are still far short of certainty in selection and transmission of desirable qualities to offspring.

What is really needed, the speaker hammered home, is the selection of particular desirable qualities, the fixing of these in pure lines of sires and dams, and the uniting of these pure lines into high-production offspring by crossing. It will be the hybrid corn technique applied to animals.

Carrying of this pure-line method of breeding into application in human eugenics did not appeal to Secretary Wallace as practicable. Negative eugenics, the attempted elimination of undesirable traits by sterilization programs, he considers of dubious workability. Similar techniques failed when applied in early corn breeding, he pointed out.

For the much-advertised "race im-

provement" schemes of totalitarian states he had only scorn. We do not know what human qualities we want to breed for, he said, and it is highly improbable that any human community would submit to rigid mating control for the many generations necessary to produce results if we did know.

"It is definitely a false eugenic idea," Secretary Wallace continued, "to work toward some standardized preconception of the perfect man, such as the 'Aryan Race' of the Nazi mythology. No race has a monopoly on desirable genes and there are geniuses in every race. The fact that the dictator type of mind must inevitably oversimplify its problems, and attempt practical solutions, based on such false premises, can only mean that eugenic progress under a dictatorship will fail in the long run. Man does not live by bread alone, nor by genes alone . . ."

"No board of experts can tell a dictator how to breed a genius, nor indicate what kind of children our genius would have—if any. Were this possible we feel sure that a genius-breeding program by decree (even a decree buttressed by 99.75% of the 'electorate') could only offer the kind of environment from which the best inheritance would bear only bitter fruit.

"If the eugenic outlook in democracies is today as bad as some eugenicists feel, the solution is thus seen to lie not in an appeal to dictatorship but in the development of a kind of social environment in which superior individuals feel that life has values and possibilities which it is a privilege to pass on to one's children."

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METEOROLOGY—AVIATION

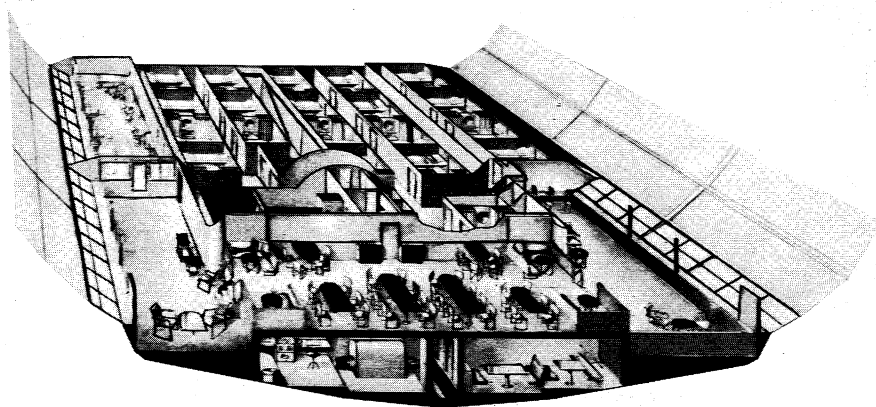
French Steamer In Atlantic To Supply Weather Data

THE FRENCH steamship S. S. Carimaré will be stationed in mid-Atlantic until June to furnish weather data for trans-Atlantic flying and for regular maritime purposes, it is announced at the Hydrographic Office of the U. S. Navy.

The service to be conducted by the steamer will be similar, it was stated, to that provided by the S. S. Jacques Cartier in the past. Ships are asked to radio weather reports to the Carimaré at midnight, six a. m., noon and six p. m. Greenwich Mean Time.

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Geysers have rather brief careers compared to most geological phenomena,



INTERIOR

Artist's drawing shows the arrangement of public rooms and passenger quarters on the new German Zeppelin, LZ-130. In the foreground is the galley, the large dining room and the lounge, bar and smoking room. At the top right of the picture are the "luxury" cabins with outside windows.