

When the little party of students turned up to take their first lesson they were eager enough until it came to the question of making a practical trial, when one and all bowed before the rest, so to speak, with a view to conceding the honour of being first. Next day only four pupils turned up, and on this occasion no suggestion of actually flying was made, as M. Delagrance had arranged to hold a class on the construction of the machine.

## Pommery Cup.

THE Ligue Nationale, in whose charge the Pommery Cup has been placed, have decided that the flight must be undertaken as one continuous effort, without landing or replenishing. In other words, it must be in the nature of the cross-country trip which Farman made between Chalons and Rheims. The cup is of the value of 50,000 francs, and is awarded half-yearly; the winner receives 7,500 francs in cash.

## Commission Aerienn Mixte.

THE C.A.M. met on January 20th to receive the report of its representatives at the International Congress at London, which delegates were, as our readers know, the delegates of the Aero Club of France. The report was to the effect that the division of the control of aeronautics in France on lines already drawn up—viz., that the French Aero Club shall take charge of ballooning, while the C.A.M. looks after dirigibles and flying machines—had been accepted, and that in consequence the delegates to the next meeting of the F.A.I. would be nominated by both bodies. It was further reported that the F.A.I. had adopted for 1909 the general rules relating to aviation which had been elaborated by the C.A.M., and that they would make them obligatory, not only in France, but abroad.

## Rheims Circuit.

THE Commission Aerienn Mixte has appointed a sub-committee, consisting of the Count de la Vaulx and Messrs. Bleriot, Pelterie, Rousseau, Quinton, Chaix, and Surcouf, to inquire into the question of the Rheims Circuit with the local committee. This latter has as its Hon. President the Mayor of Rheims, Dr. Langlet, and numbers on its committee the Marquis of Polignac and Messrs. De Bary, A. Prevost, E. Wenz, de Brimont, de Briailles, and several others.

## More Cross-Channelites.

THE absence of any practical efforts to actually fly the Channel does not appear to deter more entrants from sending in their names for the event. Among the latest which our contemporary, the *Daily Mail*, announces, is another Englishman, Mr. Hubert Latham. A well-known explorer, M. Piquerez, has also apparently notified his intention to try for the prize.

## A Zeppelin Escape.

DURING the course of a storm recently one of the rafts for the Zeppelin airships came adrift and was blown over to the opposite bank, but happily the airship itself was not attached at the time, and thus on this occasion escaped otherwise inevitable damage.

## Prince Henry and the German Airships.

THE interest Royalty takes in aeronautical matters is manifest in several directions, and in Germany especially do the members of the Royal house take an active part in encouraging progress. Even in the present spell of cold weather Prince Henry of Prussia, the Kaiser's brother, made an ascent in the Gross dirigible on Saturday, January 23rd, and remained aloft for about an hour. The airship ascended from the headquarters at Tegel about 9.15 a.m., and headed for the centre of the city, returning *via* Charlottenburg, and descending at 10.40. A wind of about 5 metres per second was blowing. A second successful ascent was made in the afternoon.

## Paris to London in the Air.

IT appears that M. Surcouf, Director of the Soc. Astra, is in negotiation for the formation of a British company on somewhat similar lines, and intends, if his scheme is carried through, to deliver the first airship by sailing it from Paris to London. Even in any case, M. Surcouf has stated, as we foreshadowed some little time ago, that this little trip will probably be undertaken in addition to another from Paris to Antwerp. If the English company is formed, the Soc. Astra will probably be interested to the extent of about £20,000 in it. Lord Brassey's name has been associated with the new concern.

## Hydrogen from Water Gas.

IT is reported that the German military authorities are investigating the possibility of obtaining cheaper hydrogen from water gas, and are contemplating estab-



THE OBRE BIPLANE.—Front view of the Obre aeroplane, which came to grief in its early trials, as recorded last week. Although essentially of the biplane type, this machine has a very small expanse of upper deck. It has a light monoplane tail and rudder behind, which are invisible in the above view. The span of the lower deck is 10 metres; the engine is a 50-h.p. 3-cyl. Anzani.