

Curtiss and His Aeroplane.

Our Representative in the Aviation Contests Abroad Confident of Winning the Speed Prize—Song of Prosperity Heard in New York—Other Gotham Topics of Interest.

By JAMES A. EDGERTON.
[Our New York Correspondent.]

GLENN H. CURTISS, who represents the Aero Club of America in the aviation contest near Rheims, France, recently sailed from New York, taking with him his chief mechanic and latest machine, confident in his ability to win the speed prize from the representatives of the other nations. Second to the Wright brothers, who refused to enter the Rheims event because of certain restrictions, Mr. Curtiss has proved his right to represent America. With a machine only half as heavy as that of the Wright brothers and which does not weigh as much as even the French monoplane, although itself a biplane, Mr. Curtiss has already made many notable flights, having won the Morris park prize and at Hempstead plain having remained in the air fifty-two minutes.

Because of a wonderful motor which he contrived Mr. Curtiss' aeroplane is believed to be the lightest one afloat, weighing only 300 pounds, or 450 with the operator. That gives it even less weight than the monoplane of Bleriot, while its double wings make it more certain and stable when contesting the currents of the air. While the monoplane is generally believed to be more speedy than the biplane, Mr. Curtiss demonstrated speed abilities in New York which make his friends confident that he will win the prize. In an interview given on the eve of his departure for Rheims the aviator expressed the



GLENN H. CURTISS.

same confidence when he said: "I feel pretty certain now that I will be able to win the speed contest. Whether I do or not, however, I know that I will have the satisfaction of contesting in what will undoubtedly prove in aviation one of the most fruitful contests that the science has yet known."

Mr. Curtiss recently gave utterance to an opinion that has become general among aviators to the effect that the serious problem now before aeroplane men is not one of air currents or of any other element peculiar to air navigation, but is one of motors. No motor has yet been invented that is absolutely reliable. This fact is familiar to automobilists and owners of motor-boats. With aviators the problem is still more serious in that it contains an element of danger. When an aeroplane motor stops it necessitates a sudden descent, with a probable accident at the end. It is the motor that causes most of the aeroplane mishaps, and it is the fear of the motor which prevents aviators from going to great heights. With the invention of a reliable engine the chief obstacle in the way of successful and general air navigation will be removed.

A few days after Mr. Curtiss departed for Rheims a pupil of his, Mr. Charles Foster Willard, using a Curtiss machine now the property of the New York Aeronautic society, made five successful flights, averaging a height of thirty feet and reaching a speed of forty miles an hour. The remarkable feature of Mr. Willard's performance was that he made three turns, although he had been in the air only eleven times in all. It is quite uncommon for an aviator to attempt a turn until he has become thoroughly familiar with his machine. Curtiss himself would not undertake it till he had made forty-eight flights. Yet his

pupil accomplished the feat without mishap after one-fourth of that number.

The song of returning prosperity is now being sung in this city in full chorus. Even before the ending of the tariff discussion the music was heard in spots, and since congress is out of the way the joyous sound makes more noise than the "L" railroads. To add to the jubilation, the New York state labor commissioner has just issued a report showing that the percentage of organized wage earners out of employment has fallen from 35 per cent a year ago to 21 per cent now. This percentage is still too high, but the movement is in the right direction, and with a few more months the percentage will

be down to the normal. In the building trades the number of unemployed was largest, but that has been scaled from 56 per cent a year ago to 36 per cent at the time the report was made. This tells the story, for in the last analysis the condition of the labor market is the surest index to the financial situation. Favorable reports are even more marked in the world of trade. For the first time in twelve years imports exceed exports. Under ordinary circumstances this would be regarded as an adverse condition, but at present is thought to be a good omen, as the bulk of increase in imports has been in the line of luxuries and shows that our people have a revival of confidence and are in the buying mood. The increased imports in automobile supplies has been especially marked. Thus we have favorable symptoms at both ends of the line, more laboring men employed on the one hand and men of money buying more freely on the other. Real estate is looking up, orders for goods are on the increase, and the optimist has all the best of the argument. Sound the loud timbrel, for prosperity is here.

The law's delays constitute a growing question in America's jurisprudence, a fact recognized at length in President Roosevelt's last message to congress. Nowhere is the condition worse than in New York city. Here the natural congestion of cases in the courts is augmented by dishonest lawyers and clients who deliberately seek delay to escape justice. So serious has the situation grown that the justices of the supreme court, first department, have investigated the matter and have made a tentative report recommending certain changes in procedure to relieve the condition. As the situation with which they deal is to some extent a general one throughout the country, their findings, which cover civil actions only, may be of interest elsewhere and are here summarized.

In brief, these suggestions are for marked simplification of privileges in pleadings, both as to substance and in time of making; for reform in court assignments through which justices making orders in such cases shall hear argument upon these orders, and to the passage of laws reducing the period within which such actions may be begun and requiring clear, precise and unequivocal statements of facts pleaded as constituting causes of action.

Aside from the recommendation that postponements of pleadings shall not be allowed except for the best and most clearly defined of reasons and that times of serving pleadings and notices shall be "materially shortened," perhaps the most important recommendation is that for the practical abolition of the demurrer in civil actions. In place of the demurrer, so frequently a flagrant method of obtaining delay for delay's sake, the judges would compel the litigant to answer and have the case brought to trial when his objections to the complaint should be thrashed out and judicially decided on the spot.

It is now fairly certain that the Belmont traction trust is not to control the building of the new subways. Recently President Shonts gave out a veiled threat that the trust's proposed extensions would be dropped if it were not allowed to control the building of the new system also. To this the public service board countered by proposing additions to the new lines which would make the trust's extensions unnecessary, since which time Shonts and his Ryan-Belmont employers have been singing low.

An ex-convict at Perth Amboy has raised a novel point. After serving a four and a half year term in the penitentiary he demands the return of a kit of burglar tools which was taken from him before his incarceration began. He even threatens to sue for the possession of his property. As a revolver is included in the outfit, the authorities might settle the point by returning his outfit and then rearresting him for carrying concealed weapons.

It is hard to be sent to jail for taking a bath, but that is what happened to a Boston actor found swimming in

one of the lakes of Central park. The policeman who arrested the Boston person did not give him time to dress, but marched him all the way to the station in a state of nature. Imagine a man from the shadow of Harvard parading through a crowded park without clothes! Nor was this the worst of it. A six months' sentence to Blackwell's island followed. The natural inference from the incident is that it is all right to bathe in New York provided nobody catches you at it.

It seems that the Catskill water project is bound to become an issue in the pending city campaign, the charge being that gross extravagance and grafting have resulted from its management. Aside from this aspect of the undertaking, the project is one of the most remarkable engineering feats ever undertaken by a city. At present New York gets most of its water from a chain of reservoirs in Putnam county, a distance of fifty miles away. With the growth of the city it was foreseen that these would soon be inadequate, and the Catskill project was the result. In this it is designed to carry the water nearly a hundred miles in an immense aqueduct which passes under the Hudson river and under the highest mountain bordering the river in the highlands. At present the work of tunneling under the Hudson and through this mountain, known as Bull hill or Mount Taurus, is in actual progress.

AMERICA'S GRACE DARLING.

Ida Lewis, Keeper of Lime Rock Lighthouse, and Her Wonderful Record.

When the name of Ida Lewis appears in print it is usually in connection with some new act of heroism that she has performed. This was the case recently when a rowboat containing five girls upset and Miss Lewis single handed went to their rescue and saved them from drowning with a bravery and vigor astonishing in one of her age.

This remarkable woman, called the "Grace Darling of America," has been keeper of Lime Rock lighthouse, off Newport Harbor, R. I., for many years.



IDA LEWIS.

As a girl she assisted her father in this work, succeeded him after his death in 1879 and is still caring for the light which so many mariners depend on for safely making the harbor. She was only seventeen when her first rescue was made, a very daring one, of the crew of a boat that upset near the lighthouse in a storm. Since then she has risked her life time and again, her last rescue placing twenty-three lives to her credit.

In recognition of the work of Miss Lewis congress and American and foreign societies have decorated her with medals, and her snug little home in the lighthouse is filled with testimonials of her heroism. In 1907 she was awarded a pension of \$30 a month for life by the Carnegie hero fund. In 1879 General Grant presented Miss Lewis with a boat named the Rescue. Every seafaring man on the New England coast knows Ida Lewis, and her home on the rocks has been visited by hundreds of prominent men and women.

Miss Lewis receives \$750 a year from the government as lighthouse keeper.

MRS. H. CLAY PIERCE.

Bride of Oil Magnate a Noted Beauty and Society Queen.

The name of H. Clay Pierce, the multimillionaire oil magnate of New York and St. Louis, will hereafter appear quite frequently in a part of the newspaper where it has heretofore not often been seen. This will be in the society columns, for in marrying Mrs. Virginia Burrows in London recently he wed a woman who is famous for her social entertainments. Mrs. Pierce has gained a distinguished social position abroad in the most exclusive of English and continental society and last spring entertained the king and queen of England.

The bride of Mr. Pierce is forty-three years of age and has been noted

for her beauty since childhood. She is an accomplished linguist and musician, and it was while studying music in



MRS. H. CLAY PIERCE.

New York that she met her first husband, Mr. Burrows, who died six years ago. After his death she retained their residence in the east, but made frequent visits to St. Louis. Here she met Mr. Pierce, and here in 1907 the oil magnate's romance began. At that time the beautiful widow promised that when her daughter had had the advantages of two years on the continent she would return to America as his bride. The busy man of affairs plunged into a ceaseless round of business matters to await the passing of the two years. The time was up recently, and today the happy couple are touring France in the bridegroom's seventy horsepower auto.

Mrs. Pierce is a daughter of Major William Russell Prickett, a retired banker and millionaire of Edwardsville, Ill. She will prove a charming hostess at Mr. Pierce's numerous residence places. He has a mansion in New York, another in St. Louis, a large country house and game preserve in Newfoundland, a country place at Prude's Crossing, Mass., hunting lodges in Wisconsin and Texas and a seagoing yacht.

The Carnegie And Her Big Task

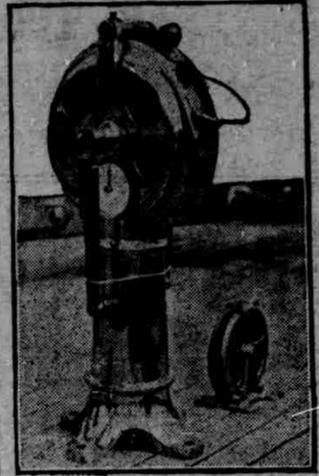
THERE called out of New York harbor recently a vessel unique in the history of navigation and one that has aroused intense interest among the scientists of the world since her launching a few months ago. This ship is the Carnegie, the new nonmagnetic yacht that is to complete the work of making a magnetic survey of the earth. A gigantic task is that which this vessel, named in honor of the donor of the Carnegie institution, has to solve.

The department of terrestrial magnetism, whose business is to study the magnetism of the earth, proposed to make a complete resurvey of the oceans of the world in order to obtain data so as to correct the variations of the compass as laid down in the present charts. These present surveys are erroneous because iron and other substances on board the vessels used to determine the data for those charts detracted from the accuracy of those tests. Charts will be prepared on the voyage of the Carnegie showing how the compass points in all parts of the world and by what amount it changes from year to year. These charts will be invaluable assistance to the mariner, surveyor and explorer.

In order to obtain perfectly correct data the department of terrestrial magnetism determined that it would be necessary to build an absolutely nonmagnetic vessel. Henry J. Galloway, the naval architect of New York, was authorized to design a vessel to meet the necessary requirements. For two years after the architect had completed his plans the Carnegie institution endeavored to find some one to undertake the building of the vessel. The task, however, was considered so difficult and the specifications appeared so rigid that shipbuilders hesitated and declined to undertake the construction of the vessel. Finally, on Dec. 9 last, after a most careful consideration of all features involved in the contract, a Brooklyn firm agreed to do the work. The result is the Carnegie.

The boat was built at a cost of \$125,000. The length over all is 155 feet, the water line length 123 feet, the beam 33 feet and the draft 12 feet. She has a displacement of about 568 tons. The material used is oak keel, stem and sternpost, oak frames and waterways, pitch blue planking, pitch

pine ceiling, Oregon pine decking, teak-wood rail and all deck joiner work. Every particle of metal in the con-



NEW SOUNDING DEVICE ON THE CARNEGIE.

struction is nonmagnetic, each piece having been subject to a most rigid test by William Peters, the Carnegie institution magnetic expert. Mr. Peters was present all the time during the vessel's construction, and he will be the commander and chief of the scientific staff during the years of hard work ahead of the vessel. There are also on the ship a sailing master and a crew consisting of first and second officers, an engineer, six seamen and two cooks.

Every nail, every spoke and every bolt used in the construction of the boat is either of bronze or of copper. She is fitted with commodious quarters for the scientific staff, including observation towers of bronze and glass. She is a completely rigged brigantine, with a spread of about 13,000 square feet of sail. The mast, bowsprit and jibboom, all the yards and other spars are of Oregon pine. The boat is unique in that every particle of metal fitting in connection with the rigging and spars is of bronze, the first set of its kind ever made in the world. There are also four bronze anchors.

The Carnegie is fitted with auxiliary power for use in maneuvering the vessel when making special surveys. She has also been fitted with internal combustion, four cylinders and four-cycle Craig engines. The fuel is producer gas, the Carnegie being the first seagoing vessel ever built to be so propelled. This feature is hoped and expected to be perfectly successful, and it portends a revolution in marine propulsion.

As she is built for ocean surveys, the Carnegie is constructed in a particularly substantial manner and combines with the strength of a merchant vessel all the beauty of finish and workmanship of a yacht. To complete the work mapped out for her her voyages will consume about fifteen years. She is now bound for Hudson bay.

BURDETTE'S EARLY WORK.

How the Preacher-Humorist Began Writing Funny Paragraphs.

The retirement recently of Robert J. Burdette as pastor of Temple Baptist church, Los Angeles, owing to illness recalls the early work of the famous preacher-humorist. Mr. Burdette is a native of Pennsylvania, but it was in Peoria, Ill., that he first began newspaper work. After several years' employment on the local newspapers he removed to Iowa and became one of the editors of the Burlington Hawkeye. He was the factor that built up the circulation of the paper, the wit and genius of his pen being widely copied throughout the United States.

The story of Burdette's touching devotion to his first wife, now dead, is familiar to many, but the following recital of his beginnings as a humorist may be new to some: He was at that time local editor of the Peoria Transcript. He had to fill two columns a day. It was hard work. Dog fights were scarce, and human beings were disgustingly sober and peaceable. His page was dull.

At home was his wife, ill of the disease of which she finally died, and to cheer her up he stayed with her an

hour or two at noon and wrote imaginary local events of an exciting nature and read them to her. They did not have a debilitating effect on her, but actually made her laugh, and one day she said: "Robbie, this ridiculous stuff of yours is bad enough to print. Having seen that I survive it, why don't you try it on your readers?"

He cautiously did so, dealing it out in small doses, and it was copied everywhere.

An Ounce Weight.

An ounce weight is supposed to represent the weight of 840 dry grains of wheat.