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true that S. F. Cody flew magnificently at forty-eight; but the authorities pick out men younger than that, and only men really in the prime of life; anyone tending to come into the category of the "aged" is rejected.

As has already been indicated, the first stages of tuition are simple. The pupil goes in the morning to the sheds and arrays himself in helmet, overcoat, leather jacket, leather waistcoat, etc., adding gloves and goggles and muffler—protective devices against the cold above. With his instructor, he mounts a machine equipped with controlling levers in duplicate, so that any blunder that he may be guilty of is immediately corrected by the instructor, the "dual control" enabling the latter to pounce at any moment. "Pounce" is, however, not the right word, for it is usually by the most delicate and almost imperceptible action that the machine is righted when trouble threatens. Awkward and dangerous as the aeroplane was in the early days, it now possesses a stability of its own so automatic that the machine seems to help the pupil more than puzzle him. When the instructor has taken his seat behind the pupil, a mechanic, with his hand on the propeller, gives instructions—"switch off," "suck in," intoned ritual somewhat akin to that familiar to the learner of motor-car driving. After the big swing of the propeller and a short run over the ground, the pupil has the wonderful sensation of finding himself many feet aloft, and climbing briskly into the upper regions. A first flight may last only ten minutes; the height may be a few hundred feet. The pupil is taught how to work the controls, how to deal with deviations in the machine's course, how to depress the head of the machine for a descent, how to cut off the engine when the actual alighting is to take place, and how to come to a full stop when the machine is again running along the ground.

At each lesson something additional is explained—what to do if a strange noise from the engine indicates something wrong in that direction, how to deal with "bumps", as the air-waves caused by the sun's action are termed, how to choose the right spot of earth to alight upon. The beginner gets to know that he must never ascend without examining every strut and wire on his aeroplane, or without ascertaining that every working part is in order. Thus for the first few flights the programme only varies slightly, until the learner knows how to steer the machine himself, taking turns to the right

and left, and, in course of time, being permitted to bring the machine to the ground. A few more days, and the eventful moment arrives when the teacher says cheerfully: "Now you can just go up by yourself." However long a man lives, and whatever may be his adventures, his first "solo" flight will remain an exciting memory.

Then come the tests for the "ticket". The candidate must prove to the testing observers that he can cut figures of eight in the air, that he can land without bursting a wire, and that, generally speaking, he can handle his machine correctly. The "ticket", once obtained, proclaims to all and sundry the joyful intelligence that its holder is a certified aviator; in course of time the Press may begin to speak of him as "the intrepid bird-man". In England this acquirement leads to an appointment as probationary Second-Lieutenant, and one of the next tasks set is generally the flying of types of machines different from that to which the "ticket"-holder has hitherto been accustomed.

Three months or thereabouts must be allotted to the "advanced" course of training, and while that stage is being gone through, the candidate presents himself before the examiners to obtain his "wings", a further guarantee of capability that may cause him to be sent across the Channel to join in the fight for the liberties of the world, or, perchance, he may be simply allotted the responsibility of assisting in the defence of the British Isles against the raiding aircraft of the enemy.

War Flying

There are censorship limits to a discussion of the aviator's daily life in the war zone, but some account of his work is permissible. In preparation for military or naval duties, the certified pilot has, first of all, to attend a new course of lectures. Some of them will "bore him stiff," but most of them may even enchant him by virtue of their direct relationship to his coming work. Dull theory is swallowed up in the practical details of many branches of science. The airman must indeed be scientist as well as pilot. If his work is to be merely the steering of the machine, with a comrade on board to do the scouting or fighting, the subjects that he must study will include maps, compasses, and meteorological conditions. To a mastery of the technicalities of his machine he will have to add a knowledge of clouds and rain, of line-squalls and

electrical disturbances in the air. He must know how, when a gale is blowing, to climb out of its delaying power. He may have to encounter sea-fogs or the smoky haze that hangs over a "black country".

The complete air-warrior must learn another dozen sciences. The information that he seeks in scouting must be accurately collected and intelligently reported; it is thus essential that he should understand, not only map-reading, but also photography and wireless telegraphy. It is the duty of the aerial photographer to provide his side with section pictures of the enemy's lines of communication, of the lay of the country miles and
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