

St. John's From The Air.

Press Representatives Fly Over City With Major Cotton.

(By Our Own Representative.)

Looking down at St. John's from a height of 2,000 feet, I could not help thinking with the poet that "distance lends enchantment to the view"; for at that altitude, it was possible to see the city free from all the many defects which are so obviously apparent to all who live in it. One could scarcely believe that a town so poorly laid out, with its dingy side streets, its slums, and the many other disadvantages, whose presence in our midst we are compelled to admit, could present such a splendid spectacle from the air. But perhaps, I had better begin at the beginning.

THE START.

Since he came here from Botwood, Major Cotton had promised to take up a party of press representatives in his Martinside plane, and Sunday saw the fulfilment of that promise. During the past week, mechanics had been busy overhauling various parts of the machine, and when it was wheeled out of the hangar, and skids were substituted for the wheels, it was ready for the air. A large crowd had assembled to see the machine go up. After the engine had been warmed up, Major Cotton and Captain Bennett made a short test flight. The plane taxied down towards the foot of the pond and turning, "took off" like a great bird, the sunlight glinting on the silver-painted body, presenting a wonderful sight to those privileged to see it. The machine landed on the ice in the centre of the pond, and then it was our turn. Although flying is by no means uncommon in other countries, very few Newfoundlanders have had an opportunity to go up in an aeroplane, and especially under conditions such as exist here in winter. In fact, previous to our flight, Capt. Bennett was the only Newfoundlanders who had flown over St. John's. There were three of us, besides the pilot, Major Cotton, and we fitted quite comfortably into the passenger compartment in front of the pilot's seat. Hardly were we seated, when the engine was opened out, and I felt the machine trembling. I looked out of the window to my right, and to my surprise, discovered that we were off the ground. We had risen without any perceptible motion.

A WONDERFUL PANORAMA.

The country below us presented a wonderful panorama. As we passed over the outskirts of the city, the houses under us seemed like miniature buildings, with their little fences around them, and here and there, a black speck, representing a man. The weather conditions were perfect for flying, and if we were cold, we did not realize it in our excitement. A glance at the altimeter showed that we were at an altitude of nearly 2,000 feet. Soon we were passing over the town itself. Could that tiny building situated in that small plot of fenced-in ground be Government House? It did not seem possible. Indeed, the whole town had assumed tiny dimensions. It was, for all the world, like a pigmy town. That long twisting ribbon bordering the water's edge was Water Street; other thin white ribbons, some short, some long, none of them straight, could be identified as other streets. Every well known building, the Roman Catholic and Anglican Cathedrals, and other churches, the Court House, all, in fact, appeared as very small models of their real selves. Through all this, conversation was impossible. The noise of the engine, and the wind rushing past, made all attempts at talking useless. If we wished to have

anything to say to one another, we had to write it.

MOTION IMPERCEPTIBLE.

As we passed out into more open country, I looked below, and seeing the same house in view for what seemed so long, I almost thought the machine was not moving. As if to bear out this idea, a glance at the wing showed it to be almost still. There seemed hardly a quiver in it. But a look at the speedometer soon disillusioned me. . . . It registered nearly ninety miles an hour. Over fields and wooded land we passed, until reaching Mount Pearl, the aeroplane banked round and righting itself, made towards town again, this time passing over the South Side Hills. Over the Narrows it "zoomed"; that is, came down close to the sea, and then turning up, glided over Signal Hill. Cabot Tower, like a toy fort, came into view and was gone. Next came a glimpse of a wide expanse of sea, cold, grey-looking, a small schooner the only sign of life on it. Now we were circling over the pond, and flying out towards Virginia. Back we came in the direction of the pond. The altimeter needle pointed at 1,000 feet, 500 feet; next, a sudden thud, another and yet one more, a short taxi, and my first air flight was over, all too quickly. We had been up about 8 minutes.

WHAT FLYING FEELS LIKE.

Naturally, the first question we were asked after landing was "What does it feel like." Without intending any feeble attempt at humour, I would answer, "Like nothing on earth." By that I mean that the sensations perceived in flying are almost indescribable. I had been warned before going up that one was liable to attacks of sea-sickness while in the air. I did not find it so. In fact, the whole feeling was one of exhilaration, and the slight sinking sensation as the machine dropped, was reminiscent of that perceived while dropping in a fast elevator, and was over almost before one realized it was there. Personally, I was up only long enough to make me want for more, and I am sure my companions felt the same.

AERIAL POSSIBILITIES IN NEWFOUNDLAND.

There is no country in the globe, in which the establishment of an aerial mail service could be productive of more good, than in Newfoundland. In the winter, especially, it is impossible to maintain an organized mail service and some outlying settlements may not receive any mails for months. The establishment of an aerial mail service would obviate this, and would provide a periodical communication between otherwise inaccessible settlements and the remainder of the country. Everything possible should be done to encourage the establishment of such a service. As Lord Northcliffe has said, "Governments must make up their minds that, although national economy is imperative to-day, every step should be taken to prevent accidents suffering from lack of subsidies or any aid that government can give. The encouragement of flying is justified by reasons stronger than any question of trade, and private enterprise deserves the wise and discriminating assistance of the state. Every penny expended in fostering this industry is spent not merely in aid of aeronautics but for the general good of the community."

Major Cotton is the first airman to

attempt to carry mails in this country, and while he was prevented through adverse conditions from reaching Halifax, he has been entirely successful in his mail carrying flights between Botwood and Northern settlements. The Government would be well-advised to take Lord Northcliffe's words to heart, and taking advantage of Major Cotton's presence in the country, induce him to engage in an aerial mail service during the winter.

HOW AN AEROPLANE IS CONTROLLED.

It is not my purpose in this final paragraph to attempt an explanation of the working of an aeroplane, but to tell, as briefly as possible, and as well as my lack of practical knowledge will permit me, how an aeroplane is driven. In the Martinside machine which Major Cotton uses, the pilot's seat is behind the passenger compartment. The control surfaces are operated by means of a joy-stick, which, by fore and aft motion, operates the elevators, and by sideways motion operates the ailerons. There is also a rudder bar, on which the pilot always keeps his feet. This bar operates the rudder. To the pilot's left are levers, one of which is the throttle and another is used to increase the mixture of air with the petrol. All the instruments and engine controls are situated in the pilot's cockpit. These include the magnetos, the speedometer, altimeter, petrol gauge, and many other instruments which are necessary for the proper control of the machine. The machine is lifted from the ground by the joy-stick, and is turned by a sideways movement of the joy-stick, combined with a movement of the rudder bar. After it is turned, the plane is righted by reversing these movements. A plane should never be lifted from the ground before it has attained a speed of 45 miles an hour, at the very least. There are fewer controls in use in an aeroplane than in a motor car.

Past President Tamed.

S.U.F. CLUB PRESENT CLOCK TO BRO. JAMES RENDALL. A very pleasing and enjoyable function took place in the dining-room of the Society United Fishermen's Hall, last night, when in the presence of the Grand Lodge Executive and a large attendance of club members, Bro. James Rendall, Past President of the Club was presented with a handsome clock as a souvenir of his term of office since the organization. The presentation was made by the Grand Master, R.W. Bro. J. S. Curlew, and was emotionally responded to by the recipient, who appreciated deeply the spirit of the gift. A light repast was afterwards served by the Club Stewards, when the following toast list was taken up, being interspersed by songs rendered by the members. A surprise being sprung when Miss Muriel Burridge was ushered in, who gave two popular examples of vocal art, being enthusiastically applauded. The Chairman of the evening was Bro. W. MacGillivray, President of the Club.

TOAST LIST.

The King.—Prop. Chairman.
The Grand Lodge.—Prop. Bro. J. Harman, resp. R.W.G.M. J. S. Curlew.
The Club.—Prop. D.G.M. C. T. James, resp. Past Pres. Rendell.
St. John's Lodge.—Prop. Bro. R. LeDrew, resp. Bro. H. Rendell, W.M.
The Junior Lodge, Caribou No. 78, North Sydney, established Jan. 18th, 1922.—Prop. Bro. J. S. Curlew, G.M., resp. Bro. C. T. James, D.G.M.
Ladies Association.—Prop. Bro. R. LeDrew, resp. Bro. C. T. James.
Our Guests.—Prop. Bro. W. MacGillivray, G.P., resp. Sergt. Shepherd, (Bell Island).
The Press.—Prop. Bro. A. E. Withycombe, G.S., resp. Bro. C. T. James (Telegram).
The Chairman.—Prop. Bro. W. T. Lever, resp. Bro. MacGillivray.
Auld Lang Syne and God Save the King brought this happy gathering to a close.

S.U.F. Lodge

ESTABLISHED AT NORTH SYDNEY.

A lodge of the Society of United Fishermen, a fraternal organization for the toilers of the deep was organized in North Sydney Wednesday afternoon, 18th inst, and to begin with will have a chartered membership of about 50 members. There is already a Lodge of the organization in this city. It was organized at the Pier some time ago, and is in a flourishing condition.

The new Lodge is to be known as "Caribou" No. 78.—Sydney Post.

Money Stolen.

Trunk Unlocked and \$250 Taken. An uptown boarding house keeper has reported to the police that \$250 were taken from a trunk in her hotel recently. The trunk and a cash box were both found unlocked and clothing lay strewn over the floor. The lock of the trunk is not a common one and the only key was in the possession of the proprietress. The key of the cash box was kept by one of the owners of the money. Four people, including the proprietress, herself, owned the money. The other three were transient boarders, and their money was kept in trust for them. This has been done for the past five years. The police are investigating the case.

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NOTICE.

The Annual Meeting of the Newfoundland Auxiliary Bible Society will be held in the Methodist College Hall on Wednesday evening, the 25th January, at 8 o'clock. His Excellency the Governor will preside and addresses given by Revs. E. C. Earp, C. H. Johnson and others. Special music will be in charge of F. J. King, Esq., Organist of C. of E. Cathedral.

A collection will be taken up in aid of the Funds of the Society.

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