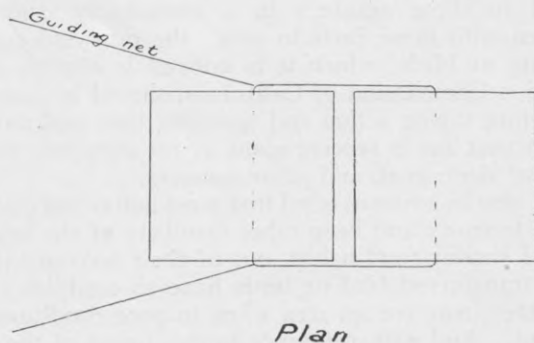


TRAPPING VERMIN.

(By CAPTAIN E. V. SANDERSON.)

Anyone can scatter a lot of steel traps around and catch and maim birds and a lot of things, but the skill is in catching what you want to without hurting what you don't want to. The writer has experimented on these lines for years, and, without pretending to know all there is to learn, now gives the results of his attempts.

Say we start with the humble mouse which decides every autumn to make our homes its winter quarters. Traps can easily beat a cat, whose natural food is birds and fish, and a wild cat is a good fisherman. Cats are dirty things and disease carriers which we have got used to, like some farmers have got used to tolerating blackberry and Californian thistle. Proximity seems to make us careless of the evil. Cats, moreover, are considered by many able to form a correct opinion, to be the most harmful predatory enemy of birds, especially game birds. Now for the mouse, just use half-a-dozen of the common break-back traps. Those with the wood and tin bait stick are best because they set lightly. Bait with whatever the rodents are feeding on and tie it on. Set traps extremely light and keep them set. Treat rats



RAT TRAP

in the same manner, but rub the hand all round the ground about each trap, so that the scent is not only on the trap. A trap which is always baited and always set can be made out of a petrol tin if one is handy with a soldering iron. One of these caught seven rats in one night, while hedgehogs fall an easy prey.