

The Zeppelin "Viktoria Luise"

(By H. I. Allan in Toronto Globe.)

The small German university town of Marburg is at any time a place of interest for the traveller. Its picturesque situation on the western slope of the valley of the Lahn immediately charms the stranger. Towering high above the town, and commanding a view of the valley north and south, sits the ancient castle where Luther and other reformers held their debates with representatives of Henry VIII. Below, in the town, and beautifully situated in grounds to which one descends by several steps from the street, is the interesting and perfectly preserved Church of Saint Elizabeth, which was built in 1235-33 by Langrave Conrad of Hesse, Grand Master of the Knights of the Teutonic Order, to contain the shrine of his sister-in-law, St. Elizabeth, and to serve as the church of the order. For more than two hundred years pilgrims came from far and near to do honor at this shrine and to see the relics of the beloved saint, which the priests displayed from the gallery to the crowds in the court below. By the order of Philip, the Protestant Landgrave of Hesse, the pilgrimages were stopped in 1539. It was this same Philip, the Generous, who, possibly to atone for the bigamy that scandalized the early reform movement, founded the University of Marburg, which has become one of the most important in Germany, having an annual attendance of over two thousand three hundred students.

Naturally, I was glad to be able to spend a week-end in this old city. My visit, however, was made more interesting than I had anticipated, for on looking out of my hotel-room window early Sunday morning I was surprised to see great throngs of people in the street. Dressing quickly, I went downstairs, where almost before me I was going to see the Zeppelin. The new "Viktoria Luise" was to come from Frankfurt at 9 o'clock, circle about the castle, descend to a landing-place in the valley and then return. That was the explanation of the large crowds in the street.

After my coffee and rolls I went outside, and as there was still an hour before 9 o'clock, I walked through the crowds two blocks to the station. From here the people were actually streaming out. Special trains were arriving from all the surrounding district, bringing mostly peasant people attired in their holiday splendor—women with their bulging skirts, close-fitting waists and small expensive bonnets, covering merely the knob of their tightly-dressed hair. Most interesting were the costumes of the thrifty Schwabian peasants from forty miles away. The men wore breeches, stockings, high-heeled, buckled shoes, long navy blue frock coats to the knees, and small, hard felt hats. The women's garb consisted of a dark-colored waist, skirt reaching to the knees, white stockings and high-heeled shoes. In marked contrast the dresses of the smaller children came to the ground.

MANY VISITORS.

One can quite believe that the local paper was right when it said the next morning that Marburg never had "so many visitors except, possibly, at the never-to-be-forgotten opening of its 'one-line' street car system." Urging my way through the crowds, I climbed up steep, narrow streets of the older town to the castle hill. All its points of vantage were already taken, for it was almost 9 o'clock. Everyone was looking southward down the valley.

There was a momentary hush during which the drone of the motors could be heard.

Soon those in good positions announced that the dirigible was visible with the aid of glasses. The rest of us strained our eyes and shifted our positions, until finally we, too, could see a moving speck, and when we could not see, we contented ourselves with listening to the whirr of the engines. In five minutes she became quite distinct, and in another five she was flying along the valley high over the southern extremity of the town.

Steering sharply to the left and lowering her nose, she headed for the castle, and in a moment was passing gracefully over our heads so close that one could distinctly see the handkerchiefs of the passengers waved in greeting. From the two engine compartments some material like ash dust was being thrown, which, as it dropped, gradually scattered until it became invisible. This we learned was sand which is carried for ballast. As the vessel descends from a higher to a lower altitude, its tremendous surface collects moisture sufficient to considerably increase its weight and thus hasten its descent. Consequently, to maintain equilibrium and regulate the descent, ballast is carried in the form of bags of sand of half a hundredweight each. As the vessel descends sufficient of these bags are burst and thrown overboard to counteract the increased weight of collected moisture. This sand is so fine that, scattering wide as it drops, it is not at all observable on the objects where it finally settles.

THE LANDING.

For some little time the Viktoria Luise continued to lighten her ballast, circled once above the castle hill, and then descended in the direc-

tion of her landing-stage in the valley at the north of the town. Hurrying down through the old narrow streets and along the more modern thoroughfares, I elbowed my way amid the throng, until I eventually reached the landing place.

I was rather desirous of seeing the vessel land, for I knew the difficulty, and even danger experienced in anchoring such craft, especially during a gale. Sometimes they will pass along the ground at the rate of from ten to twenty miles an hour, the grapple trailing on the surface, catching some object with a jerk, then tearing away from it, uprooting a small tree, plowing a furrow in the level earth, until after miles of tearing and jerking it finally makes itself fast in the bank of a stream, and brings the vessel to a dead stop to the discomfort of the passengers. This day, however, only a light breeze was blowing and the vessel had evidently descended with ease, for when I reached the large, open field which served as a landing-stage, she was resting gently on the ground, surrounded by a mass of eager observers. So here I was, ranging upon this huge five hundred-foot craft, the latest of Count Zeppelin's accomplishments. It was thirty years since that popular patriotic engineer travelled three and a half miles in his first dirigible, attaining a maximum speed of eighteen miles an hour. His balloon on that occasion consisted of sixteen gas bags, built in an aluminum frame. His second vessel, which was constructed with much more powerful engines, was wrecked in a gale on its initial trip, in nineteen hundred and five. Next year his third, carrying about nine passengers, sailed around Lake Constance, attaining a speed of thirty-six miles an hour. Subsequent vessels were built which made still more successful flights. In 1908 one flew two hundred and fifty miles in eleven hours, but the greatest attainment as yet had been those of the Viktoria Luise, and her sister airship, the Schwaben, which was burned at Dusseldorf, in June, 1912.

On walking around the Viktoria Luise as she rested on the ground in the Valley of Lahn, one was able to observe some of the distinctive features of the Zeppelin dirigible. On the lower part of the side of the balloon two fan-shaped projections, which have their counterparts on the opposite side, are noticeable. To these are attached the propellers, which are driven from the two engine compartments, constructed only a few feet from the body of the vessel. Zeppelin was the first inventor thus to attach the propellers to the balloon instead of the car, which was suspended some considerable distance below. This scheme necessitated for the balloon a rigid frame, which, though made of aluminum, greatly increased the weight of the vessel and therefore involved a much larger capacity for gas.

In the case of the Viktoria Luise the gas is contained in eighteen gas bags. The rudders are seen at the very rear of the balloon, and are operated thirty feet behind this box the steading wheel, which extends along the whole lower length of the vessel, broadens out to form the passenger compartment. From through the windows, as the dirigible rested on the ground, one could see the twenty or so occupants complacently chatting over their beer and wine.

OFF SHE GOES.

I had only time to saunter leisurely around the airship, noting her general construction and taking one or two snapshots, when word was given that she was about to start. The crowds were not dispersed, but only her strangle was loosed. Keeping herself parallel with the ground and without moving her propellers she ascended perpendicularly about one hundred feet, remained stationary a moment and then started her engines. Gracefully she moved forward, gradually increasing her speed and rising higher into the air. Slowly circling about she sailed back high above the landing ground, on over the castle and town and in a few minutes was again a small speck in the valley away to the south.

It is not to be wondered at that a sense of national pride, almost akin to a feeling of patriotism, arises in the heart of the German citizen as he beholds such successful attempts of his nation's scientists in aerial navigation. Scarcely a section of the country has been unvisited by one or other of the Zeppelins, whereas in the larger towns and cities it is now a commonplace to see them.

This summer the "Hansa," one of the three vessels belonging to the passenger company, the "Deutscher Luftschiff Aktien Gesellschaft," made a new record by flight to Vienna and back. To conclude, however, that Zeppelin had mastered the air would be premature, especially in view of the terrible fate of the two naval airships in September and October of

last year. Of the total twenty-two vessels which Zeppelin has built, fourteen have been destroyed or dismantled. The fact, moreover, that of the remaining eight one was built in 1911 and the rest since that date is manifest proof of the indurability of this type of air-craft. During the past year, in spite of accumulated experience, three vessels, which is a greater number than in any previous year, have been wrecked, and that too, as is vivid in the minds of all of us, with the most horrible suffering and loss of life. Nevertheless, in spite of the dangers and of the belief of experts of other nations, that the Zeppelin is too heavy a ship to ever become of commercial value, one cannot but admire the indomitable perseverance and courage of those who are devoting their energies and means in endeavoring to make them perfect.

A Forecast of the St. John Exhibition

Brighter, Bigger and Better than ever, is the slogan of the St. John Exhibition Association in connection with this year's fair, and St. John will no doubt sustain its reputation for holding highly successful shows. Previous shows held in St. John have entertained thousands of people from many parts, but this year, various novel features will be added of a most interesting character, and prospective visitors to the big show can rest assured that they will be delighted with the Exhibition. Mr. H. A. Porter, the General Manager, has already established a reputation as a promoter of high class amusement features, and has arranged for many high class attractions.

The entire Midway has been sold en-bloc, to Henry Meyerhoff Inc. of New York, one of the largest amusement promoters in America and this in itself assures the public of splendid novel attractions direct from the big shows in New York, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Boston, etc. The Midway with its army of "spielers" will furnish fun galore, and visitors to this department of the big show will have many novel ways of amusing themselves.

Among the attractions is the B. H. Patrick Trained Animal Circus, a combination of trained wild and domestic animals, such as bears, ponies, dogs, monkeys, boxing kangaroo and other species. This is one of the strongest attractions ever placed on the Midway of any exhibition.

The Museum of Living Wonders is another strong feature attraction, with all its living and breathing wonders from all parts of the world, including the Human Fish, Fat Girl, Living Half Lady, South African Snake Girl, Monkey Paradise and a number of other novelties that will startle the patrons of the big Exposition.

The Motordrome will perhaps be the most startling sensation of the Midway, for here the dare-devils of the motorcycle will race on the inclined side of a wall at the rate of sixty miles an hour; wherever this attraction has been presented it has startled all beholders, as it is so sensational that it almost takes the breath away.

Billy, one of the world's funniest little men and an entertainer who amuses at all times with his quaint ways and humor is another star attraction; he is the only living Billikin and is always a favorite from the beginning to the end, and will be a real novelty.

Another strong feature of the aggregation is Crazy Town where fun and laughter reign supreme; a trip through this world of fun is a sure cure for the blues and all who pay it a visit will have a hearty laugh from the entrance to the exit. There are many other first class attractions that will be heard from later, among them will be three big riding devices, a \$10,000 Parker Jumping Horse Merry-go-Round, a Big Eli Ferris Wheel, one of the largest ever built, over fifty feet high, the Circling Wave which is a fine ride for both old and young.

In addition to the amusements to be found on the Midway there will also be a splendid programme of free acts in front of the Grand Stand, the principal of which will be a half hour game of Auto Polo, a game which is creating a lot of interest and excitement south of the line due to the skill, nerve and judgment which it calls forth. It partakes of the nature of ordinary Polo except that the contestants, instead of being mounted on ponies, ride in light automobiles driven by an attendant,—that is each car has a crew of two, one of which attends to the manipulation of the car, the other to the swinging of the mallet and the driving of the polo ball. As in the case of ordinary Polo Polo collisions are numerous and unsets not infrequently, but as the players are garbed in togs not unlike the American foot ball uniform the element of personal danger is greatly minimized although not entirely absent. The game has taken a great hold wherever seen and St. John will have the honor of adding still another feature to the long list which have been introduced to these Provinces by the enterprise of the Exhibition Association.

This splendid feature will be supplemented by a Trained Animal Act and a bounding Hay Wagon Act which was a great sensation last year in the New York Hippodrome and which is declared to be far in

advance of the ordinary act of that kind. These features, together with the double fire works programme which has been arranged for will give the patrons what should prove a most satisfying programme. In short the attractions at the St. John Exhibition this year will far surpass the features of many of the larger exhibitions in Canada and all who pay the exhibition a visit will be more than repaid.

From the industrial standpoint, also, this year's show will outclass all previous efforts. All space on the main floor and in the gallery has been taken, and a "waiting list" has been opened in case of withdrawals or forfeitures.

The entries in the Poultry, Live Stock and Agricultural Departments are coming along very satisfactorily and a splendid showing in the above departments is assured. A report from the Secretary of the Women's Work Department is very gratifying to the management, and many new and interesting exhibits will be seen in this department including comprehensive exhibits regarding "Child's Welfare" movements; exhibits of this nature excited a lot of interest last Winter in New York, Montreal and other large centres and were strong educational lessons, and incentives to improvements in conditions of city life for children.

The Experimental Farm System of Canada will take a special interest in the Exhibition this year and will be on hand with a splendid exhibit of Agricultural and Horticultural products, which will be placed in the new wing. This will be supplemented by exhibits by the N. B. Department of Agriculture.

The Exhibition will also contain several moving machinery exhibits demonstrating different lines of industry. Special stress has been laid on this department this year and visitors will no doubt see very much to interest them.

The New Brunswick Kennel Club are co-operating with St. John Exhibition Association, and a bench show in the old Drill Hall will form a department of the show. It is expected that upwards of 500 dogs will be in competition.

The exhibit grounds and buildings have received considerable attention. The grounds have been enlarged by incorporating the large tract of land between Sheffield Street and where the old fence was formerly located.

William Taylor, for many years Superintendent of Buildings, has for some weeks had a large crew of men getting the grounds and buildings into shape, and even at this early date they present a very fine appearance. The contract for painting the main building has been let, and this will no doubt add greatly to the general appearance of the surroundings. In addition to the old wooden approach to the main entrance has been torn up, and replaced by a splendid concrete walk.

In conclusion it might be said that St. John Exhibition this year will undoubtedly surpass all previous efforts in merit, etc., and prospective visitors can look forward to the big show with many happy anticipations. The travelling representatives report a very keen interest in the Exhibition this year and with favorable weather conditions, there is likely to be a record attendance.

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