

rabbit-hutches with carefully made lattice gates and cement floors, before which visitors always stopped to gaze at the endlessly twitching pink noses and vacuous faces of the little beasts. I hastened to explain that they were not at all for the children to play with, but that they form a serious part of the activities of every country family in the region, supplying for many people the only meat they ever eat beyond the very occasional fowl in the pot for a fête-day. They take the place, as far as I could see, of the American farm family's hog, and are to my mind a great improvement on him. Their flesh is much better food than the hog's, and since the animal is so small and so prolific, he provides a steady succession all the year round of fresh meat, palatable and savory, not smoked and salted into indigestibility like most of our country pork. In addition, he costs practically nothing to raise. This is, under the usual conditions of the French countryside, almost literally true. They are given those scraps from the kitchen and garden which hens will not touch, the potato and vegetable parings, the carrot-tops, the pea-vines after they have stopped bearing, the outer leaves of the cabbages, and, above all, herbage of all sorts which otherwise would be lost. Every afternoon, the old women of the town, armed with gunny sacks and sickles, go out for an hour or so of fresh air and exercise. The phrase is that they *va à l'herbe* (go for the grass). It is often a lively expedition, with the children skipping and shouting beside their grandmother, or one of the bigger boys pushing