SIDELIGHTS ON THE WORLD'S NEWS

Enter the Aeroine—Heroine of the Air

1. READY FOR A BALLOON FLIGHT. 2. GRAHAME WHITE AND LADY ABDY. 3. MRS. LEO STEVENS, BALLOON MAKER. 4. CAP FOR AVIATION. 5. MISS E. LILLIAN TODD IN HER SHOP. 6. COUNTESS FITZWILLIAM IN MONOPLANE. 7. MME. PAULHAN STARTING FLIGHT. 8. ALL DRESSED FOR A FLIGHT. 9. MLLE. ABOUKANA IN MONOPLANE.

By CHARLES N. LURIE.

SAID I to my friend the woman hater:

"Well, why shouldn't women fly if they wish to do so?"

Said my friend the woman hater: "No reason in the world. They 'go up in the air' often enough."

So they are going up in the air, as the pictures show, but not in the sense in which the misogynist used the words. Aviation for women has reached the point where the Parisian costumers are designing special costumes for the sport or pastime or vocation or avocation. That means that it is fast becoming an "institution." One of the lady aviators is shown in the picture garbed for a flight.

What Shall We Call the Lady Flier?

"Lady aviators" brings up another point. What shall we call the women who are ascending in aeroplanes and balloons? Shall we refer to them as aviatrices (plural of aviatrix, of which the masculine is aviator), or shall we adopt the suggestion of an English magazine and refer to the fair fliers as "aeroines?" The latter suggestion has merit, but the word has one fatal defect—it is difficult of pronunciation. From some mouths it will emerge with so close a resemblance to "heroines" as to be mistaken for that word. Perhaps it is well to suggest a relationship between "heroine" and "aeroine," since the latter is undoubtedly worthy of enrollment in the lists of the former. At this stage of the flying game any woman who accomplishes a flight is surely a heroine.

Up to the date of writing there had not been many women aviators. Italy had the Duchess of Aosta, cousin by marriage of King Victor Emmanuel.

France, in some respects the leader in aviation and in many respects the world's mentor in "feminism," had only three prominent lady fliers—Baroness de la Roche, incapacitated for an indefinite length of time by very serious injuries due to a fall; Mme. Franck, also injured just after she had announced her intention of making a flight across the English channel, and Mme. Paulhan, wife of the famous Louis. There have been a few others, but their exploits have attracted little attention. England has two or three women fliers in heavier than air machines. Germany has produced no women fliers of note—none, that is, in aeroplanes. The Zeppelin, Parseval and Gross dirigible balloons have had female passengers in some of their famous flights. In America we have had Miss Katherine Wright, Mrs. Hart O. Berg, Mrs. Cortland Field Bishop, Mrs. Clifford B. Harmon, Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., and a few others as passengers with the "man birds" when they made flights above the earth. Mrs. Bishop was the first woman to fly in America. But no American woman so far as known has been daring enough to go aloft as an aviator. That will come in time, no doubt, and in the meanwhile we may rest content with the fact that we have the only genuine, bona fide woman airship inventor on earth. She is worth a separate paragraph.

Only Woman Airship Inventor.

The name of the lady is Miss E. Lillian Todd, and her postoffice address is New York. She is called "probably the first woman in the world to design and build an aeroplane" all by herself. The Todd machine was a collapsible or folding aeroplane, and the fact of its existence was first made public two years ago. Since that time Miss Todd has kept busy designing and making improvements to her aeroplane. She is a member of the Aero Club of America and one of the founders of the Junior Aero club, which aims at teaching the young American idea how to fly. Miss Todd has the added distinction of being the builder of her flying machine as well as its inventor. Recently she had the good fortune to attract the notice of Mrs. Russell Sage, and it was announced that there was a fair chance of some of old Mr. Sage's carefully hoarded money being burnt up in gasoline and oil to run the Todd machine.

Commenting on the possibility of the woman flier becoming a common sight, a leading English periodical said recently:

"It may almost be said that the flying man has become a commonplace of the sky of the continent, even if he is still a rare bird in this country. The flying woman is a novelty abroad and altogether a novelty here and as such and because of her own attractions is arousing much curiosity. It has been said time and again that women are more apt to be daring than men, inasmuch as they do not always realize the extent of the risks they take. Such an argument, however, cannot possibly be advanced in connection with some famous aviatrices. (Notice the coolness with which the Englishman assumes that that is the proper word to use!) Considerable experience in the art they are favoring and considerable knowledge of the feats of flying men—and of the fate of some of them—have taught them that followers of the newest of new sports take lives in their hands every time they leave the surface of the earth in company with man-made wings. Despite this, they presevere, which says much for their skill and their courage. It should perhaps be said that but one of them, the Baroness de la Roche, is in the habit of making flights by herself. The others have made their ascents in company with men, who have acted as pilots of the machine. This nevertheless does not lessen the interest in them, for, whether they have been at the wheel or not, the mere fact that they have flown is enough to place them among the 'aeroines' of aviation."

Must Be a Heroine as Well as Aeroine.

In one respect, above all others, the "aeroine" must be a heroine when she goes aviating. Even to a greater extent than the woman automobilist she must renounce all her pretensions to comeliness. Aviation is not conducive to the preservation of one's good looks, and the woman aviator, dressed for the occasion, is as much a "sight" as her machine or her flight in the air. Her garments get little chance in the aeroplane, set as she is in the midst of spraying oil and the fumes of gasoline. The most favored material for women aviators' garments is leather, cut in as few pieces as possible and with very few seams. In the air there is no dust—that bete noire of woman automobilists—but there is more than a sufficiency of oil and gasoline fumes to make up for it. "Grimy" is the word that must be applied to the woman flier descending from the clouds.

But there is this supreme consolation—it is worth it, according to the testimony of all of the women who have tried the novel experience.

"I never had a more delightful experience," said Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., recently upon her return from an aerial journey with Clifford B. Harmon, "and I would never ride any other way if I could help it. It's a most restful feeling—no exertion, no care. I never thought of falling."

It is the almost unanimous opinion of the leading men aviators of the world that, for the present at least, women should not think of flying in machines by themselves. Less objection is raised, of course, against having women as passengers in the aeroplanes, although some demur is made even against this slight concession to the demand of the fair sex for novelty and new sensations. According to the "man birds," women are temperamentally unfitted to cope with the problems which confront the aviator. One of the most outspoken of the objectors is Charles K. Hamilton, the famous hero of the New York to Philadelphia and return flight. Among the others who have expressed themselves as opposed to the flying of women are Captain Thomas S. Baldwin, probably the oldest and most experienced of American aeronauts, who says:

"A woman may be able to run a bicycle or a motorboat or an automobile. Compared with an aeroplane either is as easy to manage as a baby carriage. It takes out and out nerve to run an aeroplane. The operator must cast all fear aside and have no thought for the consequences. Had a man been in the machine instead of its occupant being Mme. de la Roche I don't believe there would have been any accident. But she lost her head and then lost control of the machine also."

Dangers to Fliers and Spectators.

"It will be recalled that the baroness was very severely injured at the recent aviation meet at Rheims, her arms and legs being fractured and her body sustaining other severe injuries. She was flying along smoothly when two other aeroplanes passed over her. The rush of air confused her so that she cut off her ignition and lost control of her machine. Instead of gliding safely to the earth in normal fashion her biplane turned over and dropped to the ground with its occupant.

The danger to the spectator from the falling of an aeroplane also enters the minds of the experts. Without any intention of jesting with so serious a subject it may be asserted that it will hurt just as much to have a woman aviator drop on one, almost literally from the clouds, as it will to have a man do so.

SENATOR DICK, SOLDIER AND STATESMAN

WHEN the government of the United States wants information on military matters to whom does it turn? To the same man to whom the state of Ohio looks for advice and guidance in regard to its citizen soldiers. And that man is Major General Charles William Frederick Dick. Don't recognize the name? Well, you are not to be blamed. When the name of the senior senator from Ohio is printed in its usual form the two middle sections are cut out and the name proceeds on the main line as Senator Charles Dick of Ohio. If Dick were an Englishman he would be known as Major General the Honorable Charles William Frederick Dick. But he is not a Britisher, only a plain—very plain, in fact—Ohioan, who sheds luster on the title of United States senator by adding to it that of major general in the Ohio national guard.

Come to think of it, major generals are scarce in the senate these days. Dick is the only one at present now in active service, and his title is only a militia one, after all. Pressing him hard for senatorial military honors is Du Pont of Delaware, whose record in the civil war requires nearly a page of the Congressional Directory for its proper setting forth. But Du Pont never got as high as the wearing of a major general's stars, so Dick would outrank him if it ever became necessary for the president to call out the senate in defense of the country. There are a few of the older senators who saw service in the civil war on one side or the other; but, so far as patient research can disclose, Senator Dick is the only one of the ninety-two who saw service in the war with Spain. But he was only a lieutenant colonel then, not a major general.

For one man to be at the same time a lawmaker and an armed upholder of the law is not a frequent occurrence. That is what makes Senator Dick's recent action in donning a uniform and leading his troops in person during the Columbus street car troubles so interesting an event. He is no mere "tin soldier" either. He knows all about the handling of men from long experience.

MAJOR GENERAL DICK AND STAFF.

As Senator Dick's colleague in the upper national house, Senator Burton, knows everything there is to be known or guessed about rivers and harbors, so Senator Dick has a most comprehensive knowledge of things military. Full evidence of his grasp of the subject was presented a few years ago in the Dick militia or national guard bill, now known as the Dick law. It formulated the present system under which the relations of the federal government with the national guard of the various states are governed. It substituted for the slipshod, loose system that formerly prevailed a method of co-ordination aimed at making the national guard a really efficient, dependable part of the national defense. It brought the militia organizations into close relations with the war department and provided for standard equipment, drilling of the citizen soldiers by methods approved by the army authorities and raised the standard of the state soldiers almost immeasurably. Men old enough to recall the heartbreaking task of fitting the civil war volunteers for active service and the army men who remember the almost equally discouraging conditions in 1898 give their unqualified approval and unstinted praise to the provisions of the Dick law, introduced and pushed with vigor to a successful conclusion by the legislator who served against Spain as lieutenant colonel of the Eighth Ohio volunteers. Subsequently Lieutenant Colonel Dick became colonel of the regiment.

Major General-Senator Dick possesses one indispensable characteristic of the good soldier and the successful politician—that is, he never knows when he is licked. Not that he has been licked so many times since he took up the career of a leader of Ohio's Republican destinies; but, of course, like most of the prominent men of the exceedingly lively political commonwealth, he has known what it means to have a fickle following turn one down. But he has always "come back," and today there is no keener, shrewder, harder political fighter within the boundaries of the state. In one detail alone Dick has made a reputation second to none—that is, as a political prognosticator. He has been known to take a given township in a given county in any part of Ohio and predict with amazing, almost uncanny, certainty how it would go in a primary or general election.

Dick's power of political prediction, joined to his industry and persuasiveness, was the quality in all probability that first brought him to the notice of the great ones in Ohio politics. The two men with whom he was most closely connected before his own star blazed forth on the state skies were President McKinley and Senator Hanna. The former placed Mr. Dick—he was young Mr. Dick then, only thirty-four years old—in charge of the Ohio campaign in 1892 after he had demonstrated his ability in Akron, his home city. Later Senator Hanna made Dick his lieutenant, and it is the senatorial toga of the "kingmaker" which Dick is wearing now.

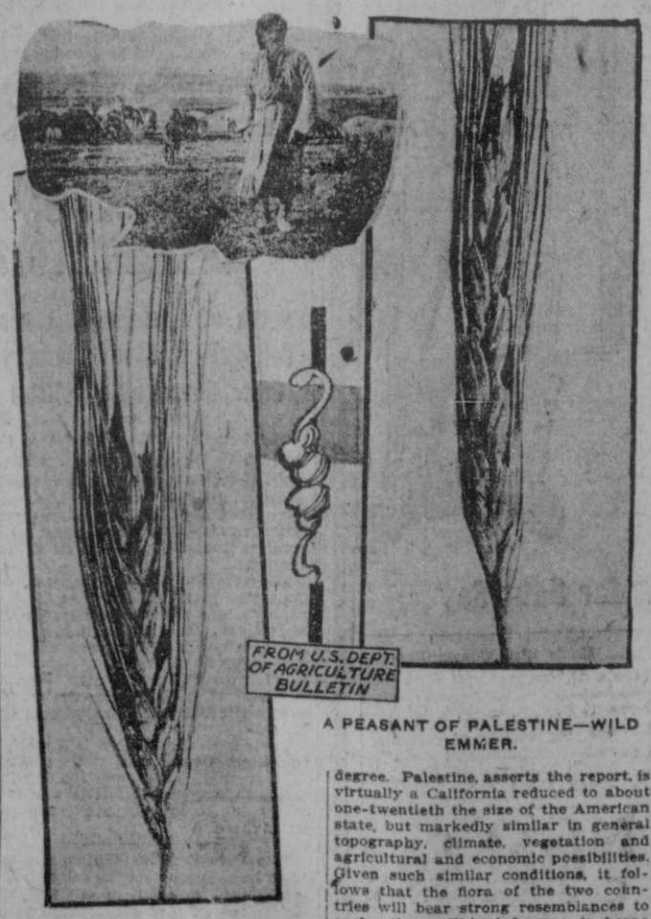
Senator Dick was born in Akron, Nov. 3, 1858. His father was a German miller. After receiving a public school education and working at the banking and grain commission businesses Mr. Dick turned his attention to the law and was admitted to the bar in 1893. Before that time he had engaged in politics, receiving an election as auditor of Summit county in 1886 and continuing in that office until 1893. Subsequently he became secretary of the Republican national committee, delegate to Republican national conventions, member of the house of representatives and senator. His continuous connection with the national guard dates back to 1876.

WALTER P. HUDSON.

TURNING TO THE HOLY LAND FOR FOOD

FOR many decades we Americans have drawn spiritual sustenance from the tales and traditions, the legends and the precepts that sprang from the soil of the Holy Land. Now it appears that we are to derive from the same soil the means of bodily nourishment. In pursuit of the policy of ransacking the earth for varieties of plants and animals that may be adapted to profitable reproduction in the United States the department of agriculture recently turned its searchlight on Palestine. The result of its researches was made known recently in a pamphlet entitled "Agricultural and Botanical Explorations In Palestine," from which most of the facts detailed herein are taken.

In presenting to the public the results of its explorations the department draws some very interesting analogies between Palestine and California. It is stated that the topography of the American state and the ancient historic land is similar to a very high degree. Palestine, asserts the report, is virtually a California reduced to about one-twentieth the size of the American state, but markedly similar in general topography, climate, vegetation and agricultural and economic possibilities. Given such similar conditions, it follows that the flora of the two countries will bear strong resemblances to each other. This inference is borne out by the researches and the conclusions of Aaron Aaronsohn, the department's investigator, who is director of the Jewish agricultural experiment station at Haifa, Palestine. "This analogy of the flora of Palestine with that of California justifies the expectations of the best results from their introduction into the last named state," says Mr. Aaronsohn.



A PEASANT OF PALESTINE—WILD EMMER.

Especially interesting in this connection is Mr. Aaronsohn's account of his delvings into the history and cultivation of the wild emmer, believed by scientists to be the ancestor of modern wheat, the greatest of the world's cereals, and its important relatives, such as rye, barley, etc. From time dating back before the dawn of history emmer has grown on the rocky slopes of the Palestinian mountains and hills, affording the natives a large percentage of their foodstuffs. There seems to be no doubt, says Mr. Aaronsohn, that by the selection and crossing of this wild cereal, which prefers poor, rocky, shallow, dry soil and thrives without any cultivation, we shall be able to produce new races which will be very persistent and very hardy. In this way we can extend the cultivation of wheat to regions where it is at present impossible on account of the low quality of the soil and the severity of the climate. "The world's total production of wheat will be very materially augmented," says the report.

Mr. Aaronsohn has not confined his investigations in Palestine to the wild emmer. His researches have extended into every variety of plant life in the Holy Land, with a view to its adaptation to American soil and climate. Among other good things he found there is the chick pea, which he calls "one of the most valuable legumes grown in Palestine." In good years this yields twelve bushels to the acre and sells for as much as wheat, and often more. It is there, says the report, a remunerative crop and excellently adapted for use as a rotation crop before wheat. It is asserted that the chick pea will do well in the dry farming regions of the United States.

In a division of the report entitled "Economic Plants Worthy of Introduction Into the United States" many varieties of fruit are enumerated. There are, it is said, many wild types which are excellent for stock and may yield some valuable results by hybridization and selection, but also some cultivated fruit varieties which would be worth trying in the United States. Among them are the almond, the apricot, the quince, the pomegranate, the olive and the fig.

WILLIAM HENDERSON.