AGRICULTURAL.

Stale Butter.

A subscriber writes: "Is there any way to sweeten butter after getting stale? If so please give me the receipt for doing it?"

We never saw (or tasted) any butter that had become stale, had "gone over" or was "off" that we thought was of much account. Yet there is considerable "worked over" butter (?) on the market.

We have never used the following but give it for what it is worth; "Bad butter may be improved by dissolving it thoroughly in hot water; let it cool, then skim off, and churn again, adding a little good salt and sugar. Try a small quantity first, if improved or approved, fix up a larger quantity. The water should merely be hot enough to melt the butter or it will become oily."

Here is another for "Restoring Rancid Butter." "Melt in a hot water bath, with some coarsely powdered animal charcoal (which has been thoroughly sifted from dust) and strained through flannel."

If by any mishap a good butter-maker has some poor butter on his hands he will not try to doctor it and put it upon the market as his make. His reputation is worth too much.

In the case supposed (where one has poor butter) it is best, it seems to us, and cheaper in the long run to put the stuff on the market without brand and let it be sold for what it will bring, rather than "doctor" and fool someone who cannot tell doctored butter till the "bottom falls out" of it.

Hives and Honey.

Every farmer should keep some bees. They will furnish him with food that is as healthy as the healthiest. I feel confident that a person who eats honey regularly will not be troubled with "La Grippe;" in fact, it has been stated that during the rage of that dreaded disease last year honey prevented it in some cases where it was used regularly.

Anyone who has decided to keep bees should begin in a small way and increase as their knowledge increases. The first thing to do is to select the hive; but do not imagine that the hive will make the honey. I advise using the "dovetailed" hive for several reasons; it is the simplest, strongest, and best; it consists of a lower story, a plain box of seven-eighths pine, thirteen seven-eighths by twenty inches and nine inches deep, with hand holes in each end for lifting, the ends rabbeted frames to rest in. The hive contains eight thick top-bar Langstroth frames; the cover and bottom boards are both fourteen by twenty-one inches, the cover being a sound board with a grooved cleat on each end that prevents it from warping and keeps it in place on the hive; the bottom board has a similar cleat at the back, while the cleat in front is leveled down on top to form an entrance; the bottom may be used as a cover in an emergency. The supers are the same size as the hive body and just one-half the depth; and if desired two supers may be used as a full body.

The special feature that gives the hive its name is the fact that it is dovetailed together at the corners, thus giving it great strength and durability as well as simplicity of construction. The supers have slatted bottoms with openings to correspond with the openings in the sections. Taking everything into consideration it is the simplest and easiest hive to handle. They can be shipped, knocked down at a very low rate of freight, and they can be put together by anyone.

These hives are sold very cheap, and I recommend them to all farmers in preference to any on the market. They are not patented. If you will give them a trial I am sure you will not be disappointed.

The next thing is the bees. Italians are by all means the best; they are the gentlest, the best honey gatherers; they will stay on the combs better, and are not vicious. If your bees are not Italians it is a very easy matter to change them. By the purchase of untested Italian queens, and introducing them into your own colonies, the job is done.

BEEKEEPER.

The Farmers' Alliance.

It seems to me that some of Mr. Shearman's statements in his recent letter to you predicate a misunderstanding of the farmers' movement, or a desire for a roundly turned sentence, when he says: "The Farmers' Alliance and the millions of voters who have control distinctly want a dollar which shall cost them only seventy-five cents."

My friend the banker, who delights in twelve per cent. interest, insists that money never was so plenty, that gold is the standard of all values. My neighbor who was compelled to haul his corn six miles and take sixteen cents per bushel for it, the product of whose labor, according to the banker's standard, including use of team and tools and his own labor for the year, was less than one dollar for each working day, and, if compelled by emergency to borrow a few dollars, is forced to pay twelve per cent. interest in advance, naturally concludes that money is scarce.

There is no denying the fact that farming, in spite of our boasted prosperity, our "great plethora of money," is not, nor has not been profitable for several years. I see no immediate relief under the present condition of affairs; the way is tedious and long, involving about the same length of time to read just matters as it took to bring about the present condition. I do not share in the sentiment that therefore "farming has gone to the dogs." But, if forced by capital to accept the present condition of affairs, there must result considerable friction, not a little strife, and serious loss to capital itself—more than the occasion justifies.

Let me illustrate. The township in which this is written comprises 176 square miles of agricultural lands; the uplands best suited to grazing, the bottom lands to corn growing. Since the "hard times" began, five years ago, a vigorous retrenchment has set in: no new houses, no new barns, no improvements of any kind, unless absolutely necessary.

What is the result?

In the country seat, which depends solely for its support upon the farmers, the result is plainly visible. Merchants, mechanics, professional men, and laborers are leaving as fast as opportunity offers. Population has decreased from 500 to 800 within the last five years.

What is true of this town is true in greater or less degree of every town in the agricultural portions of the West. Formerly I used to keep at least one team shod. I haven't paid a shoeing bill during the last five years.

Formerly my neighbors put their teams in the livery stable, and went to the hotel to dinner. Now they take their horse feed with them and feed in the hind end of their wagon; go into the court-house park and eat their dinner brought from home. I have seen chain harnesses attached to good teams and "top buggies" in the busy season of the year. Does this look like "distinctly wanting seventy-five-cent dollars"?

All that is asked is that the dollar and the products of the farm shall bear a just relation to each other based upon the intrinsic value of each.

We have heard it so often said, that it has been accepted without question, that the age of the family loom and the tallow candle were forever past; but there are people to-day who are making their own cloth and burning tallow candles—using tallow because it is worth but two cents per pound, while coal oil is worth twenty-five cents per gallon, and it takes money to get the coal oil.

With a rigid economy prevading throughout the agricultural districts; with "no new improvements" as a watchword, thereby forcing the mechanics to go to the cities for work; with the demand for all manufactured products reduced to a minimum, it seems to me that no great amount of reasoning power is necessary to see that capital must bear its share of the burdens incident to the present condition of affairs.

Now a word in regard to Western mortgages, and I am done.

Western mortgages may be divided into three classes:

First: Mortgages given on good, well-improved farms under competent management, with a security ranging from three to five times the amount of the loan. This class of mortgaged property will never become the property of the loan companies, for the reason that a good farm can always find a purchaser and, if "worse comes to worst," the farmer can sell and protect himself.

Second: This class of loans is by far the largest, and in Kansas is made up largely of people from the East who bought speculators' lands or pre-empted lands not very desirable according to the ideas of the old settlers, who have invested all their own funds, and in many instances all they could borrow, in a futile attempt to prove their faith in Kansas uplands and make a home. The marked decline in the value of farm products, and consequently farms, leaves this class of mortgagors in a very trying situation—not improved by some of the proposed legislation or by the attitude of the average loan company.

Of this class, if the loan companies persist in their threats not to renew loans, the loan companies will become the owners of all the least desirable lands, and the mortgageors will be stripped of all they put into their farms—both time and money.

Third: For this class I have neither excuse nor sympathy. The cupidity of three parties was necessary for the perfection of a loan of this class. First, a desire for an exorbitant rate of interest on the part of the mortgagee. Second, an adventurer who never expected to redeem the security, and in many instances took no pains to conceal his intentions. And, third, an unprincipled loan agent who became a party to the transaction for a large commission. This class of lands were in some instances mortgaged for from two to three times the first cost, the borrower only remaining long enough to get possession of the difference between the two transactions, when he sought "pastures fresh."

Who is responsible for this class of loans? Is the Farmers' Alliance? Are the actual farmers? when, if they had any interest in this class of lands, it was to have them remain open to run a few old cows on.

Over one hundred of this class of loans have been foreclosed (?) during the last year in Greenwood County. Gentlemen, the property is yours; you have paid well for it. But please don't charge the Farmers' Alliance with trying to get these lands away from you with "dollars worth only seventy-five cents."

A WESTERN GRANGER.

Maple Lodge, Kansas.

What Affected Her.

Mr. Oppenheimer—"Rachel, do you observe dot peautiful sunset?"

Mrs. Oppenheimer—"I do, Solomon. It vos lofely."

Mr. Oppenheimer—"Der finest thing I haf seen all my life in."

Mrs. Oppenheimer—"Oh, Solomon, dere vas tears in your eyes. Dot shows me you haf a goot heart ven you vas affected by dose beauties of nature like dot."

"Mr. Oppenheimer—"I vas shust affected ven I thought how I could look at dot peautiful effect midout it costing me a single cent."—[Chicago American.

Carrying Out the Provisions of a Will.

"Oi hear that rich owld uncle of yoor'n are dead and buried, Tarrance."

"He are, Moiles."

"And phwat the divil soort uv a will wer that he med, Oi doan' know? The owld amadhaun, shure Oi always thought he were cracked, but the oidee of layvin instroocshuns to hev twenty-foive tousand dollars buried wid him! And you were execootrix, Tarrance?"

"Faith, that Oi was."

"An' did you folly out the provishuns of the will?"

"Oi did that."

"An' wer it goold ye put in the coffin?

"It wer not."

"Silver?"

"Devil a ha'porth."

"Paper mooney?"

"Not a whit."

"An' phat thin?"

"Shure, Oi soigned a check payable to his orther for the amoont and shtuck it in his phist whin they closed the lid."—[Detroit Tribune.

It was Sam's Fault.

Sam—Now, boss, I never did git no sich a ting as dis on no 'count.

Boss—Well, Sam, you know that we keep everything in the store for you, don't you?

Yas, sar, I s'pose you does.

Then, if you don't get it, it ain't our fault, is it?

No, sar.

Then you have to pay for it, all the same, for it is your own fault that you did not get it, not ours. And Sam paid it.

THE LAST MAN AND WOMAN.

A Graphic Story of the Extinction of the Human Race.

The Desperate Battle of Science with the Inevitable—Crowded to the Equator by the Conquering Ice.

II.

Alas! the entire earth had disappeared beneath snow and ice. Everywhere the desert, everywhere solitude, everywhere silence. Snow followed snow, hoar frost followed hoar frost. An immense shroud covered the continent and the seas. Sometimes a solitary peak rose above the frozen ocean; sometimes a dismantled ruin, a spire, a tower, marked the site of a vanished city. Even tombs and graveyards were no longer to be perceived; ruins themselves were destroyed. Everywhere nothingness, ice, silence. Days followed days, and every night the red disk of the sun set behind the white plain which slowly, at each twilight, took the violet tints of death.

Already half the members of the expedition had died of hunger and cold, when the flhtilla thought they saw from their airy heights an immense ruined city near an unfrozen river. They steered toward the unknown city, and thought themselves dreaming, when they discovered on the banks of the river a group of men walking. A cry of happiness and wonder sounded from every breast, and in an instant all the skiffs were tied up by the river banks.

They were received as unexpected saviors by men who had long believed themselves to be the only survivors of terrestrial humanity, looking on with despair at the last days of the world. At the head of the group stood an old man enveloped in reindeer skins. Of commanding stature, his hollow black eyes shady by bushy white eyebrows, with a long beard as white as snow, and his skull as yellow as antique ivory—it was felt that his was one of those energetic characters who have endured all the trials of life without yielding, but whose heart has bidden farewell to every hope. However, his countenance lit up with joy at the arrival of the newcomers. His sons and their companions threw themselves into the arms of the aerial travellers.

They made large fires and seated themselves at a modest meal, composed principally of fish which had just been caught. The newcomers informed their hosts that they were about the last survivors of equatorial Africa, that they came from the celebrated metropolis now deserted, and they asked if their aerial route had not deceived them, if they had not left the equator, and if they had landed at the mouth of the Amazon, as their calculations indicated.

"My friends," replied the old man, "the ancient Amazon River, whose waters still flow over the circle of the equator, no longer rolls between its shores the impetuous floods which, if we believe tradition, caused it formerly to be compared to a sea. At the period, long since vanished, when the empire of Brazil, the Argentine Republic, and Columbia flourished in South America; when North America was divided into confederated States; when France, England, Germany, and Russia struggled for supremacy in European politics, the Atlantic Ocean extended, as we see on the maps, from the ruins of New York to those of Havre, and from Pernambuco to Dakar—ruins which are now forever buried beneath the ice. The great continent of the West Indias was, it appears, cut up into innumerable small islands, scattered over an immense sea. The oceans were far vaster and deeper than to-day, the rains frequent, the rivers inexhaustible, ice and snow never showed themselves in our country, and the rays of a beneficent sun fertilize the earth in its youth, giving birth to flowers and fruits, nests and love.

"But now all is over with the planet and all the works which have illustrated its history. The earth revolves more slowly on its axis, the days have become longer, the moon is more distant, and the sun has become colder. The prediction of the astronomers is fulfilled. The waters of the oceans which the solar heat caused to evaporate in the atmosphere, and which gave birth to the clouds, the rains, the springs, the brooks, and the rivers, have from century to century been partially absorbed by the deep rocks; the air has become drier and drier, and ceased to be a protecting cover for the preservation of the heat received; the nocturnal and even diurnal evaporation has caused all the heat borrowed from the sun to radiate into space, and the cold of the poles comes gradually nearer and nearer the tropical and equatorial zones.

"The summits of the mountains had already been long frozen because above them the atmosphere was too dry and too rarefied to preserve the heat; but life established itself in the plains and valleys, along the streams which traversed the surface of the globe. Ths limits vegetation, and, at the same time, the conditions favorable to life, insensibly descended. The last zone of terrestrial life has been the zone of the equatorial plains along the thermic equator, which traverses on one side South America, where we are, and on the other Central Africa whence you came.

"When Europe had disappeared beneath the invading glaciers coming from the North Pole, from Siberia, from Lapland, from the Alps, from the Caucasus, from the Pyrenees, being finally reduced to the shores of the Mediterranean, many centuries had already elapsed since civilization had abandoned it to shine in America, along which continent it gradually descended. In consequence of a strange social organization all the States of Europe had perished in their own blood; had mutually opened each other's veins. Some Governments had convinced millions of citizens that the greatest happiness, the supreme honor, and the highest glory consisted in wearing uniforms of all colors, and killing each other to the sound of music. They believed that until the day when the Chinese invasion came and confiscated them like a band of schoolboys.

"The annals of modern times report that anciently expeditions had been sent through the ice to find the ruins of Paris, of London, of Berlin, of Vienna, of St. Petersburg, and that they had principally found forts, barracks, arsenals, arms, and ammunition on nearly all the territories. It was doubtless a primitive race hardly differing from the animal races.

"This opinion is, moreover, confirmed by the books of ancient history preserved in the libraries, showing a state of rude barbarism in the customs of these populations. We find, among other things, a long list of curious tortures. Criminals were murdered with the sword, with poison, or with a remarkable choice of varied weapons. Then they cut up the bodies into small pieces. Society in turn killed the criminals in various ways. Here their heads were cut off by means of axes, swords, and guillotines; there they were strangled or hanged; further on they were impaled or drowned. On certain days of revolution, in the midst of the capitals of this pretended civilization, the victors were seen to place the vanquished quietly along the walls and shoot them down by the hundred. Historians state that at a period not far removed the most civilized nations kept executioners who were exercised in crushing the limbs, quartering, taking off the skin, burning with red-hot irons, pulling out the eyes and the tongue, breaking the limbs, and torturing in, every manner the victims, whom they generally ended by burning in the public squares on holidays. The commentators are right in saying that these ancestors of our species did not yet deserve the title of men.

If the end of the world had taken place at this period, the destruction of the race would not have been a great loss. But this ancient race made way for ours, and we too must perish. We perish of cold. Sterile nature no longer produces aaything. For many centuries past there has been no more wheat or vines. For many centuries there have been no more pastures or flocks. We are now reduced to the last fish. But," added the old man, "the table will still outlive the guests, for there are no new born babies among us; there are actually only men here, those that you see, the last child of the other sex, my poor little Speranza, not having survived her birth."

This declaration produced on all the members of the expedition the effect of an electric shock. The fall of a thunderbolt in the midst of the assembly would not have brought about a greater confusion.

"What!" cried the chief of the flotilla. "There is no longer a single woman among you?"

"Not a single one," answered one of the guests.

"We had just come," added the young chief, "in search of female companions with whom we could associate. Our country is still wealthy, and had we found but one single wife all the riches of our country would have been hers."

"You have also no women?"

The travellers exchanged a glance and remained silent.

III.

Some time before these events happened in Africa, and in America, the island of Ceylon, now attached to the southern point of Asia, through the diminution of the seas, found itself to be the last refuge of the human race in Asia, and there, in this former earthly paradise not far from the equator, at the foot of Adam's Peak, twelve women remained the sole heiresses of the last unextinguished families.

The male sex had completely disappeared. For a long time the number of girls had been far above that of boys—a condition of things which corresponded, besides, with the succeses obtained by women and their increasing authority in politics and in the universal direction of business. They had gradually substituted themselves for the effeminate and enervated men as deputies, lawyers, physicians, and, in general, in the greater number of social professions, in commerce and industry, arts and literature, pure and applied sciences. The education of the boys had been more and more neglected, and finally there were no longer even competent gardeners or agriculturists to be found among the men. What the women did not do directly with their own hands in the way of industries was accomplished by ingeniously constructed and indefatigable machines. The slow decrease of the organic forces of the globe had also manifested itself here by a slow diminution of the births, by a weakening of the average life, and it was only in rare circumstances, and by a sort of heredity, that families counted, as in former times, a large number of children. As in our day, in some countries, more girls than boys were born on the average. This tendency increased from generation to generation, and toward the end of the days that remained, for Asia as for the other parts of the globe, there were at the period of which we speak only three living families, and by an unfortunate chance, the two boys having died in infancy, twelve beings of the feminine sex were left alone to represent the present and the future.

The youngest, little Eva, was a child of 3 years of age; her mother had reached 40, The last survivor of the fathers had died of aneurism of the heart on the day of his wedding.

The interest which attaches itself to things which seems to be the cause of life had diminished with the decrease of population and of business and with the more and more imminent threat of a definite end. Formerly immense and populous, the city had disappeared beneath a poor but invading vegetation: all those ancient dwellings were empty, deserted, ruined, partly hidden beneath the moss and weeds, and the traces of the ancient boulevards and principal streets were hardly visible to the eye. As humanity had retired so Nature had resumed her rights: polar plants, larches, pines, some snow birds, and more recently penguins and bears, had arrived near the ancient city. The last building which remained standing was the public library, in which the purely literary works had nearly all been abandoned to the insects, and in which were to be found only the scientific treatises written on the supreme question of the end of the world, and the historical annals of the departed centuries, humanity not having consented to its own extinction, and having clung to all that personified it. But the fatal day had come. The world must end.

The decline of human forces had brought about the decline of the inventions and usages which seemed but lately the most indispensable. They had wearied of all even of hope. The electric motor had fallen into disuse. There was no more travelling after the invasion of the ice. No attempt had even been made to repair the interrupted telegraphic communications. Only a few centuries before all the inhabitants of the globe, in whatever portion they may have dwelt, had constant intercourse with each other, as though they had inhabited the same country, conversing and hearing each other, whatever may have been the distance that separated them, and there was but one nation and one single language for all the globe. But now isolation and separation had returned as in the primitive ages; the three groups remaining in the world no longer knew each other: and the population of Ceylon, although composed only of women, had lost all spirit of domination, all sentiment of curiosity, all energy, and all vitality. Henceforth, deprived of all desire of pleasing, of all idea of rivalry, and of all coquetry, they formed among themselves but one family of sisters, associated in a common misfortune, and they had all adopted a sombre mourning costume, a sort of black and misshapen religious garment.

But this little population itself had rapidly disminished. Fifteen years had sufficed to reduce it by more than half. At the moment when the events narrated above took place, there remained but the youngest of the Ceylonese, then eighteen years of age, with four of her companions.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

A Wonderful Work of Engineering, the History of Which is Forgotten.

As the seat of an extensive commerce and internal trade, Roman London was as eminent in antiquity as it is to-day. Its monuments, the memorials of its greatness, prove its prominence. One of these, if it is Roman work, which is uncertain, is the embankment of the river Thames. This immense work is quite unequalled by any of the labors of the modern English engineers. For thirty-seven miles along the course of the stream lofty mounds confine the river within fixed bounds, and offer a secure path to the navigator. On each side the country spreads out far below the embankment, and more than once the waters have broken through, overspread the lowlands, and left desolation around them. The English had neglected to repair and strengthen the banks of the river, and were indebted to the skill of a Dutch engineer for the restoration of the Roman work. "The Thames from Richmond," says Mr. Smiles, "is an artificial river." How many years of ceaseless toil, of acute engineering skill, and vast expense were employed on this unequalled work no history relates, no record even suggests. Some authorities attribute the embankment to the Belgic traders, before the Roman invasion; others, even to the monks of the Middle Ages. But there is good reason to suppose that the true authors of the chief improvements on the Thames were the Romans. Similar works almost on an equal scale exist in other parts of England, and we have the complaint of the subject Britons that they were worn out and consumed in clearing the woods and embanking the fens. Not that the hapless natives were ever treated by their Roman taskmasters as harshly as were the savages of Hayti and Cuba by the Spanish discoverers. But they have outlived their conqueror.

Before these embankments were made the country below London was an immense fen, or marsh, over which the tide flowed incessantly. The town could have been only a collection of rude houses seated on the rising ground above the river. It was already a seat of considerable trade even before the Roman conquest. But the genius and skill of the Roman engineers, if the Romans built the embankment, gave it those unequalled facilities for traffic that have secured its commercial supremacy in every age. By the embankment the Thames was confined within bounds; many acres of land were added to the agricultural domain, while along the fine highway of the river a ceaseless procession of vessels of every size and form moved up and down. They came, as Strabro tells us, from the mouths of the Loire and the Garonne, the Seine and the Rhine. Some were war ships, moved usually by oars, distinguished by their sharp beaks of iron, and their crews armed with spears and shield; some were huge merchant vessels, propelled by oars and sail, laden with rich cargoes of Eastern manufactures, with the wines of Italy, and the artistic wares of Greece; some, sailing down the river from the docks of London, would carry the tin, lead, furs, and the corn and cattle of the west to the ports of Gaul and Spain. Julian found in Britain the necessary supplies for his perishing soldiers in Germany, and the immense stores he drew from it when famine prevailed on the Continent show the general cultivation and prosperity of the island. His six hundred corn ships were hastily built in the forest of Ardennes, and possibly landed only on the southern shore; if we allow them a burden of one hundred tons each, they would equal the capacity of at least six *Umbrias* or *Etrurias*, and the very names of our modern argosies recall the Italian teachers of our ancestors.

Summer is Coming.

The bee will soon be humming,
The soft south wind is blowing,
The days of warmth are coming,
The days of grippe are going.

The daffodils are blooming,
The garden walks adorning,
The violets perfuming
The zephyrs of the morning.

The air is fresh and balmy,
Unclouded skies are o'er us,
Old Time will soon the palmy
Days of Summer-time restore us.

The landscapes all around us
With greening beauty greet us,
And the bacillus that downed us
Is recevining its quietus.

A Family Asset.

Briggs—Poor Robinson. After his wife died he married her dressmaker.

Grigg—How are they getting on?

Briggs—I understand that he still owes her the money.

Sad.

Jones. "Poor Smith lost his life, though every one else escaped out of the burning building."

Brown. "Did they forget to waken him?"

Jones. "No. He was one of the first to receive the alarm; but the poor fellow was so excited that he tried to get out of the building by the fire-escape."

Not to be Bluffed.

Railroad Official (breaking the news gently to wife of Toronto drummer). "Ahem! Madam, be calm! Your husband has met with a slight—that is to say, one of the drive wheels of a passenger locomotive struck him on the cheek, and—"

Wife—"Well, sir, you needn't come around here trying to collect damages. You won't get a cent from me. If your company can't keep its property out of danger, it'll have to take the consequences. You should have your engines insured.