THE LATE MR. GRAHAM GILMOUR.

Saturday last, February 17th, was a day of mourning for the entire aviation industry, for just before noon on that day Douglas Graham Gilmour, one of our foremost English pilots, was claimed a victim to the triumphal progress of aviation. Enthusiastic, skillful, active, daring, but with his daring always tempered with a certain caution, he was one of those pilots whom the science and practice of heavier-than-air locomotion could little afford to lose. The details embracing this tragic incident are briefly these. Shortly after 11 o'clock he started away from Brooklands on the Antoinette-engined Martin-Handasyde monoplane, with the intention of making a cross-country flight. That he did not intend to fly to Hendon or down the river is rather borne out by the fact that he gave his mechanics to understand he would return within the hour. Passing over the Old Deer Park at Richmond at a height of what is generally estimated to be 400 ft., the machine, apparently without any warning, suddenly failed, and with its occupant was dashed to earth, a tangled mass of wreckage. Poor Gilmour, as we all know, was killed instantaneously. At the inquest, which was held on the following Tuesday morning, a verdict of "accidental death" was recorded, coupled with the remark that the jury were of the opinion that something must have happened to the machine to have caused the accident, although the evidence was not sufficient to show what. Eye-witnesses gave evidence to the effect that the left wing broke in the air, but that all truss-wires were found intact when the wreckage was examined rather casts a doubt upon this theory. At the same time, knowing Mr. Graham Gilmour's ability at the lever, and even taking into consideration that he had recently complained of a certain giddiness when flying, it seems difficult to connect the cause of the accident to any failing on the part of the pilot. The theory that the failure of the wing explanation is entertained, for the abnormal strain that would be necessary to rupture so strongly and conscientiously constructed a wing as those with which the Martin-Handasyde machine was equipped. In every part of the south of England where flying was indulged in on Saturday last, this extraordinary condition of the atmosphere was noticed. At Brooklands flying was abandoned for a considerable time for that reason. At Hendon, Ewen, while flying his Deperdussin about midday, met with a "pocket," which, although he was turning to the right, had the effect of banking his machine heavily in the opposite sense to that necessary for the turn. With full warp and full rudder, and diving steeply, the dangerous cant of his machine was not corrected until he had dropped, in his estimation, 200 ft. At Eastchurch, Lieut. Longmore, at a height of 2,000 ft., met with a "pocket" of so serious a nature that he asserts he has no desire for a repetition of the experience. Lieut. Lawrence at Shoreham had noticed a similar state of affairs. The accident that Capt. Gilbert de Winckels sustained at Salisbury Plain has also been attributed to these abnormal conditions in the air.

If this theory that the wing broke in the air is entertained, we can but cite the occurrence as an appalling example of bad luck, for to us it is altogether unnatural to connect structural failures with a machine so thoroughly well designed, and so carefully and conscientiously constructed as the one on which poor Gilmour met his end.

We voice the feelings of all those interested in aviation, not only in England, but in the whole world, in extending our heartfelt and sincere sympathies to the relatives of the lamented pilot, and to the constructors of his machine.

Mr. Gilmour's portrait appeared, it will be remembered, as a Flight Pioneer in these pages on October 29th, 1910.

The Navy and Aviation.

QUESTIONED in the House of Commons by Mr. Alan Burgoyne, on Tuesday, as to whether the Admiralty intended to develop hydro-aeroplanes or some form of aerial vessel suitable for naval purposes, Mr. Winston Churchill said the answer was "Yes." Up to the time of going to press, this is the sum total of Parliament's work referring to aviation.

A Busy Day for Cody.

QUITE a lot of work was put in by Mr. Cody on Saturday on his big bus. He started off with a long flight round Winchester, taking about three hours and traversing 145 miles. He then took his son Frank and another passenger to a height of over 2,000 ft., and coasted round the Laffans Plains at a speed of about 60 miles an hour. After this he flew with his two passengers to Brooklands and back.

MR. GRAHAM GILMOUR'S FATAL ACCIDENT.—General view of the monoplane after the disaster.

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Prizes for Safety.

At a conference of representatives of the various bodies interested in aeronautics in France, held at the headquarters of the Aero Club of France, on the 17th inst., it was decided to form a Union pour la Securite en Aeroplane. This Union proposes to raise a sum of about 300,000 francs for prizes to encourage improvements to aeroplanes mainly from the point of view of adding to their safety. A sum of 25,000 francs has been voted by the Aero Club of France, and a similar amount has been promised by the Automobile Club of France.

A Long Trip in West Africa.

On the 17th inst., a long flight was made in French West Africa by Lieut. Fecamp, who, accompanied by Administrator Carl, went from Bamby to Thies, Dakar and back, a distance of about 200 kiloms.