

greater than is desirable, and we feel that the Fund only needs to be brought insistently before their notice for their purse-strings to be loosened on behalf of what is undoubtedly one of the most deserving causes in connection with the war. As the circular issued by the club states:—"In view of the great utility of the work of the Flying Services, evidence of which has been repeatedly given in the official despatches of the Commander-in-Chief, the skilful and daring flights into enemy country, and the protection afforded by the continuous patrolling of our coast by aircraft, it is confidently expected that the British public will welcome this opportunity of showing their appreciation by subscribing promptly and liberally to the Fund."

Zeppelin Raids and Damage.

When the first scare was worked up over the Zeppelin fleets which were to visit London and destroy the entire City and its inhabitants, we endeavoured to point out the absurdity of such an attempt at terrorising the weaker section of the public and hinted pretty strongly at the probability of the "frightfulness" being fostered for other reasons than those entertained by the Germans. That a huge "boom" in insurance against aircraft risks followed is significant, and when premiums began to slack off, the scare was again and again worked for all it was worth—and away soared the premiums again, to the great delight and aggrandisement of those who were gathering in the shekels as a result of this working upon the feelings of the more nervous of the population. And a pretty big haul must have been raked in up to the present time, as although a raid actually has materialised, the amount of damage and loss of life—regrettable as is the latter—has been practically negligible; no doubt other raids will follow in due course, but with more or less the same results. At the time we urged all this strongly, and suggested that a more reasonable view of the possibilities should be taken. We adopted the attitude that if tens of thousands of pounds were to be annexed from the pockets of the British public upon so flimsy a pretext, then for goodness sake let the Government come forward boldly and take in the cash, as in any case such risks should not be borne by individuals, but be made a national affair, and compensation be paid out of the Imperial Exchequer.

To quote merely one statement of what we said on this subject as long ago as October:—

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Science and Aircraft.

LECTURING on Aerial Navigation at the Royal Institution on Saturday, Dr. A. T. Glazebrook said that it was commonly supposed that the development of heavier than air machines had gone on independently of science, and that science had only come in at a late hour to check the conclusions of practical men. But aeroplane construction was more the result of scientific calculation than shipbuilding. The precise investigations of such intricate matters as air-pressures in relation to lifting power, friction, and drag had gone far towards establishing our aerial supremacy in the field. In a letter which he had received from a friend at the front, it was pointed out that one of our machines with a 70 or 80 h.p. engine could outstrip a German machine of 100 h.p. The result was that German aeroplanes were becoming rare, and during several days preceding the date of the letter none had been seen.

One of the important matters for the scientist was to increase the speed-range of aeroplanes, and Dr. Glaze-

"For ourselves, our view of the matter, as we have already stated in a previous issue, is that, if there is any real prospect of an attempted invasion, it should be a matter for serious consideration whether the Government—which, through its various channels of information, is likely to be best informed on the subject—should not be called upon to accept responsibility for any damage that might result from such an invasion. Obviously, such damage would be the direct outcome of the national conflict, and as such ought, as far as possible, to be made good by the Government. The amount of damage likely to eventuate is in any case likely to be comparatively negligible, and the moral effect upon the general public of such an effect would undoubtedly be to inspire complete confidence, and put the little army of scaremongers into the gloomy obscurity which they deserve. Even if such a suggestion does not commend itself to the authorities, there is still another proposal they might consider, and that is, seeing that they have already taken many excellent safeguards in the public interests, notably in connection with marine insurance, in the fixing of maximum food prices, the prevention of a 'corner' in sugar, &c., they should undertake the issue of war-risk policies, covering also damage from hostile aircraft, so that the many thousands of half-crowns which are now being paid over to underwriters could be diverted to the public funds as a provision against a national risk. The whole business is a national question, and not one to be left to a few cute business men out of which to make capital."

And now we are pleased to see that the Government is likely to recognise that the results of these dastardly attacks upon the unarmed section of the country should be regarded in the way suggested by us, as a message was received by the Mayor of King's Lynn on Tuesday from the Prime Minister informing him that it is the intention of the Government to take measures to deal with the damage sustained as a result of the recent air raid on King's Lynn.

This follows on a similar action after the bombardment of Hartlepool and Scarborough, in which the same principles were involved, and we shall hope to learn officially presently that the compensation is as generous and complete as it undoubtedly should be under the circumstances. What should be done about all the vast sums already paid in premiums is another matter, but that large profits should be made by individuals out of the fears of the ignorant public under such calamitous conditions as exist for the country as a nation is one of those phases of exploiting others' troubles with a vengeance, which should not be allowed to continue. It must be at least a source of very considerable gratification to the ratepayers of London that the London County Council has refused to be drawn into the net, and has declined to insure its buildings and property against such risks, and in new building contracts is inserting clauses making it clear that the contractors will not be required to take the risk of damage by the King's enemies.

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brook pointed out that whereas in 1912 the Cody machine which won the military trials had a speed-range from 48 to 72 m.p.h., or 33 per cent., in 1914 a Sopwith machine had a range of 37 to 92 m.p.h., or 60 per cent.

To illustrate the importance of the effect of surface shapes, Dr. Glazebrook mentioned that altering the shape of the wires on aeroplanes—from round to oval—had brought about a reduction from 10 to 12 per cent. in the horse-power required for flying at 70 miles an hour.

Holland and German Airships.

ACCORDING to information to hand from Rotterdam, the Netherlands Government has instructed its Minister in Berlin to draw the attention of the German Government to the question of aircraft flying over Dutch territory. In view of the fact that on the night of the 19th-20th an airship, believed to be German, was observed over Holland proceeding in an easterly direction, the Netherlands Minister is to suggest an inquiry as to whether or not this took place.