

# THE CANADIAN BREEDER AND AGRICULTURAL REVIEW.

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## THE RACE OF LIFE

A sporting paper, viewing a race of life from its  
distinctive standpoint, gives the following "point-  
ers" to those who might wish to stake money on  
the issue of this great go-as-you-please contest  
against time:—

"If one could see a million babies start on a  
journey, (all scratch the mark of course,) and could  
follow them through life, this is about what we  
would see: Nearly 150,000 of them drop out  
of the ranks at the end of the first year, while  
twelve months later the numbers would be further  
thinned by the deduction of 53,000 more, 28,000  
would follow at the end of the thirteenth year.  
They would throw up the sponge by twos and  
threes until the end of the forty fifth year, when it  
would be found that in the intervening period  
something like 500,000 had left the track. Sixty  
years would see 370,000 gray headed men still  
cheerfully pegging away. At the end of eighty  
years the competitors in this great "go-as-you-  
please" would number 98,000, but they would be  
getting more shaky and 'dotty' each lap. At the  
end of 95 seasons 223 would only be left in the  
final 'ties,' while the winner would be led into his  
retiring room, a solitary wreck, at the age of a  
hundred and eight. There is something grimly  
humorous in the quaint array of figures, but they  
are founded on statistics carefully compiled. One  
cannot help wondering what would be the betting  
at the start about any one of those million babies  
coming in alone at the one hundredth lap of the  
great and mysterious track upon which the race of  
life is run."

## THE "PRACTICAL" MANIA.

In almost every avocation there are to be found  
who allow a disposition to theorize, to run away  
with their better judgment. When a farmer takes  
some absurd notion into his head regarding the  
carrying on of his farm work, he is very apt to  
suffer for it financially. Very often the intelligent  
and enterprising farmer in his anxiety to work  
intelligently and understand the why and wherefore  
of all that he has to do, spends more money in  
experimenting than strict economy would warrant,  
but at the same time the man who thoroughly  
masters the problems that confront him in his work  
as he goes along, usually succeeds best in the long  
run. As we have already intimated, however, there  
are some farmers who make theorizing and experi-  
menting the business of their lives, and of course  
such men cannot make much progress as practical  
farmers. On the other hand, however, there are  
not a few but very many farmers throughout  
Canada to-day who persist in following such methods  
as have been taught them by their forefathers  
without ever asking whether or not they are suited  
to the changed conditions with which they find  
themselves surrounded. Such farmers are sure to  
find themselves terribly handicapped in their  
race for prosperity when placed alongside those  
who are always ready to avail themselves of any  
improvement of method which they think would  
help them along the road to prosperity. The  
farmer who milks a herd of nondescripts cannot  
compete in the butter market with the farmer who  
has nothing but Guernsey or Jersey grades or  
throughbreds on his place.

And yet there are fossils who will persist in  
claiming that one year with another the scrub is a  
better butter cow for the farmer than either the  
Jersey or the Guernsey. We are told that the  
scrubs will live in colder quarters or exist on less  
feed than the Channel Islanders. Now, if this be  
true, what does it mean? Let us follow the "prac-  
tical" man's reasoning to its legitimate finish. A  
good scrub cow will consume, say a dollar's worth  
of food in a week and produce five pounds of  
butter. That is, of the dollar's worth of food she  
consumes enough is taken out to sustain life while  
the remainder makes five pounds of butter. Now,  
more generous keeping will make a Jersey or a  
Guernsey produce thirteen pounds of butter per  
week. If she is the same size as the scrub it will  
take the same amount of feed to sustain life while  
the remainder is converted into butter. The  
"practical" man will tell us that the scrub is the  
better dairy cow of the two because she consumes  
less feed. In other words, she converts less feed into  
butter than the Channel Islander, and therefore  
she is the more profitable of the two. At this rate  
a small buck goat would be still more profitable  
than either for it would take very little to feed him  
and he would convert more of the food he con-  
sumed into butter.

If we have not stated the case fairly, let any  
advocate of scrub cattle test a few of his best  
cows against as many Jerseys and Guernseys, weigh-  
ing every pound of food consumed and every pound  
of butter produced. He will find that the improved  
breeds will give very much better results than the

scrubs in case both are fed reasonably well, though  
on starvation fare there is little doubt that the scrub  
would live the longer. A cow is a dairy ma-  
chine intended to convert hay, grass, roots and  
meal into butter, and yet the "practical" man will  
tell us that the most profitable of these machines  
are those which do the smallest amount of work with-  
in a specified time. If the feed be worth more than  
the butter it produces, then why should the farmer  
make any more butter rather than sell all of his  
feed? If, on the other hand, the butter be worth  
more than the feed that it costs to produce it, then  
why should not the cow be most valued that will do  
the most work of this kind within a given space of  
time?

Again and again has the value of the Channel  
Islanders as butter cows been established by practi-  
cal test, the reliability and accuracy of which cannot  
be gainsaid, the "practical" men merely shrug  
their shoulders and say "give the scrubs the same  
chance and they will show like results."

If the advocates of scrub cattle for the dairy  
really believe what they say regarding the race they  
have decided to champion, what prevents them  
from proving what they so boldly assert, by actual  
test? The truth is that they know well that they  
would have no chance of winning even a place in  
competition with fairly good individuals of the im-  
proved breeds of butter cows. At the same time  
these people know that by writing and publishing  
all this nonsense regarding the value of scrubs and  
of old-fashioned methods in farming and stock-  
breeding they are flattering the vanity of stingy  
ignoramuses who have never known what the care  
of a really good animal was. Such journalism is of  
course unworthy of the name, and does much  
harm by actually misleading the confiding and  
uninformed. The "practical" cranks are having  
their innings just now in a small way, but their  
career will surely not be a very long one.

## A QUESTION OF COMFORT.

The last issue of the organ of the scrub cattle,  
rye straw and and basswood browse fraternity con-  
tained an editorial solemnly warning farmers  
against keeping their cattle too warm during the  
winter. It accused the advocates of comfortable  
winter quarters for live stock of adopting that course  
just because they were prejudiced against "native"  
cattle. And just here we may be pardoned for  
setting our venerable contemporary right on a mat-  
ter of terms. He tells us that "natives" stand the  
cold better than the "improved breeds," but what  
he really means is that the common nondescripts,  
commonly known as "scrubs," will endure more  
cold than those of any of the improved breeds. It  
is quite true that these scrubs are "natives," but so  
are most of the Jerseys in Mr. Fuller's herd at  
Oaklands, notably the great Mary Anne of St.  
Lambert. Our contemporary has been using the  
term "native" without knowing its meaning, but of  
course that is a small matter and in his case hardly  
worth mentioning.

What is of more importance, however, is the  
animus he displays when discussing anything per-