



"Not muzzled, but under control." (FLIGHT Photo.)

The officers of the watch were functioning like the proverbial book. Passengers had breakfast at 8 a.m., and about that time the airship turned inland over Hull. She was well seen from the towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and she was well up to time in arriving over Manchester by noon. From the air the view was not so good as it was from the ground. Mr. Montague admitted that he found flying through mist "a little tiresome." But when there was nothing to see through the windows, he said that the passengers interested themselves otherwise. There was a suggestion of playing cards, but no one would admit the soft impeachment. All the passengers in turn were taken over the ship, into the control car, where some of them were allowed to take the steering wheel, and along the "catwalk" of the hull up to the tail. Sir Harry Brittain found that a very interesting experience. He said that everything was very still indeed until suddenly one came to a certain spot over an engine car, and then one heard the roar of the engines quite loudly. All were emphatic about the absolute steadiness of the ship and the absence of vibration and distracting noise. Mr. Montague described the trip as "calm, peaceful, uneventful." The Under-Secretary is an old soldier and an old journalist, and he likes excitement. He gave it as his personal feeling that he prefers travel by aeroplane because he finds it more exhilarating, and he likes the sensation of speed, which one does not get in an airship. Probably, most prospective travellers will think Mr. Montague's criticisms a recommendation. The Under-Secretary added that he would very much like to fly to Montreal in R 100.

While R 100 was still in the air the Canadian Department of National Defence cabled to Lord Thomson, asking that the flight to Montreal might be postponed until after the Canadian Parliament had risen at the end of May, as many Ministers and Members of Parliament wished to be at Montreal to see the airship arrive. Lord Thomson at once cabled back, agreeing to the suggestion. The change of plans was news to those on board when they landed.

At 4.30 p.m., on Thursday, the airship came back over Cardington. The officers on board were very surprised to get a message from the station: "Suppose you know your tail is buckled." They knew nothing of the sort. But it was a fact. The fairing behind the last transverse frame, a member some 20 to 30 ft. long, was badly buckled. It is supposed that it must have collapsed during the 10 min. run at full speed, when the air pressure on that member would be considerable. It is a member which does no work beyond completing the streamline shape of the ship, and apparently it did not receive enough attention from the stress-calculators. But its collapse did not in any way affect the handling of the airship, and Booth was very surprised to be told that it had happened.

It was as nasty an evening for mooring as could well be imagined. The wind was blowing in sharp vicious squalls, with frequent bursts of heavy rain which added a couple of

tons to the weight of the ship until the wind dried off the moisture. Occasionally, the sun would break through, but not sufficiently to expand the gas rapidly. The first time the mooring cable was dropped the rain stopped suddenly and the ship rose, so that she had to be put about and brought in again. Booth handled her very skilfully, indeed, though afterwards he said in an apologetic tone: "You see, none of us has had much airship practice for the last ten years." The second attempt was successful, and the ship's cable was attached to that from the tower at 4.45 p.m. Then the engines were stopped, the elevators were kept raised, and Flying Officer H. G. Cook, D.S.M., took chief charge from the head of the tower. The direction of the wind was also awkward as it could well be, the ship coming in over the top of the office sheds round the base of the tower. The side guys had to be carefully handled over the roofs of the sheds before they could be attached to the bollards, and to add to the discomforts of those on the ground, the fires in the winch houses were smoking abominably. At the Ismailia tower all the huts and winch houses are inside the perimeter of the tower, which is the ideal arrangement. For an hour and 10 min. F./O. Cook played R 100 as an angler plays a fish, easing her off when a squall caught her bows, and seizing every opportunity to wind her in. I fancy that a sea pilot who has had to bring a large liner into dock in difficult circumstances would have admired the skill with which this operation was carried out. At last, the dewdrop was locked safely home into the mooring cone, and at once a megaphone from the control car began to demand that the ground party should hurry up with the four weighty wheels to hold the tail down. The tractors got busy. Again the hatch did not fit quite perfectly on to the embarking platform, and hands had to assist the passengers to disembark. The passengers did not very much enjoy it. R 101 fits very much better. None the less, opinions were unanimous that the flight had been most enjoyable.

On Monday, May 26, R 100 was taken back into her shed for examination of the damage to the tail and for necessary repairs.

It was found on examination that the fairing of the tail piece had been made of too light a gauge, and a new one will be made in a heavier gauge. It was also found that the fabric cover had given way in a bay behind one of the power cars. This will be remedied by fitting an intermediate girder at this spot, a step which has proved an effectual remedy at other places in the ship. The flight to Canada has accordingly been postponed until the end of June or the beginning of July.

THE ENGINES OF R 101

The new transverse ring which is to be inserted into R 101 behind the passenger quarters, is now being assembled. The ship will have to be inflated for the operation, as the two ends will be floated apart. It is hoped to make a couple more