Household.

How to Prevent Oil Lamps Bursting.

A late number of the *Scientific American* contains a valuable letter from Prof. J. M. Barbour, of La Grange College, Missouri, on a very simple device for preventing the bursting of oil lamps. It consists simply in fastening the burner on with a cork instead of a screw, when, if an explosion does take place, the cork will blow out, leaving the lamp and oil intact. He has experimented for over twenty years in explosive gases, and has proved the correctness of this plan upwards of five hundred times during his lectures. For instance, he fills a strong glass decanter of one quart capacity with equal volumes of olefiant gas and oxygen, and plugs the mouth tightly with a cork When the gases are fired it will blow the cork out with a loud explosion and force, but the decanter, which he holds during the experiment in his hand, is unharmed. The same experiment may be tried with an ordinary lamp with perfect safety. The reason why the glass does not break is because there is a ready exit for the force, and there is no necessity for rupture. The olefiant gas and oxygen exert a greater explosive force than could possibly take place with any mixture of hydro-carbon vapor and atmospheric air. The only danger when applied to an oil lamp, would be to throw out the inflamed wick along with the cork; the oil, according to the Professor's experience, would seldom, if ever, ignite. The device is not patented, and it appears effective and reasonable enough to knock all the other patent safety non-explosive contrivances into the shade.

VARNISHING.—When applying varnish, do it quickly, have the material cut or reduced with spirits of turpentine until it flows nicely and without a gummy feeling Do not brush after the varnish begins to set, but thoroughly before. A heavy or very light coat will not prove best, a medium coat should be the rule After a little practice all the furniture of the house, and the buggies, carriages, etc., about the premises may be kept looking like new with little expense, and without employing a practical painter.—*Ohio Farmer.*

An enterprising housewife in Ohio, who for several years has received the first premiums for the best display of canned fruit exhibited at the annual State Fairs, was abruptly deprived of her laurels this year. Her fruit was as fresh and plump looking as usual; but there happened to be lady on the committee for awarding premiums who insisted on opening one of the cans, when it was discovered that the fruit had been put up in strong brine. As this process of preserving fruit, although novel, was not considered such an improvement as to merit encouragement, the collection was promptly ruled out, to the great indignation of the fair owner.

Poetry.

Growing Old.

Ah me! How fast the years go on
The gray hairs mingle with the brown!
And yet these whitening hairs should be
A chain of silver links to me,
Forged by the gentle hand of love,
To lift my earth bound heart above!

Sadly I watch the fires burn low,
Which in these dimmed eyes used to glow
But courage, heart! When falls the night,
Then hidden stars reveal their light!
Shall not my soul, heaven lit within,
Gleam brightly out, though eyes grow dim.

How fast Time's ruthless fingers trace
The lines and furrows in my face!
Yet, though the world finds written there
Only decay and age and care,
Set in my forehead let me see
God's seal of immortality!

God can take from me all my store,
Yet leave me richer than before.
Trustful, through life his hand I'll take,
And Time's sad changes he will make
My stepping-stones to that blest shore
Where change is gain and time is o'er.

Wrecks.

Through all the dreary dismal night
The storm king rules with ruthless power
And straining eyes seek for the light
That flashes from the beacon tower

Out where the long reef's breakers glance,
And sunward toss their diamond rain,
The morn, at last, with golden lance,
Has pierced the dizzy lighthouse pane

A fair, frail form, is kneeling there,
Amid the breakers' deafening roar:
To Heaven she lifts her pleading prayer
For one whose ship will come no more.

The rocks are strewn with wrecks at morn,
And many wrecks ne'er reach the shore;
And many hearts are rent and torn—
But wrecks of what they were before.

O maiden, in the lighthouse tower,
Thy watching and thy prayers are vain
No plea of thine, or wish has power
To bring the lost to thee again

Above him float the wrack and drift,
The yeasty surge, the froth and foam
The restless waves that change and shift,
The rolling tides that go and come

The passing keels of home bound ships,
The storm's loud shriek, or loved one's prayer
Naught, naught can move those silent lips,
No sound can reach that listless ear.

'Tis thus with life's bright hopes and dreams,
'Tis thus life's lights and shadows blend
Thus come to naught its cherished schemes,
And thus its high endeavours end.

Wrecks! wrecks! wrecks! all about are strewn
On sea, and land, and everywhere
Not wrecks of costly ships alone,
But wrecks of hopes and hearts are there.

Ah, we must lift our hearts above
To find a shelter from the storm,
And trust in Heaven's unfailing love
To keep us ever safe from harm.

Agricultural Intelligence.

Hamilton Township Farmers' Club.

At a meeting of the Township of Hamilton Farmers' Club, held on the 16th December, Mr. W. Riddell introduced the subject of discussion by reading a paper on

THE BEST AND MOST PROFITABLE BREEDS OF CATTLE.

The question was treated with special reference to the circumstances of the township and neighbourhood.

From the earliest records of our race we find that cattle have been domesticated and in the service of man. In early times the natives of Egypt, India and Hindostan, showed the high value they placed on cattle by putting the bull and cow among their deities, and judging from their use in almost all climes, no animal could have been selected whose value to mankind is greater, as not only the milk and flesh, but almost every part of the animal, is useful—the fat, the skin, hair, horns, and intestines.

The use of the ox in agricultural and other labours may be traced in almost every country, and to periods of the remotest antiquity. In South Africa they are as much the associate of the Caffres as the horse is of the Arabs; they share his trials; they have been trained for war. In Central Africa they perform the same service for the fashionable ebony beauties that our well trained steeds do for fair ladies among ourselves. In Spain and other countries they trample out the corn. In India they raise the water from the deepest wells to irrigate the thirsty plains of Bengal. Their value and usefulness to the early pioneers of our forests are undeniable. All those of us who have had any experience in clearing up new wild lands can bear testimony to this. As to the cow, it is hardly possible to do justice to her value; rich and poor are alike dependent upon her for those highly esteemed and useful articles—butter and cheese.

The rearing and feeding of cattle is one of the most important branches of agriculture. Much of the success of a farmer depends upon the judicious management of his live stock, without which our land cannot be maintained in a proper state of fertility, We should like to impress this homely motto on the minds of our farmers, "that without dung there is no corn—without cattle there is no dung."

So far as the necessity of keeping cattle is concerned, we are, I suppose, all agreed; but most likely on the question which is the best and most profitable kind to keep, there will be a great difference of opinion. No doubt our friends, Westington, Delve, and others, will tell us that the Durhams are the best and most profitable; while Mason, and Eagleson, will be ready to reply—commend them to the Devons for profit; and Wright, Pratt and