



WHY AND WHEN LAMPS EXPLODE.

The *Scientific American* gives a catalogue of causes of the explosion of coal-oil lamps, from which it seems there can be no possible exemption from the liability of an explosion, and its direful consequences, however carefully one may guard against such a calamity. The introduction of a new and safer illuminating agent will be an inestimable blessing to the world:

1. A lamp may be standing on a table or mantel, and a slight puff of air from the open window, or sudden opening of a door, may cause an explosion.
2. A lamp may be taken up quickly from a table or mantel and instantly explode.
3. A lamp is taken into an entry where there is a strong draught, or out of doors, and explosion ensues.
4. A lighted lamp is taken up a flight of stairs, or is raised quickly to place it on the mantel, resulting in an explosion. In all these cases the mischief is done by the air movement—either by suddenly checking the draught, or forcing the air down the chimney against the flame.
5. Blowing down the chimney to extinguish the light is a frequent cause of explosion.
6. Lamp explosions have been caused by using a chimney broken off at the top, or one that has a piece broken out, whereby the draught is variable and the flame unsteady.
7. Sometimes a thoughtless person puts a small sized wick in a large burner, thus leaving a considerable space along the edges of the wick.
8. An old burner, with the air draughts clogged up, which by right should be thrown away, is sometimes continued in use, and the final result is an explosion.

CALVES AND BABIES.—An acquaintance once complained to me that when she took her children into the country in pursuit of fresh air and wholesome food for them, she couldn't get the latter from the farmer's folks where she boarded, because the calves had to have the best of everything. There was plenty of milk brought in, and strained, every night, but only the most meagre supply was grudgingly allowed to her and her children. They could have all the butter they wanted, but the milk was all needed for the calves, and the cream skimmed from it before it went back to the calves was all needed for butter. Fine flour bread and butter, with plenty of cake and pie, were set before them freely, but she wanted something better for her growing children. It was vain to ask for oatmeal or graham fare, which would furnish something to strengthen the little ones as well as to fatten them. But when she discovered a quantity of canaille, or middlings, she thought perhaps the children could have some made into porridge to eke out their poor little suppers. But no! The calves did not have enough milk, though they took it all, and the canaille had been brought home for their use. Stock-raising was profitable in that part of the country, but no one seemed to think of applying to the rearing of children the same common sense rules that were understood and accepted in respect to raising calves. No one would have thought it so good for the four-footed babies to feed them on fine flour bread, and cream, as to give them porridge made of shorts and skimmed milk, even though sour. Four-footed babies are treated on scientific principles, while precious human babies take their chances from ignorant and haphazard treatment.—*Agriculturist*.

—Through the benevolence of an English lady—Miss A. C. Bentinck—the Middlesex Hospital, one of the London hospitals, near which there is much street traffic, is about to have conferred upon it the boon of a noiseless pavement before its gates. She has offered to give a thousand pounds toward the expense of a wood pavement along the frontage of the hospital; and as the estimated expense of the pavement is only about fourteen hundred pounds, the good work will undoubtedly be executed. Bodily sufferings caused by noise are often very acute. Those who are ill or in delicate health endure untold agonies from this cause. A sharp, sudden sound gives a shock to the nerves which does not soon pass away, and dull continuous sounds are peculiarly trying to weak invalids. It is a thoughtful and humane idea to lay down noiseless pavement in front of hospitals; and Miss Bentinck could scarcely have made a more appropriate gift, or one which would contribute so much toward the soothing of pain and discomfort. It is not alone upon the sick and those of especially delicate nerves that the misery and evil effects of noise are apparent. The feeling of relief which every one, when driving, experiences on passing from the rat-

ting stone-paved streets to the comparative quiet of wood or asphalt indicates that it is only by a constant, although perhaps often an unconscious, effort that we endure the perpetual noise of city life. The brain is more exhausted by working in the midst of noise and confusion than in quietness; hence, to a great degree, comes the recuperation of a sojourn in the country. When, in the progress of mechanical and scientific improvements, we shall have pavements in our streets which combine durability and noiselessness, an inestimable blessing will be conferred upon all residents of large cities.—*Harper's Bazar*.

HATS AND BONNETS.—There is no recognized reason why of late years neuralgia of the face and scalp should have increased so much in the female sex as compared with our own. There is no doubt that it is one of the most common of female maladies—one of the most painful and difficult of treatment. It is also a cause of much mental depression, and leads more often to habits of intemperance than any other. This growing prevalence of neuralgia may to some extent be referred to the effects of cold upon the terminal branches of the nerves distributed to the skin; and the reason why men are less subject to it than women may to a great extent, I think, be explained by the much greater protection afforded by the mode in which the former cover their heads when they are in the open air. It may be observed that the surface of the head which is actually covered in man is at least three times that which fashion allows to a woman; indeed, the points of contact between the hat or bonnet and the head in the latter are so irregular as practically to destroy any protection which might otherwise be afforded. If we were to report a case of facial neuralgia cured on the principle of protecting the lateral frontal surface of the face, as well as the superior part of the scalp, it might excite a certain amount of ridicule. I can assure you, however, that my patient considers that her case ought to be reported; for she says that, if we cannot do much for neuralgia with our prescriptions, we ought to oppose fashion when we find it prejudicial to health and productive of suffering.—*Opinion of a London Physician*.

WOODEN FLOORS ON ASPHALT.—A novel method of laying down wooden floors was introduced in France about twenty years ago, and has since then obtained a wide application. It consists in putting down flooring not, as hitherto, on sleepers, but in imbedding the boarding in asphalt. The new floors are used mostly for ground stories of barracks and hospitals, as well as for churches and courts of law. Mr. Schott, in the *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, draws the attention of architects to this new mode of construction, very little known out of France, and urges that its application is desirable on account of its evident usefulness. For the floor in question, pieces of oak usually 21-2 to 4 inches broad, 12 to 30 inches long, and 1 inch thick are pressed down into a layer of hot asphalt not quite 1-2 an inch thick in the well-known herring bone pattern. To insure a complete adhesion of the wood to the asphalt and obtain the smallest possible joints, the edges of the pieces of wood are planed down, slanting towards the bottom, so that their cross section becomes wedge-like. Nails, of course, are not necessary, and a level surface may be given to the flooring by planing after laying down. The advantages of this flooring, which requires only an even bed on which it rests, are said to be the following: 1st. Damp from below and its consequence, rot, are prevented. 2nd. Floors may be cleaned quickly and with the least amount of water, insuring rapid drying. 3rd. Vermin cannot accumulate in the joints. 4th. Unhealthy exhalations from the soil cannot penetrate into the living rooms.

AN ARROW-ROOT DIET.—The other day I heard of a baby who was nearly starved to death on arrow-root gruel. Its mother had asked her physician whether arrow-root was healthy food for a babe. He replied in the affirmative without farther explanation. So she proceeded to feed her child on that, and that alone. It pined away, and seemed at last too weak to endure any more of this world, and the same physician was summoned. "What have you been feeding the child?" he asked. "Arrow-root," she answered. "What else?" he asked. "Nothing else," replied the mother. "Why, woman!" exclaimed the doctor, "you have been starving the poor baby." Then he explained to her that arrow-root contained only starch, and could not possibly furnish all of the material necessary to build up the child's physical frame and furnish the various elements needed to make it a healthy child. A little of it would do no harm, but other food must be furnished. Good fresh milk is probably the very best food for babies lately weaned. Next to that I know of nothing so reasonable as gruel and soft bread, or crackers made of sifted graham flour without shortening or sugar. The canaille is really the best part of the flour, or the most nourishing, but if the bran can be ground fine enough to be pleasant

in the eating (and this is possible), it is not reasonable to separate the parts of the wheat kernel for ordinary use.—*Faith Rochester, in American Agriculturist*.

A CURE FOR OBESITY.—There are many persons afflicted with an uncomfortable burden of polysarcia or pinguetude, or, in other words, who have too much fat on their ribs, and would like to reduce the amount of their adipose tissue. Banting's system proves rather too much for the most of them, and they would rather be aldermanic in their proportions than reduce themselves by starvation. Time, in working out the development of nature's resources, has at last brought to light something for the relief of these unfortunates. M. M. Griffith, M. D., of Wyoming, Kent County, Del., writes to the *Baltimore American* stating that an infusion of a species of seaweed, commonly known in Delaware as "gulf-weed," possesses the peculiar property of reducing adipose tissue in the human frame without injuring the stomach. No care need be taken in regard to the amount of the infusion the patient drinks. Dr. Griffith first noticed the effect of it upon a person who had taken it for the cure of a skin disease and found that it diminished his excessive weight considerably. He then took it himself, taking no other drinks, and in the course of a few weeks his own corpulence had greatly subsided. He then tried it on three stout neighbors, who lost from 12 to 30 pounds within periods ranging from 2 to 3 months. Dr. Griffith says great care should be taken in collecting the weed. It acts by the absorption of the adipose tissue and lessens the secretions from the oily sudiferous glands.—*Boston Journal*.

SOD AS A FERTILIZER.—During the past year I made a limited experiment in the use of grass sod as a fertilizer. It was desired to plant a piece of worn out land in cabbage. Home-made manure was exhausted, and it was doubtful whether commercial fertilizers would pay on land so utterly destitute of humus and all other carbonaceous matter. Furrows were opened four feet apart with one horse turn-plow which was twice each way, opening to a depth and width of about ten inches. The road-sides were resorted to for wild grass sods, which were taken up with a spade, of a width to suit the furrows, and of such length as the sod would allow. These were turned bottom upward in the furrows, which were then filled full of loose earth with a hoe. After the first rain, the plants, which were a good size, were dibbled into the loose earth, the roots reaching down generally to the sods. The plants gained a rapid growth within a few days, and the result was such a crop of cabbages as I have never seen produced except in soils in a high state of fertility previously, or made so for the special crop by a very liberal application of fertilizers. The sod was a source of both moisture and fertility, and maintained a thriftiness in the plants during a drouth which seriously affected adjoining crops.—*Plantation*.

TO DISSOLVE BONES.—A correspondent of *Colman's Rural World* gives the following method, which appears to possess some peculiar conveniences. The fresh lime renders the ashes caustic, and fits them for acting with more vigor: To dissolve bones, I dig a space or pit double the size of the pile of bones I wish to dissolve, say two feet in depth. As the soil where I make the pit is a stiff clay, I sprinkle the sides and bottom of the pit and pound the soil until it is water-tight. I then put into the pit two hundred pounds of bones, which have been previously broken into pieces with an axe. I then add and mix with the bones two hundred pounds of fresh wood ashes, and thirty-five pounds of unslaked lime; mix well together, and then pour upon the mass in the pit, water enough to cover and wet the whole. As fast as the water dries away, add more, and keep the mass moist. As soon as you can crumble the bones with your fingers, mix the entire mass together and add dark, dry soil, vegetable mould, decayed leaves, &c., to it, until it is well dried and powdered. I shovel it over several times before I use it. It is in this way that I succeed in pulverizing bones without the aid of sulphuric acid.

—A high factory chimney in Havre, which during the process of building had, owing to the sinking of one side of its foundation, been thrown out of perpendicular, was recently straightened in the following manner: The earth on the side opposite to that toward which the chimney inclined was dug away to the foundation bed, and for a width of six feet. On the wide lower course, pillars of masonry were erected, which supported a heavy staging on which some 30,000 paving stones were piled. The effect of this immense load was to cause a sinking of the structure beneath, which, in six weeks, resulted in the straightening of the chimney, the top having passed through an arc of thirty-one inches.

—It is said by some physicians that condensed milk is not a suitable food as a substitute for pure milk for infants. It is believed

to be more fattening, but less nourishing, and to diminish the child's power of resisting diseases. This is a matter that ought to be thoroughly investigated and universally understood, for condensed milk is largely used as food for infants.

DOMESTIC.

ONE-EGG CAKE.—One and one-third cups of flour, one-third cup of sweet milk, one cup of sugar, one table-spoonful melted butter, one egg, and two tea-spoonfuls of baking powder.

FISH CAKES.—Take cold boiled cod, either fresh or salt, add two-thirds as much hot mashed potatoes as fish, a little butter, two or three well-beaten eggs, and enough milk to make a smooth paste, season with pepper, make into nice round cakes, and fry brown in sweet beef dripping or very clear sweet lard.

CANNING FRUIT.—In soldering fruit, where tin cans are used, and a tinman is not convenient, putty answers every purpose, and is very easy to use. It will not answer for tomatoes, but does for anything else. After filling the cans and wiping of all particles around the opening, put on the cap, and press on enough of the putty to exclude the air.

BUCKWHEAT BATTER.—Keeping buckwheat batter is often very troublesome, especially in mild weather. It can be kept perfectly sweet by pouring cold water over that left from one morning, and which is intended to be used for raising the next morning's cakes. Fill the vessel entirely full of water, and put in a cool place; when ready to use, pour off the water, which absorbs the acidity.

HEATING THE OVEN.—Fruit pies require a hotter fire than bread, but steady from first to last; if too hot at first, the crust will cook before the fruit does; if too slow toward the last, the crust will dry before the fruit is done; if too hot toward the last, the fruit will stew out before the crust is done. Pumpkin pies require a fire as hot as can be without burning the crust.

TO PICKLE LEMONS.—Rasp the lemons a little, and nick them at one end; lay them in a dish with very dry salt; let them be near the fire, and covered. They must stand seven or eight days; then put in fresh salt, and let them remain the same time; then wash them well, pour over them boiling vinegar, grated nutmeg, mace and whole pepper. Whenever the salt becomes damp, it must be taken out and dried. The lemons will not be tender for nearly a year.

BOSTON CREAM PIE.—Cream part.—one pint of new milk, two eggs, three table-spoonfuls of sifted flour, five table-spoonfuls of sugar. Put two-thirds of the milk on to boil and stir the sugar and flour in what is left. When the rest boils put in the whole and stir until it cooks thoroughly. When cool flavor with vanilla, or lemon. Crust part.—three eggs, beaten separately, one cup of granulated sugar, one and a half cups of sifted flour, one tea-spoonful of baking powder. Divide in half; put in two pie tins, and bake in a quick oven to a straw color. When taken out, split in halves and spread the cream between.

ENGLISH PLUM-PUDDING.—One pound of suet, chopped very fine, one pound of seeded raisins, one pound black English currants, one half pound citron cut fine, six eggs broken in without beating, one bowl dry bread crumbs, one bowl chopped apples, one cup good molasses, two tea-spoons ground cinnamon, two of cloves, one of nutmeg, one bowl of sweet milk, flour enough to make it very stiff. Put the fruit in last. Put it in a bag when well stirred, leave plenty of room for it to swell, and boil eight hours, four one day, and four the next. You cannot boil it too long. Eat it with sauce of flour, little butter, considerable sugar, flavored with vanilla or lemon and nutmeg.

PAN DOWDY.—Pare and slice tart apples enough to fill, about two inches deep, a flat earthen or tin pan. To three quarts of apple add one cup of sugar, one grated nutmeg, one cup of cold water, and butter the size of a walnut. Cover this with plain pie-crust (have the crust about an inch thick), and bake slowly two hours and a half; then cover and set where it will keep hot one hour. Serve with sugar and cream. When done, the apple will look red. Do not break the crust into the apple after baking, as by this means you spoil the pastry. If you wish to have it richer, cover with puff paste.

GOOD COOKING. A New England house-keeper says: If you take one or two boarders to eke out your income, remember one thing: There is nothing gained by setting a scripped table. If anything, set on too much, cut extra large pieces of pie, and so on. Your boarders will not eat as much if they are certain you mean to be liberal. It is cheaper to make food rich than poor, so if you have an inclination to snip off half the butter you had prepared for the mashed potato, don't do it! It is certainly cheaper, in the long run, to cook well.