

## THE FIRST "AEROCAR."

THE Blériot workshops have just turned out a machine which marks a distinct point in construction and to which previous reference has been made in these pages. Built to the order of M. Henri Deutsch de la Meurthe, it is the first passenger-carrying aeroplane to be constructed in which the comfort of the human complement has been taken into serious consideration.

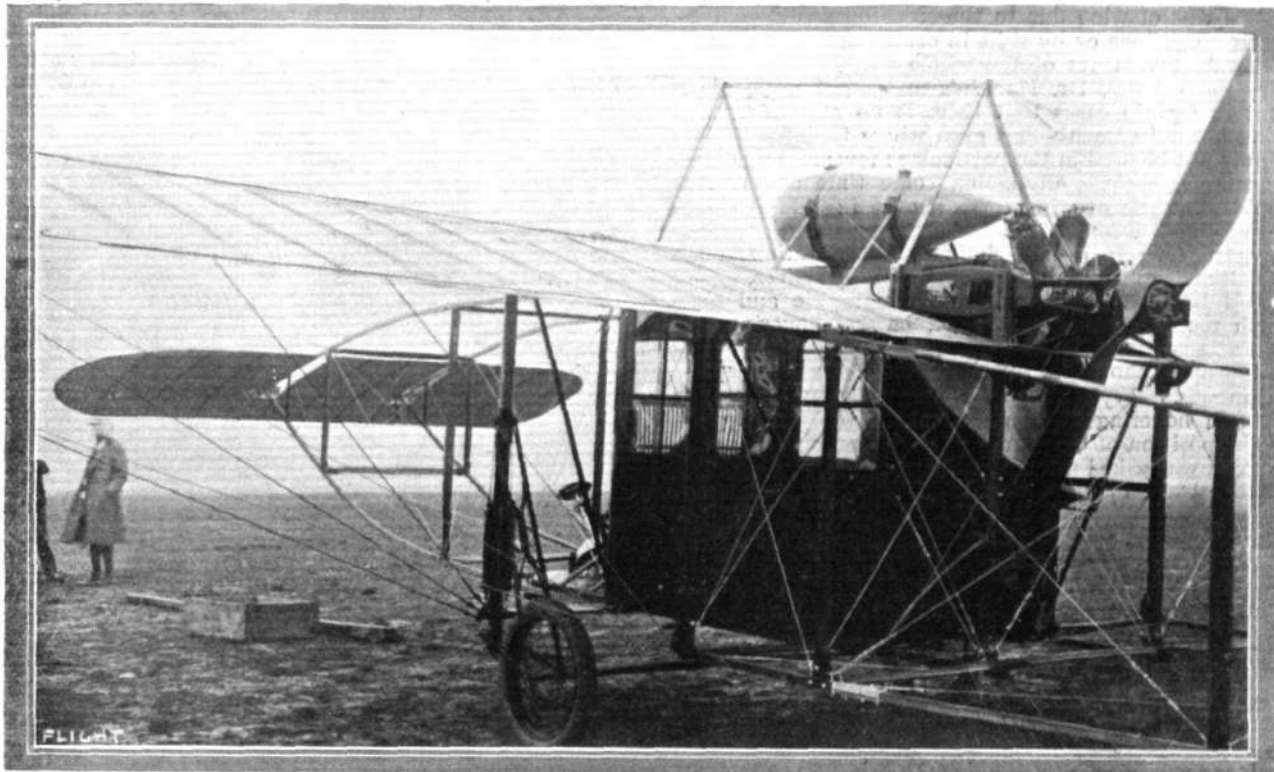
In this respect it signifies the commencement of a new era in aeroplane construction.

The passengers are comfortably accommodated in a side-entrance body, built by Rothchild, which is provided with mica windows in

plane working in inverse conjunction at the tail, as is usually the case when an organ of this description is employed.

It will be remembered that the experimental 100 h.p. monoplane built a few months ago by Blériot with the object of providing data for the construction of the machine at present under consideration, made use of a method of wing bracing very much analogous to that of the Etrich. This has been abandoned and triangulation of the wings by stout steel cable resorted to.

As can be seen in the accompanying photograph, both the motor, a Gnome of 100-h.p., and the fuel tanks are arranged above and to



M. Deutsch de la Meurthe's Blériot "Berline" aeroplane, showing the suspension of the car body part of the machine and the disposition of the Gnome motor, petrol tank, &c. The pilot sits in front of the enclosed body, the *cloche* being seen in our photograph just projecting forward. Note the special stabiliser fitted to this machine.

front and on either side, in order to afford to its occupants a good view of the country over which the machine is passing. Its interior is padded with pneumatic cushions for the purpose of protecting the passengers should a rough landing be made. The pilot maintains control of the monoplane by means by a regulation Blériot *cloche* and foot bar from his seat on the platform extending in front of the body, and to his left is a space which can be utilized either for the purpose of accommodating a mechanic or personal attendant, or for packing luggage. To facilitate communication between passengers and pilot, a speaking tube, similar to those in use on taxis, is fitted. The landing chassis is of the customary Blériot type, and it is further interesting to notice that the control of the machine's elevation has been entrusted to a front elevator, which is not connected with a

the rear of the body, a disposition which, we must admit, savours a little too much of the Sword of Damocles to be to our liking.

The wings span 43 ft. from tip to tip, and the overall length of the machine is 46 ft. Ready for flight, but without its human load, the monoplane weighs 1,540 lbs.

Although allowances must be made for the fact that the Blériot aerocar is still more or less in the experimental stage, it is curious that so little attention has been paid to the reduction of head resistance, for the odd 20 sq. ft. of plane surface, represented by the front of the body, presented normally to a relative wind velocity of approximately 50 miles per hour, must surely result in an enormous and unnecessary waste of power. The machine is at present at Etampes, and its preliminary trials are expected to take place shortly.



## BALLOON RECORDS BROKEN.

DURING the very windy weather at the beginning of this month several attempts were made from France to beat the world's duration record for balloons. On the 5th inst., the balloon "Picardie II" (2,200 metres), having on board MM. Bienamie and Rumpelmeyer, started away from Lamotte-Breuil. They soon covered the north-eastern portion of France, and then, being driven on at a fair speed, they crossed Germany. Passing the coast they floated over the Baltic for six hours, and eventually sighted the Russian coast by Riga. There, making their way inland, they came down at Alt Samken, in the province of Riga, after being in the air for 16 hours and covering a distance of 1,700 kiloms.

In the evening of the 6th inst., MM. A. Schelcher and H. Lievin, in the balloon "L'Excelsior" (1,600 metres), left Lamotte-Breuil, and taking a westerly course reached Szlabings, near Iglau, in Moravia, having covered 1,100 kiloms. in a little over 16 hours. Also at 3 o'clock on the 6th inst., MM. de Francia and Destreicher rose from St. Cloud in their balloon "La Mouche II" (1,850 metres), and after a 24-hour journey they landed among the Carpathians, at Kereszt, in Hungary, a distance of 1,500 kiloms. from Paris. Both the "Picardie II" and "La Mouche II" were competing for the Lahm Cup, and the former was also entered for the Lamotte-Breuil Cup. The "L'Excelsior" was attempting a record for the Ville de Paris Prize.