

CALIFORNIA RABBIT DRIVES AND HUNTS.

This subject has recently been made the subject of a special monogram by the Department of Agriculture, to which we are indebted for the accompanying illustrations. The damage done to crops by rabbits, especially in large sections of irrigated and formerly arid lands in the West, has made necessary the taking of such extraordinary measures for their extermination. The Indians originated this method, the jack rabbits, on being started from their hiding places, usually making for the open plain, where they might be turned in their flight as desired. In the modern rabbit drives precautions are taken that no escape is left for the animals when once surrounded, and a drive always means a gala day, large numbers of people turning out with sticks and clubs and scattering over a considerable area to start the rabbits and drive them toward the mouth of the corral. The Grand Army rabbit drive, March 12, 1892, is said to have been the largest one on record. The drive took place between Oleander and Easton, twelve miles southwest of Fresno, and the conclusion of this

drive forms the subject of one of our illustrations. One of the Fresno drives has been described in which nearly 2,000 horsemen took part, the hunt covering some twenty square miles.

The details of the great drive near Fresno are portrayed as follows by a writer in the Chicago Tribune:

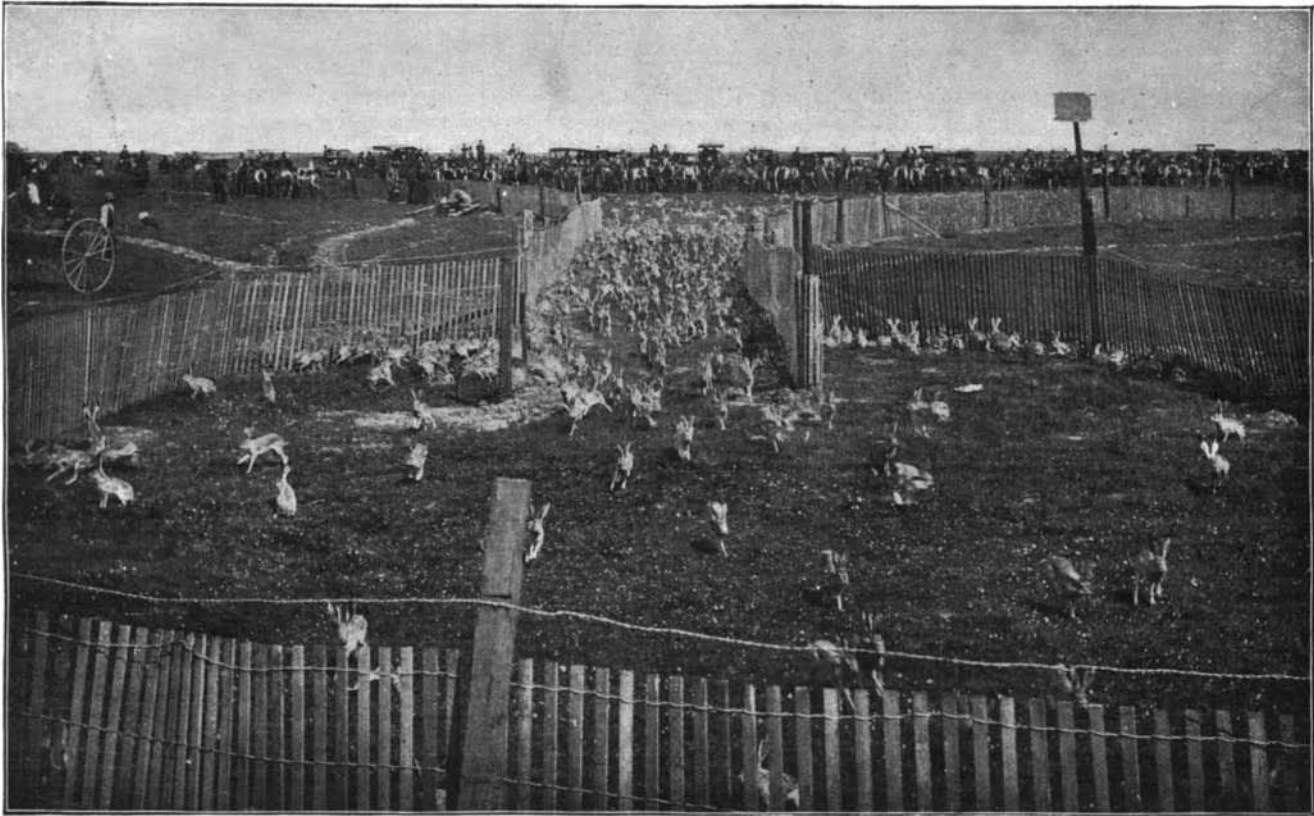
A close fence forming the corral is built about 500 yards square, with an opening or entrance for receiving the drive at one end, the opening being perhaps 50 feet wide. This is the finishing point of the drive, and will hold thousands of rabbits. From this opening diverge two fences, close enough to keep the rabbits from jumping through, about 5 feet high. These two fences diverge from the entrance for about 3 miles, increasing in their distance apart as they increase in distance from the entrance.

By 7 o'clock in the morning all is bustle and preparation for the drive. Some men have heavy sticks and some heavy clubs, but no pistols or any kind of firearms are allowed, and no dogs. The sticks and clubs are used to beat the brush and to kill the rabbits at the finish. A general is appointed to give orders, and under him, are those who keep the lines in order. But sometimes they are anything but orderly. The order to start being given along the line, the cavalcade rushes forward. Boys with hoots and cries

run hither and thither, wielding their sticks. Men on foot in advance lines are followed by those on horseback and in vehicles. Those on foot seem to have the best success in putting up the rabbits.

After advancing a few miles the commencement of the fences diverging from the corral can be seen. The scene is humorous at times, when a horseman is seen dashing at full speed after a jack rabbit and a man on foot running in another direction after another. Now hundreds of the poor creatures are easily discerned as the fences appear on the left and right, miles apart.

Many try the back track only to meet death in the attempt. All the horsemen gallop in cowboy style, some with long sticks in their hands. Great numbers of rabbits dash in every direction in front of the advancing hosts, and far ahead the long ears of hundreds more can be seen racing for life, occasionally crouching and then starting ahead again, but still surely advancing into the inevitable death trap. The close proximity to the finish makes the chase exciting. Those on foot are heated and eager. The fence on each side is closing in fast, and although still some distance from the



A CALIFORNIA JACK RABBIT DRIVE—RABBITS ENTERING THE CORRAL.

corral the screaming of the poor creatures can be heard as they find their retreat cut off.

The climax of the drive is now at hand. Hundreds of men and boys rush in every direction. The horsemen and carriages partly hide the view. The clouds of dust are stifling. Now the screeching of the rabbits can be heard above everything, and the ground is covered with dead rabbits by the dozen. At the corral entrance the scene is indescribably pitiful and distressing. . . . To slash and beat the poor screaming animals to death is the work of but a short time,



LARGEST CALIFORNIA JACK RABBIT DRIVE—20 000 RABBITS KILLED.

but it brings tears to many an eye, and makes the heart sore to witness the finish. It is a relief to everybody when all is still, when the trying day is at an end.

THE steamer Windward, of the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition, will leave again for the Arctic Sea, early in June. The vessel will carry letters for Dr. Nansen, on the chance of falling in with him north of Franz Josef Land. More members will be sent out to recruit the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition.

British Excavations at Athens.

The British school at Athens has undertaken, besides its excavations on the island of Melos, some excavation work in Athens itself, which, so far as one can judge at this early stage, gives promise of very important results for the topography of ancient Athens. The site of the ancient Athenian suburb called Kynosarges, known chiefly for its gymnasium, was for a long time thought to lie at the foot of Mount Lykabettos, on the southeastern side. This was Leake's view, and was not disputed till recently, when Prof.

Doerpfeld made it clear, from a comparison of the testimonies of ancient authors, that the Kynosarges must have lain further to the south, along the banks of the Ilissus. In pursuance of this view, Mr. Cecil Smith, director of the British school, had his attention attracted to a spot on the south bank of the river, several hundred yards below the Stadion, where the ground falls away from a small plateau in remarkably abrupt and perpendicular manner, indicating the presence of hidden walls.

As on either side of this plateau are two prominent hills,

which might well be those mentioned by ancient authors in connection with the Kynosarges, it was decided to dig a trench through this plateau. The trench, at a depth of a few inches, brought to light numerous walls, chiefly of the Roman period; and one of the first constructions whose outline could be traced exactly was that of a Roman calidarium. This would seem to point to the existence of a gymnasium, and this fact, if proved, would go far toward settling the question of the Kynosarges site, provided that the remains of the classic period can be found

beneath or beside these Roman remains. Numerous interesting fragments of ancient Greek vases and various metallic objects have been found in the rubbish excavated; the remains of a huge vase of Melian type, as it seems, deserve especial mention, as this would be almost a unique find in Attica. The wide extent of the ruins and the solid character of the masonry discovered thus far make it evident that this is the site of a large public building or group of buildings—a very significant fact for a spot so far outside the ancient city walls. The British school is to be congratulated on having secured a piece of work which promises to be of such importance for the study of ancient Athenian topography; and if it should prove at length to be the site of Kynosarges, it will be a source

of special satisfaction to Englishmen that the site, which was eagerly sought by two English excavators at the beginning of this century, and for whose discovery Lord Byron once planned excavations, should have been brought to light by the British school at Athens.—London Times.

MM. DEHERAIA and Bemoussy have tried a series of experiments which showed the great advantage of liming strongly argillaceous soil; the lime tends to preserve the porous structure.