

trees: One bushel of fresh cow-dung, half a bushel of lime rubbish of old buildings, (that from the ceilings of rooms is preferable,) half a bushel of wood ashes, and a sixteenth of a bushel of pit or river sand. Sift the three last articles fine before they are mixed; then work them together well with a spade, and afterwards with a wooden beater, until the stuff is very smooth, like fine plaster used for the ceilings of rooms.

This is put on to the decayed surface, after being cleaned as above directed, about a quarter of an inch or more in thickness, and made smooth, and then dusted over with ashes of burnt bones, put on from a pepper or dredging box.

The composition was thought, at that time, to have some superior healing virtues, and enabled the tree, thereby, to recover and grow with uncommon thriftiness. We think however, that its principal use is to cover and defend the wood from the decomposing effects of the weather. It performed, in some degree, the office of bark to the denuded surface. We have not the least doubt that any thing else that would stick as snug would do as well. With this belief we are trying the use of a mortar of hydraulic lime in the same way, and have no doubt that, in time, we can give as good a report of it as we could of the use of Forsyth's composition.

There is an interesting history attached to this (Forsyth's) mode of doctoring decayed trees. As long ago as 1791, his success in renovating and rejuvenating old decaying trees, began to be much talked about.

He kept his mode of preparing the plaster a secret, which made the anxiety of the people to get hold of it still more strong. The House of Commons made it a matter of state importance that it should be made public and, addressed the King upon the subject, who "graciously" awarded Forsyth four thousand pounds (\$20,000) for publishing the recipe and directions for its use. Such an award as that would make a Yankee very characteristically and appropriately exclaim "good gracious!"

#### THE PROPER FORM FOR AN AXE.

Almost every article, from a steam engine to a penny-whistle, has been improved and patented so that it requires an inventive mind to suggest any want in that direction unsupplied.

The plow has been subjected to change, till scarce a spot is left to attach an improvement; the stove has a multitude of forms, more numerous than the thousand and one kinds of fuel: the shovel retains nearly its ancient form, though made of a better material; hay and manure forks will pay the inventive expenditure lavished upon them. And so on through a long list too numerous to mention.

But who ever saw a *good axe*? Whoever applied for a patent on the axe? Who suspects, even at this late day, that any improvement can be made in its formation? Where is the man, or association of men, that dare offer a premium for the *best axe*? The cutting quality of the axe is right, but the *form* is objectionable. The writer, after using the axe nearly fifty years, has found but one that is right. That one was made to order.

The axemaker should advise with the wood-chopper as to the form and size. But the wood-cutters, like doctors, may disagree. What shall be done? Let premiums be offered for the best axe—also for the best specimens of wood-cutting; and in two years it will be known what is the best form for an axe.—Woodcutter, in Massachusetts *Ploughman*.

#### LOSS OF WEIGHT IN SALTING PORK.

A correspondent of the Germantown *Telegraph* says he finds it more profitable to sell pork at the usual killing time than to salt it, as it loses much in weight. Last fall he killed two hogs which weighed 659 pounds; after drying and salting in the usual manner, they only weighed 411 pounds. That is to say, 100 pounds of fresh meat only gave 62 pounds of cured pork, or a loss of 38 per cent.—*Genesee Farmer*.

We wish some one or more of our readers would test the truth of this statement by actual experiment the present winter, and send us the result at some future time; because if it is really true that pork shrinks 28 per cent net weight by the process of salting, butchers and others, who buy whole hogs and salt them for the retail trade must lose money upon every pound they sell, unless a knowledge of this enormous shrinkage enters into their calculations in making the retail price.—*Mass. Ploughman*.

#### FARM GATES.

Some time ago, somebody gave you the old recipe for making a gate.—"Scandling, boards and nails," and proposes to bate the scantling. Progress and improvement," so far—but, as your friend tells how to *hang* the gate, I interpose—*hating the hanging*.

Since it is discovered that heavy lumber is useless in a farm gate, why not let fastening (catches, latches, hooks, sockets, grooves, bolts or any cheap device,) hold both ends when in place, and *lift* the light thing and set in one side when animals or teams are to pass it? Or, if it is to be used frequently, or the old notion of a substantial thing is insisted on, *mount it on rollers*, with a plank or small timber, twice the gate's length, for the wheels to run upon—fasten it at each end with a hook—and have an extra staple to hitch one hook into while you change staples with the other hook when your gate is open. Of course you steady the gate while running it back and forth.

One extra hook, two staples, the rollers and the plank or timber to run them on, will cost less than a pair of suitable hangings and a heavy post suitable to hang a gate upon—and by my "improvement" the gate makes "progress" without danger of sagging or being broken down by lazy boys swinging on it.

#### KNOX ON THE STRAWBERRY.

In answer to inquiries we condense the information given in the Gardener's Monthly in the form of questions and answers, into a more compact form, giving substantially the management of J. Knox of Pittsburg, acknowledged to be one of the most successful cultivators of the strawberry.

His soil is plowed deeply once—all kinds of exposure are nearly equally successful—well rotted stable manure proves best for enriching it—it is always applied in autumn, and the quan-