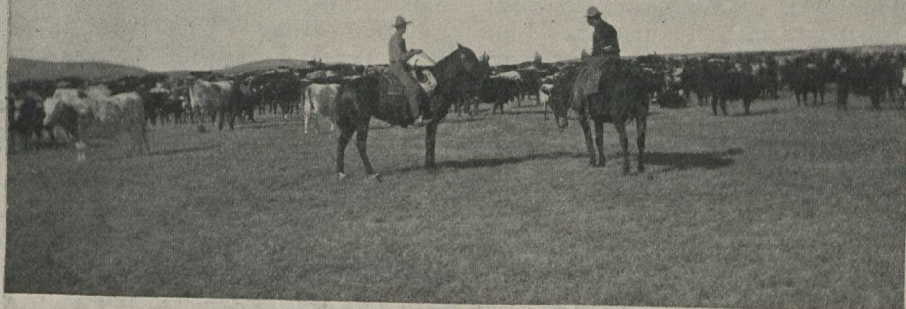


A VISIT to a "ROVND-VP"

BY JOHN INNES.



WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR.

THE greatest of all Canadian cattle-raising districts—on the western limits of which the subject matter for the ensuing lines was gathered—is bounded on the west by the Rocky Mountains, on the south by the International Boundary Line, on the north by the climate, and on the east by circumstances. It is fenced by cowboys. This statement may seem an exaggeration to people dwelling amidst a multitude of artificial limits, but it is not. If it were there would be no necessity for a "round-up."

There is, I believe, no dictionary containing "Round-up, to, v.a.," or verb active, but to the western mind at least it is an accepted word, and as to its activity there is no manner of doubt. To "round-up" is to gather a number of scattered units into one group, or "bunch." For instance: should any event of importance be imminent in the "cow country," which demands that people should celebrate it, the "boys" are "rounded-up" to do it, and they generally make the occasion a glittering success. So, when the cattle during a hard winter are scattered by storms, or attracted by

better feed and shelter to widely separated portions of the great grass sea, it becomes necessary when milder weather sets in that they should be rounded-up and driven to the ranches of their respective owners. This is called the spring round-up, and is of a general character.

Toward the latter part of May the ranchers gather, with their tents, horses, and waggons, and all the necessary paraphernalia, at some appointed place, chosen as being the most convenient from which to start working the range. Day after day the cowboys "cruise," or scout the country, gathering in all the beasts. When a sufficient number of head, marked with any one brand, are collected, they are "cut out," or separated from the main herd, and driven to the ranches of their owner. Thus each man receives the cattle which had strayed away since the previous fall. The branding and marking required is done, and all are again turned loose upon the range.

There is also the fall round-up, which is more of an individual undertaking. During the summer months the conditions which would cause cat-