

straw or hay placed in the mouth of one of them. Early the following morning the lost ferret will probably be found asleep in the hay or straw. I say early, for if left too long the ferret will get hungry and set off on its travels in search of food. A wire rat trap, of the same principle as the common wooden mouse trap, is useful for recovering a ferret; it should be set close to the mouth of the hole, and all the others communicating with the burrow the ferret is in being stopped up. The bait should be the paunch of a rabbit, and a little straw should be placed at the far end of the trap for the ferret to lie on in case it is caught.—*Bazaar.*

### The Pigeon Race from Rome to Brussels.

The great pigeon race from Rome to Brussels is over, and must have resulted very satisfactorily to its promoters, and no doubt very much so to the fortunate owners of the fifty-two splendid birds which performed the wonderful journey. Eleven hundred and sixty-six pigeons entered in the race; of these eleven hundred and one were Belgian birds, and 65 were from France and Germany. Only the Belgian birds were allowed to compete for the prizes; the German and French birds flying as honorary competitors, and, strange to say, it was one of these birds which arrived home first.

The birds were liberated in Rome at 5, a.m., on June 23rd. The first Belgian bird arrived on the 4th of July, and was followed two days after by two more, one on the 7th and one on the 10th, and from that out one or more birds arrived every day up to the 27th, (on which day the race closed,) except the 24th, on which day no birds returned.

All the prizes were of equal amount, about \$42, except to such as entered in the sweepstakes, some of which won as much as \$300 each. A splendid gold medal was presented to the owner of the Aix-la-Chapelle bird, which arrived first, as it was debarred from taking any of the regular prizes.

Some idea may be formed of the great scale this race was on, and the amount of interest taken in it, when the amount in money value flown for is known; the prizes in cash, cups and sweepstakes foot up to 23,951 franks, equal to \$4,430.82.

As well as wealthy fanciers working men were successful in carrying off some of the prizes, and it was pleasing to some of the spectators to see this class of men, dressed in the common working-man's blouse of the country, walking up to the secretary to receive the prizes which their much cherished pets had won for them.

Of the fifty-two winning birds only three were offered for sale; two of these were bought by English fanciers—one by Mr. Tegetmeier, and one by Mr. Logan. The prices paid for them Mr. T. declined to state for fear his friends might think

he and his friend fit subjects for the lunatic asylum; some idea may, however, be formed, when 2,000 franks, about \$370, was offered and refused for the first bird.

The fifty-two winning birds were on exhibition and were visited by thousands of the fancy. True, it is not much to see fifty-two pigeons, but to see fifty-two birds that flew from Rome to Brussels was a sight that never was seen before, and possibly may never be again.

The whole very pleasant affair wound up with a dinner in the evening, at which all the celebrated fanciers were present, and Mr. Tegetmeier says the style of the spread put to shame anything he ever saw on the English side of the channel. This may be so, and all I can say is, if the Belgians can beat the English in garnishing the festive board, one thing I am quite sure of is, they can't take first prize for clearing it when Englishmen are in competition. I would not call our English friends gluttons, but I don't believe there is a people in the world who so thoroughly enjoy themselves at a first-class evening dinner party as John Bull does.

No doubt some will say that fifty-two birds out of one hundred and sixty-six was a small number to find their homes in the time named, but when it is remembered that the Alps are between Rome and Brussels the wonder is that any birds found their way home at all. There is no possibility that these birds which did reach home could fly in a straight line as over a level country, but must have come *via* France or Austria. Such being the case, provided even they could be assisted by landmarks in flying as in an ordinary race, in this instance they could not avail themselves of such assistance.

Then what is it which enables these birds to find their homes. I have read several accounts of the fly, but none give any opinion on this point. The birds got home and that is all that is said about it, and perhaps I can say no more, but I can give my opinion. Now, when these birds were tossed they all headed north—that was the direction of their homes. There seems to be some instinct in this or why did they not head south, or east, or west; and whenever a bird is tossed he invariably heads towards his home. True, he has been trained to fly from that direction; still, even then he might be possessed of an intelligence which teaches him, the moment he is liberated, which way to fly, for he does not deliberate more than sometimes to make a circle or two, but darts straight for home. Still I do not nor cannot believe it is all instinct which enables a bird to find his home from such long distances. I am of opinion that his wonderful power of sight is quite as much, if not more, assistance to him than any other power he possesses. It is supposed that the