

Maurice Farman destined for the Naval Wing, the machine flying splendidly.

Monday, last week, Pierre Verrier, accompanied by Lieut. Mapplebeck as passenger, left the aerodrome at 12.40 for Farnborough, arriving there at 2.10, he having all the way to fight against a strong wind.

Next day Verrier was out piloting a Maurice Farman machine at 12.30 although the wind was showing on the aerodrome anemometer 35 miles an hour.

Blackburn School.—Saturday morning a trial flight was made by Mr. H. Blackburn, when they sent Mr. Buss to commence doing circuits, who after about four circuits landed in good style, and Mr. Glew followed with four circuits. An hour later Messrs. Buss and Glew both flew round the aerodrome for 12 mins., each feeling quite at home on the machine. This is a very creditable performance since it is their first departure from straight flights. Following this Mr. Morris spent 20 mins. practising rudder work on the ground.

On Christmas Day, Dr. Christie, at 8 to 9.30 a.m., practising straights and landings on his own machine, finishing off with a circuit of the aerodrome, after which the wind came and the machine was put away; and on Friday, last week, Dr. Christie was out early with his own machine, practising straights and curves for half an hour or so, after which he commenced a circuit, but taking so wide a curve that he could not get round he landed very hurriedly, breaking some of the woodwork.

Dr. Christie has made great progress in flying with his rare opportunities, and handles his machine in a very capable manner.

Depardussin School.—Sunday, last week, Lieut. Porte took out his 100-h.p. Anzani machine for a flight with a passenger, and when over a clump of trees adjoining the aerodrome the engine gave out suddenly and the machine began to drop, but by an excellent bit of handling he just managed to clear the obstruction and alight safely within the aerodrome. Subsequent examination of the engine, which was practically ruined, showed that a hardened steel nut had been put into one of the cylinders. This affair following on one or two suspicious incidents led to the belief that the machine had been deliberately tampered with, and the occurrences, which are referred to elsewhere, have been reported to the Royal Aero Club.

From Monday until Thursday the weather behaved abominably, absolutely prohibiting school work of any kind.

Friday morning. Weather was calm but misty. Mr. Brereton took out *brevet* machine No. 3 for a test flight, and finding conditions were favourable handed machine over to Mr. Valazzi, who put in some very good straight flights. Mr. Scott also out on the same machine, doing straights in good style. Mr. Andrews, having returned after a long absence from the school, had a few turns on Taxi No. 2 machine, which he handled very well.

Saturday was a blank day for pupils, the weather becoming very boisterous. On Monday last, Mr. Brock was out early testing No. 4 *brevet* machine, doing several circuits. Mr. Valazzi and Mr. Scott also put in some very useful work on No. 2 machine. Mr. Phelps was also practising on the same machine, showing some improvement.

W. H. Ewen School.—With the Christmas festivities the



Father Christmas Parachuting.

RECOGNISING that flying over London was contrary to the Royal Aero Club regulations, and yet wishing to get a view of London from above, Capt. Penfold, the Australian aeronaut, decided to make a trip across the metropolis in a balloon. To give a practical side to the trip he arranged with the Sandow Chocolate Co. to disguise himself as Father Christmas and descend at the first suitable point by parachute and distribute samples of Sandow's chocolate on landing. Through Messrs. Aeros, Ltd., he secured the use of one of Messrs. Spencer Brothers' balloons of 45,000 cubic feet capacity, which, piloted by Mr. Henry Spencer, and carrying a cinematograph operator, left the gasworks at Battersea at 12.45 p.m. on 23rd ult.

Capt. Penfold was seated on the edge of the basket holding the cords of the parachute, which was fastened to the net of the balloon. A 25-mile wind was blowing, necessitating a good deal of manoeuvring before the word to "let go" was given, and after just clearing the gasometer they crossed the Thames at a height of 1,000 ft. At about 1,200 ft. up the only recognisable object was the spire of Westminster Cathedral. The balloon travelled at a height of some 4,000 ft. above the clouds for a long way, and then dropping down through the clouds, the aeronauts found clear country near Chelmsford. At 3,000 ft. Capt. Penfold slid off the basket. He dropped about 500 feet before the parachute opened and the wind swayed him about terrifically. While descending he travelled safely for a distance of about three miles across country and landed safely at Little Baddow, where he distributed the chocolate.

regular routine of school work has been upset, with most of the pupils off holidaying. The few enthusiasts who remained to take advantage of any favourable weather were able to get in some nice practice. On Saturday, December 21st, pupils commenced an excellent day's practice under the instruction of Mr. L. W. F. Turner and M. Baumann. Mr. Turner had out the 35-h.p. Caudron, and after a test flight handed the machine over to Mr. L. Russell who made several circuits of the aerodrome, handling the machine in a confident manner, finishing with a *vol plané* from 60 feet. Mr. Warren also made several good straight flights on the same machine, making good landings.

The pupils, under the instruction of M. Baumann, were also making excellent progress, Lieut. M. W. Noel making good straight flights at 30 ft., on the 28-h.p. Caudron, while Messrs. R. S. McGregor, E. T. Prosser, and M. Zubiaga, were all showing good results in straights, on monoplane No. 1. M. Baumann also put up a splendid exhibition flight on the 35 Caudron, flying several circuits and finishing with a *vol plané* from 300 ft. During the afternoon, Mr. Turner gave a fine exhibition on the 60-h.p. Caudron, in a rising wind, finishing with a spiral *vol plané* from 1,500 ft.

On Sunday the 22nd the wind was too high for pupils' outdoor practice, Mr. Turner, however, made a good exhibition flight on the 60-h.p. Caudron.

On Friday the 27th, Lieut. Bayly made several excellent straight flights on the 28-h.p. Caudron under the instruction of M. Baumann.

Jameson and Temple School.—Mr. Temple was out on Blériot No. 2 for 16 mins. on Friday morning. On Monday Mr. Temple was out testing the 45-h.p. Anzani-engined Blériot, which has been built in the School, and will be used for *brevet* tests, but as the engine was not pulling well, further adjustments were necessary. In the afternoon, Mr. Temple again brought the 45-h.p. machine out for 63 mins., appearing to have perfect control.

Salisbury Plain.

Royal Flying Corps.—As nearly all the officers and men of the Royal Flying Corps have been enjoying a short period of leave, there is not a great deal to record. On Saturday week, Capt. Dawes took Lieut. Wadham over to Farnborough on the Maurice Farman, 214, and while he came back on the same machine Lieut. Wadham brought over Maurice Farman, 216. Air mechanic McCudden afterwards made a trial of half an hour on 214.

South Farnborough.

Royal Flying Corps.—Last week the men of the various squadrons were on Christmas leave and there was no flying. The weather during the Christmas holidays was, as elsewhere, anything but ideal, high winds and heavy rainstorms prevailing. The men returned from leave on Monday, and on Tuesday, although the weather was stormy, Major Raleigh, the officer commanding No. 4 Squadron made a splendid flight in the morning on the 100-h.p. Breguet 210. The wind was south-westerly and blowing in heavy gusts, from 30 to 40 miles per hour, and the flight was a splendid instance of what can be done on a high-powered machine, when in the hands of a skilful pilot.



Capt. Penfold weighed 145 lbs., the parachute 25 lbs., while it carried 30 lbs. of chocolates. When relieved of this load the balloon shot up to 10,000 feet and eventually landed near Hatfield Peveril. On May 14th, 1908, Capt. Penfold twice passed over San Francisco, the second trip being at night, when the aeronaut "bombarded" the fleet.

Aerial League Dance at Southampton.

AT the Shirley Assembly Rooms, Southampton, on Tuesday, December 17th, the first of a series of dances organised by Mr. Mortimer Griffin, of Southampton, in aid of the National Aviation Fund of the Aerial League, took place. There were between 70 and 80 people present, and the dance was a great success. The next Southampton dance in aid of the fund will take place on Thursday, January 16th, 1913.

Santa Claus at Brooklands To-morrow.

A SPLENDID programme has been arranged for the meeting which is to be held at Brooklands to-morrow, Sunday, and in addition to the prizes which are being offered for the speed, quick starting, bomb-dropping, and alighting competition, other prizes will be given for the best all-round performances. With the assistance of Mr. Merriam, the manager of the Bristol Co.'s School at Brooklands, the B.A.R.C. has arranged for a visit from Santa Claus, who will arrive "by the aerial way" about 3 p.m. Santa Claus will distribute gifts from his aeroplane to every child under fourteen years of age in exchange for a ticket obtained from the gatekeeper on entering the aerodrome.