

WORLD TOPICS IN
LETTER FROM LONDON

Success of English Air Race—The Royal Society of St. George—Official Downing Street is Propped Up—Death of Men Noted Some Years Ago.

(From our own Correspondent.)
London, Sept. 24—It is not, perhaps, generally realised what a triumph the King's Cup air race was for the organisers, the Royal Aero Club, but the aeronautical community has been quick to appreciate this fact, as is evidenced by the congratulations which have been pouring in to the secretary, Commander Harold Berrin. There has not been a single protest, and outside the ranks of the untoward incident during the contest, and the handicapping provided a better finish than anyone dared to expect. Very little time was given to organize the event, but the flying people entered into the spirit of the thing, with the result that practically every machine capable of flying, and outside the ranks of the Royal Air Force, was put into trim and entered. The air ministry has earned the thanks of everyone by its broad-minded policy of allowing serving officers-pilots to compete. On the whole the lesson of the race is that the worst thing for an aeroplane, like any other piece of mechanism, is to be lying idle. Of those who completed the course, seven of the eleven machines have been in regular service, the winner being a veteran, and of those which retired not one had been employed on air line or air taxi duties.

Patriot and Pianist.
Paderecki, late Prime Minister of Poland, and pianist of world-wide fame, was in Paris last week, and it is of interest to know that he has decided to resume his musical activities in November. He will begin a long series of recitals in America, and next year proposes to tour England. His visit is certain to excite a vast amount of interest, for his is undoubtedly the most picturesque personality in the pianistic world, and as a money-spinner stands alone. Moreover, a friend tells me that, despite his long absence from the concert platform, he is playing as well if not better than ever. Paderecki has a beautiful estate in Switzerland, where his wife runs an extensive and intensive chicken farm, and near Los Angeles, where the film stars cocoonate. He owns a large ranch, remarkable for its tennis and orange groves. The famous pianist is a keen billiard player, and excels at snooker, his touch being as delicate and his judgment as expert as when seated at the keyboard.

St. George For Merry Britain!
Apropos the current controversy as to the use of the terms "England" and "Britain," I hear that the Royal Society of St. George, founded in 1894, and now vigorously extending its activities, has achieved its ambition to have the saint's day annually honored in St. Paul's Cathedral, and the service will take place on April 27 next, as near to the correct day, that is, as other arrangements permit. The founder of the society, Howard Ruff, is at last reaping the reward of his labors, and is assisted by the glorious... with St. George's Day, Sir George Keyes has read the signal "St. George announced." Incidentally, it has not by any means an easy task to find an Englishman to conduct the cathedral service. Both the archbishops come from north of Hadrian's Wall, while other suitable clerics have crossed Ota's Dyke. The choice will probably fall on Dean Inge, who is one of the most distinguished Englishmen of his generation, and boasts a genuine Anglo-Saxon, or rather Norse, name.

Greek Financial Methods.
Some very curious and unorthodox methods of dealing with currency inflation have been tried in Europe, but that practised by Greece is, perhaps, the most striking because it has not led to disaster. The principle is simple

FOR THE PEACE CONFERENCE



This shows Lord Curzon, British Secretary of Foreign Affairs, who has been conferring with Premier Poincare of France over the Near East.

CAPTAIN F. L. BARNARD



Winner of the aerial race around Great Britain carrying the King's Cup, accompanied by Sir S. Instone, whose machine he piloted. Capt. Barnard is in uniform.

enough. The value of paper currency is declared halved, one half to remain in circulation and the other half to be lent compulsorily to the state. This principle is translated into practice by literally tearing currency notes in half, the left-hand piece remaining in circulation and the right-hand piece being surrendered to the government and credited to the individual. When the finance minister announced this amazing stroke to the Greek legislative assembly, he prefaced his remarks by pointing out to the members that the ushers had removed the ink-pots from the desks at which members sat. It is the custom apparently, to indicate disapproval of the speaker occupying the tribune by throwing one's ink-pot at him, and the finance minister was not taking any risks!

Witely Duties.
The domestic life of the Eskimo, one realizes from this film, differs only in details from that followed by so-called civilized races like ourselves. Instead of cleaning her man's boots in the morning before he goes out to get the daily bread, the Eskimo housewife chews them. Being of sealskin, they harden in the night, so have to be softened. One thing seems to make the Eskimo woman unique in the world, and that is an apparent absence of vanity in dress and ornaments. Of course, "life is real, life is earnest" with a vengeance north of Hudson Bay, and perhaps the by-no-means uncommon Eskimo ladies would display the characteristics of their sex in a climate more favorable to pneumonia blouses and silk stockings. The pictures of the Arctic blizzard are really wonderful. As a change from the average film drama, or from the pretentious American pseudo-historical spectacles with their priggish moralizing, "Nanook" is well worth seeing. I should like to see it again, and one

Ypres League's New Home.
The Ypres League has had to leave the old corner house at 23 Henrietta street, Cavendish Square. This house, which the league occupied owing to the generosity of Sir James Boyton, has changed hands and is to be demolished. The Duke of Westminster has, however, promptly come to the rescue, and placed at the disposal of the Ypres League a house at 100 Eaton Place, Eaton Square, which will henceforth be the headquarters of this famous society. Applications for membership have naturally been stimulated by the recent pilgrimage of members to the Salient, and by the wide distribution of the number of the Ypres Times dealing with this historic event. Therefore the secretary is anxious that this change of address should be widely known.

Steam Without Fire.
An engineer back from Switzerland tells me of an interesting invention that should prove invaluable to countries, with plenty of water power and little coal, if the claims made for it can be justified. It is really an inverted turbine, for instead of steam being used to produce power, power is used to produce steam, the device being a method of raising the temperature of water by internal friction. The engine is driven by water power, and the friction set up is so great that water introduced leaves it in the form of steam, which is then used for ordinary industrial purposes. Naturally the invention is still in a purely experimental stage, and it will remain to be seen whether it will stand up to regular and continuous wear.

Wilfred Scaven Blunt.
The death of Wilfred Scaven Blunt at the age of eighty-three removes a

figure which bulked large in the public eye in the eighties and nineties. A typically English paradox, a wealthy man with every social and educational advantage, devoting himself enthusiastically to strange causes, he was utterly decided and feared by official personages, or consulted by them in a backstairs way. His "diaries" few modern productions can boast, but they date, as the saying is, and his most permanent work will be his volume of "Love Sonnets."

In spite of his wrong-headedness and perversity, which tried the solemn patience of the late Lord Cromer almost as much as the erratic General Gordon, he was always popular with the class to which he belonged and with which he was usually in conflict. His influence in Egyptian affairs was very great at the time, and Gladstone used him as a correspondent unknown to the official representatives of Great Britain. Gladstone seems invariably to have followed Blunt when he was wrong, and rejected his advice when subsequent events showed it to have been right. The achievement of which he himself was proudest was his success in saving the life of Arabi Pasha, after the defeat of the rebellion, and securing a trial of sorts for the nationalist leader.

German Mentality.
A city merchant now touring the industrial towns of North Germany, writes to me that what has most impressed him is the wholesome manner in which German factories are being extended and rebuilt. Everywhere large construction schemes are being carried out, and the German manufacturer still seems quite sure that he is going to capture the markets of the world by cheaper and cheaper production, and, with a few exceptions, is blissfully ignoring the inevitable economic laws that must ultimately make the purchase of materials impossible for him.

It is the same mentality, my friend declares, as led the German in 1914 to believe he could dominate the world. Already there are signs that this question of materials is becoming pressing, and Hamburg houses which have for more than a year been buying oil-seeds to crush into oil are now buying the British manufactured oil because they cannot make a profit on the crushing transaction. For six weeks Hamburg has practically taken no oil seeds at all.

Still Buying Marks.
The chairman of one of the big banks, I hear, estimates that 600,000,000 marks have been sold in England alone, and if the estimate is even remotely accurate it would be interesting to know where this enormous number is to be found. It is quite certain that the big firms and the banks that were holding marks have been heavy sellers, but in spite of this there is still a shortage of marks in London, proving that there must be many people still with a belief in the ultimate recovery of the German exchange. So long as this state of things continues Germany will be able to sell more and more marks abroad, because it is only when there is a stampede of sellers that the bottom falls out of the market.

Vienna Economics.
I was talking to a man just returned from Vienna, and he has the full opinion from another observer that the future of Austria lies in the hands of the Vienna Municipality. That body is the one bright spot in a welter of fantastic and ruinous public administrations, and it is dominated by the so-called Christian Socialists, a curious party without precedent in this or any other European country. Its principles approximate to those of our old-time Radical party, but they are put into application by really capable and business-like men. Consequently it is the rallying point for all the same elements in the country, and its determination to make the city pay its way amounts almost to a war-cry for the middle classes.

As an illustration of the difference between the regime of the Municipality of Vienna and the Austrian State Government, my informant cited the economic positions of two men, one a tram conductor and the other a university professor. The first, an employee of the municipality, draws rather less than double the salary of the professor, and his wages fluctuate according to the cost of living. The professor gets his pre-war salary and his services are charged for on the same basis. Nevertheless the tramways are paying, while the university is bankrupt.

Trade Ambassadors.
In the past there was only one type of British commercial traveler sent abroad, that is, the man sent to get orders, and many as possible. Now a new type has developed, that has little or nothing to do with salesmanship, but is sent abroad at great cost by big firms to report primarily on the financial and political conditions of countries, and only incidentally to revise the firm's agencies. His reports, on big sweeping statesmanlike lines, are invaluable to the firm at home in adjusting periods of credit, appreciating possibilities of development, or

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Public School Mechanics.
Perhaps it is the inability of parents to afford university training for their sons, or the diminution of opportunities for careers in government service at home and abroad; however it may be, the fact is that one finds nowadays a surprising number of obvious public school boys fitting themselves to earn a livelihood in industry, and especially in engineering. Having made up their minds to follow the calling, they no longer count on the good offices of friends or the influence of relatives to procure them a comfortable position in works after they have been through the university, but plunge straightway into the stream as apprentices.

The other day I was sold a can of petrol at a country garage by a young man whose accent and punctilious courtesy excited my curiosity. We chatted about motors, and he enthusiastically showed me an incomplete motor cycle which he himself had designed and was building as part of his training, and on which he hoped to race at Brooklands some day. The garage was owned by a big firm of engineers in a neighboring city, and they made a point of giving their apprentices a spell of casual road-side work during the year to teach them this little-understood branch of the trade. Of course, in acquaintance was a trade unionist as one wonders what influence in 10 years to come the influx of this new blood into the ranks of organized labor may have.

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