

have ordered (in America, of course) a huge airship, the car of which will be over 700 ft. in length. It is unfortunate that no details are forthcoming as to the means which are to be adopted to keep this huge vessel afloat in the air, but by way of compensation full particulars are given of the passenger accommodation. There will be four first-class staterooms arranged similarly to those on a large yacht, and the dining room, to seat fourteen people, will have stained glass windows. There will also be an observatory, furnished with fourteen chairs, a divan, and a writing desk. Arrangements are to be made for carrying ten servants, and the larder will be stocked with sufficient provisions to keep thirty people for sixteen days. All the lighting and heating will be done by electricity.

By way of showing that the above is not a particularly "tall" order, the company which is to build it is said to have under construction at the present time a steel airship 1,000 ft. long, to carry 100 passengers.

Cross-Channel Ballooning.

ON Friday of last week Messrs. C. F. Pollock and P. Gardner made the first cross-Channel balloon trip of the year. Starting from Battersea at 10.20 p.m., they reached Crépy-en-Valois, about 200 miles distant, at 8.30 on the following morning.

The Wrights to Visit England.

AT the invitation of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain, we learn that the Wright Brothers have notified their intention to pay a visit to London at the end of next month, when the gold medal of the Society will be presented to both brothers, and when it is prob-



FLIGHT AND THE RIGHT TO FLY.

MAJOR B. BADEN-POWELL, in an interesting letter to the press recently, discusses the problem (which is before long likely to become acute) of international control in the air. Major Baden-Powell writes as follows:—

"Every judicious politician must look to the future rather than to the present. Changes in the laws of the country cannot be carried into effect in a moment, and what has to be considered is the state of affairs which will exist when such new laws become effective. So, too, in contemplating what the future may bring, it is desirable that legislators should devise laws applicable to the impending situation.

"We are now confronted with a most intricate and difficult question of international politics, one which in the future is bound to lead to complications and controversies. Already, it is said, the French Government are considering the matter.

"It has been clearly demonstrated that apparatus can now be made—whether dependent on displacement or dynamic power—which can carry men through the air in a practical manner; and there seems to be every probability that within the next few years many machines will be constructed capable of travelling hundreds of miles through the air, swiftly, surely, and safely. Such vessels, moving independently of fixed tracks and regardless of boundaries such as we respect to-day, must be of great military value; they will certainly be much used for sport and pastime, and will in all probability soon be employed for such purposes as postal delivery, transport of light goods, and conveyance of express passengers.

"If, then, such machines are to become at all common, it is very evident that laws must be made and modified to meet the new circumstances.

"The first and one of the most important questions calling for solution is that regarding international frontiers, seeing that neither walls nor fences, mountains nor rivers, not even seas, offer insurmountable barriers. Are these airships to be allowed to traverse frontiers freely, regardless of passports, independent of Custom duties, defiant of bans of exile and laws of immigration? Are they at liberty to hover over fortifications, arsenals, and dockyards?

"Secondly, there is the very serious question of private boundaries. Are these 'air-hogs' (as they are sure to be dubbed) to be allowed to pass over our private property? May they glide over our chimney-tops, or skim close above our lawns and flowerbeds? The law of trespass is intricate as it is, and if proof of

able that an inspection will be made by them of the Society's trial ground at Dagenham.

An Aerial Torpedo.

PERFORATING the gas-vessels of balloons by rifle shooting, or even by the projectiles of larger guns, does not necessarily have the effect of placing the aerial craft out of action. Assuming that the gas is not ignited and that the rent in the envelope is not large in proportion to the total area, the escape of gas is not very rapid, the balloon or airship, as the case may be, is still able to continue its journey to a place of safety. If the envelope could be struck by a special form of projectile resembling in its effect the submarine torpedo, however, the resultant explosion should certainly have the most disastrous effects, and already a device has been invented in Germany to bring this about. The patent (No. 42673) is being worked out in the famous Krupp works at Essen, and the feature of the aerial torpedo consists in fitting a spongy platinum plug in its point, so that ignition of the charge automatically takes place in the presence of the hydrogen contained in the balloon. Inside the torpedo is a small cylinder containing liquid oxygen, and another explosive charge.

A Significant "Straw."

AT showing the direction in which the wind is already setting, in the upper strata, it is not without interest to record the appearance of a certain small advertisement in FLIGHT, and the fact that several answers have been received by the advertiser. That which was sought for was employment as mechanician to an aviator.



damage to property is its mainstay it seems wholly inapplicable to aircraft. Damage due to accidental landings, as well as from articles dropped from above, is another matter. Then there must be consideration for enclosures where sporting and other events take place, and where entrance money is collected. In a few years we shall have the course at Epsom darkened by a vast flock of human vultures vying for places over the winning post! Even if flyers are to be allowed to cross high up in the sky, how can we limit the extra height at which they may travel!

"If definite laws are adopted controlling such matters, we then get to the still more perplexing problems of how to police these realms of blue. It is all very well to dictate regulations for aerial traffic, but how is the law to be maintained? Machines travelling at a speed of thirty or forty yards a second get such a start that they cannot easily be followed, and, unconfined to definite tracks, the transgressors cannot be detained on arrival at their destination. If all machines are to bear registered numbers or means of identification, there must be some international understanding about it; for in time we may have, for instance, thousands of Germans migrating over our heads to America?

"All this may read as a huge joke, but who can deny that such problems may demand our most earnest attention in the near future? And they must be considered while there is yet time.

"One of the first matters to decide upon is as to who is to be considered the responsible head in such affairs. Are these questions for the Home Office, or is the Board of Trade to have control? The Foreign Office and the Defence Committee will also want to have their say. Then how are such difficult issues to be decided when we have no experts with any experience of aerial navigation (beyond a few trials in very primitive apparatus)? The council of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain is now considering the various points of importance, and may be able to lay valuable suggestions before such a body as is finally appointed to control those going up in the air in ships. Probably the Aero Club, too, and other bodies may be able to offer good advice. But such institutions cannot make the laws.

"In this connection it may be added that an international meeting of aeronauts was held in London recently; but this only assembled with the object of settling certain points in connection with balloon races and other sporting events, and could not, of course, deal with these vast questions of legislative control."