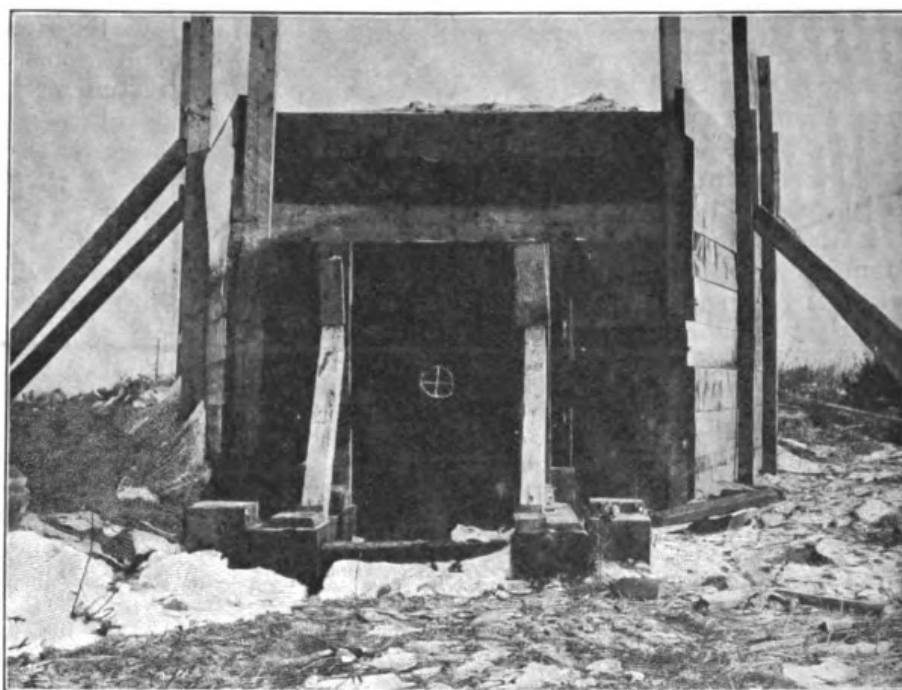


almost any attack with ordinary explosives. Five hundred men could have covered themselves within it and, safe from modern guns, could have done deadly execution on any exposed force within range. Several ordinary shells were fired at the structure and exploded without doing any appreciable damage. Then came the test of my shell.

"It was carefully placed in position, and I myself fired the shot. The effect was startling. The shell, rolling slightly, sped straight to the centre of the target, and hit it with an explosion that could have been heard for miles and shook the very ground under our feet.

"When we recovered from the shock we looked for the target in order to study the effect, but it was gone! Armour, timbers, and earthworks had not availed against that frightful cataclysm, and the structure was blown to atoms. Here and there we found



THE POWERFUL STEEL-PLATE TARGET, BACKED BY NINETY TONS OF EARTH, BEFORE THE SHOT.
From a Photograph.

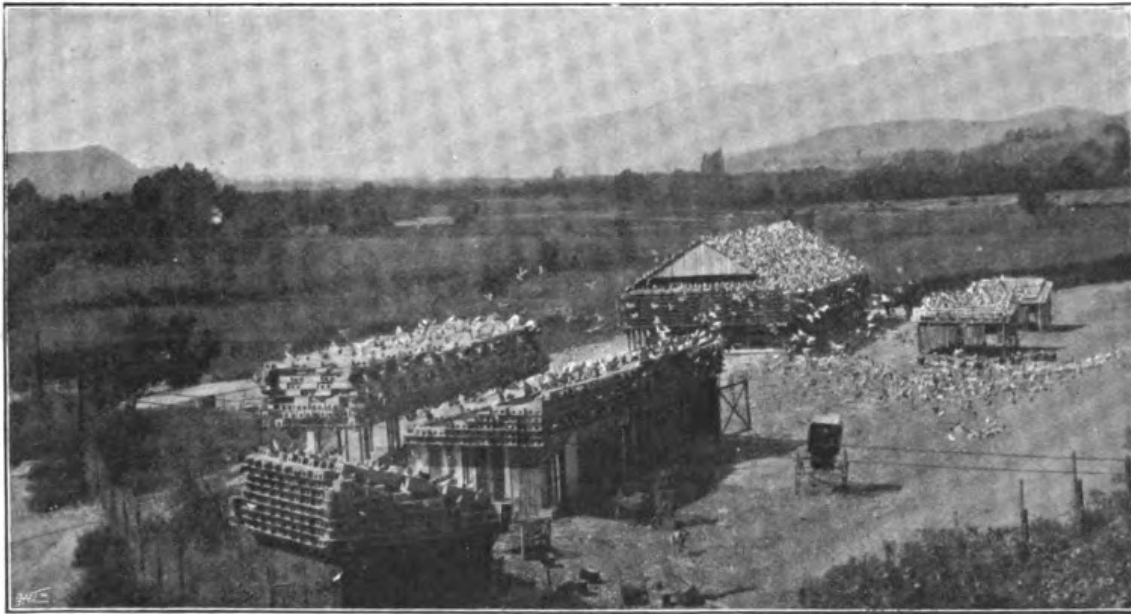
vestiges of the target, but mostly small pieces, and some of the *débris* was afterwards picked up several miles away, and all this with but one-fourth the regular load! Had 500 embattled men crunched in the structure not one would have survived."

XX. — THE ONLY PIGEON RANCH IN THE WORLD.

TWELVE THOUSAND flying pigeons are the main part of a pigeon ranch situated on the outskirts of Los Angeles, California. The pigeons live in three large tiers of coops or houses and in numerous smaller ones. The largest of the houses, which is shown in the illustration on the next page, contains 3,000 coops inside and 749 outside. The other two buildings are made up of 2,000 and 1,000 coops respectively. A remarkable fact



THE COMPLETE DEMOLITION OF THE TARGET AFTER BEING STRUCK BY THE GATHMANN SHELL.
From a Photograph.



From a]

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE PIGEON RANCH.

[Photograph.

in connection with this place is that the pigeons never leave the ranch, and it is seldom that one ever gets beyond the large wire fence that surrounds the place. They are fed on assorted grain and screenings, at a cost of about eight dollars per day. There are estimated to be about 12,000 flying pigeons on the ranch. There are also a large number of young birds, or squabs, which are

still in the nests. These squabs are killed for market before they are old enough to fly. As soon as they are able to fly they get thin. Each day the keeper goes through the nests and secures enough squabs to fill the market orders for the next day. These birds are killed by disjuncting their necks, and after being dressed are delivered. This is a profitable industry that requires very little care.



From a]

SOME OF THE PIGEONS FEEDING.

[Photograph.