

a dozen bare-armed girls, who speak no French, and afraid considerable commotion and protes. from the remaining ninety-four, six geese are collared and marched away to a cellar half underground, where wide and sloping stone tables are arranged in tiers so far as the eye can see. In the musky light thrown in by some twenty air-holes one can at first distinguish nothing; but by and by it becomes apparent that hundreds of geese are already lying strapped on their backs on the upper tiers and gasping hysteric things—probably words of love and encouragement—to one another. Our business being for the moment at the lower tables, the six girls take each their goose, lay him gently but firmly on the stone, so that his tail just projects over the ledge, and then tie down his wings, body and legs tight with plated whip-cord, the legs and wings being well spread out to paralyze anything like vigorous gymnastics. The bird's neck is left free, and it seems that during the first three days he makes a violent use of it; but towards the fourth day he arrives at the consciousness that by struggling and croaking he does nothing to amend his lot, and from that time he may be trusted to lie still for the next seven weeks: that is, till the hour of release and killing. Without pausing to see all the hundred geese tied down, we may go on at once to the upper tiers, when the birds who have been lying for three, five or six weeks respectively, are taking their ease and waiting to be fed by half a dozen other Alsatian girls laden with large wooden bowls. Each of these bowls is filled with a thick white paste, made of parboiled maize, chestnuts, and buckwheat, most nourishing; and the mode of administering the dinner is for the girl to catch the goose by the neck, open its bill with a little squeeze, and then ram three or four balls of the paste down his throat with her middle finger. The goose having been thus refreshed, resumes his slanting position and digests till the next time for feeding which arrives about two hours after, the meals being about six a day. But now we have done with the woman, for a pensive man—a connoisseur of the obesity of geese—breaks upon the scene, climbs upon the topmost tier of all, and proceeds to examine the birds who may be "ripe." He has an eye as judicious as that of a gardener inspecting melons: and his is the responsible task of pronouncing what birds would die of natural death within twenty-four hours if not dispatched beforehand. If a goose dies of natural death he is good for nothing. He must be unstrapped and executed at the precise psychological moment when nature is growing tired of supporting him, and the knack of detecting that moment can only come of long practise, and fetches the possessor wages as large as those of a diamond-valuer. Our pensive functionary has not been a minute on the table before

he certifies four geese ready for the slaughter. All four of them have stomachs of the size of pumpkins, and from what one can gather of their broken remarks, it is a sincere relief to those when a couple of male acolytes climb up, loose their bonds, and bear them out of the cellar to a pent-house across the yard, full of knives and chopping blocks. A click with the chopper on the neck of each, a rip with the knife, and, in less than five minutes after their transfer, the carcasses of the four victims are lying in a lap, while their livers are being conveyed with all care and respect to the truffling-house. The carcasses, shrivelled out of all knowledge, are sold for about eight pence apiece to the pheasants, who make soup of them; the livers are first cleaned, then put to scale, and our four geese are declared grand birds all of them, for their livers weigh from two and a half each to three pounds. The next step is to take each liver and to lard it with truffles in proportion of one half pound of truffles to one pound of liver, and then to convey it to an ice house, where it remains on a marble slab for a week that the truffle perfume may thoroughly permeate it. At the end of a week, each liver, being removed, is cut into the size required for the pot which it is to fill, and introduced into that pot between two thin layers of mince-meat made of the finest of meat and bacon fat, both truffles like the liver itself; and one inch depth of the whitish lard is then spread over the whole, that none of the savor may escape in baking. The baking takes about five hours, and absorbs all the energies of four intelligent Frenchmen in white, who relay each other, to see that the fire never blazes too high or sinks too low. When the cooking is over, nothing remains but to pack the dainty either in tin, earth or wood, according as it may be needed, for home or foreign consumption, and to shift it to the four points of the compass. A question may here arise as to how many geese die naturally before the above process can be carried out to a happy end; but it is a pleasing fact that but few geese die, and those only ill-regulated birds who have unsound constitutions, or no ambition for high destinies. It is on record, however, that a member of the Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Animals once arrived in Strasburg armed with the Larochevoucauld law, and endeavored to cope with the pie factors; but he was worsted and there are strong reasons for suspecting that he was a Socialist.

Feed liberally now; both old and young require it to develop the new plumage. A warm feed each morning will push along the moulting process. Keep your birds intended for exhibition in the shade as much as possible, and separate the sexes. The houses and runs must be kept scrupulously clean, or permanently soiled plumage will be the result.