

mile and landed in an open meadow, where it was recovered. The machine is said to have sustained no injury owing to its journey in the air and subsequent descent to earth.

The 50,000 francs Aëronautical Prize.—Mr. Henry Deutsch and Ernest Archdeacon have offered a prize of 50,000 francs (£2,000) to the owner of the first aërial appliance, without balloon, that accomplishes the distance of a kilometre, without touching earth, in presence of the committee appointed by the Aëro Club of France.

The First Balloon Ascents in England.—The *Queen* in a recent issue gave an interesting account of the first balloon ascent in England. As that periodical points out, the honour of the first ascent has often been ascribed to Lunardi, but James Tytler, one of the editors of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," described as an eccentric genius, no doubt forestalled Lunardi by making a not very successful ascent from Edinburgh in August, 1784. It appears that his failure brought ridicule upon him, and he languished in obscurity, while Lunardi, who made the second ascent in this country, became a hero. Lunardi held a post in the household of the Neapolitan Ambassador, and he set all London on tiptoe with expectation and excitement when he advertised that he had undertaken the construction of a globe, 32 feet in diameter, with which he intended to ascend as soon as completed to make the most interesting experiments, especially that of going several miles before the wind, and keeping the globe constantly not higher than a gunshot. A rival, M. de Moret, elected to make an ascent near the spot which Lunardi had chosen, so the latter was forced to change his plans, but ultimately obtained permission to use the Artillery Ground at Moorfields, and on the day in question an enormous crowd gathered at the advertised spot. Lunardi, who was advised to use gas instead of heated air, as Tytler had done, rose successfully and touched earth first at North Mimms, and finally at Standon, near Ware, where he was received at first in hostile fashion by the astonished rustics. Lunardi became the popular hero of the day. He was entertained by the Mayor and Corporation of the City of London. Articles of attire were named after him, including a popular bow tie.

Obituary.

THE REV. J. M. BACON.

Just when on the point of making an announcement in the current number of this journal that at the next general meeting of the Aëronautical Society of Great Britain the Rev. J. M. Bacon would give to his fellow members an account of his

acoustical experiments in balloons, came the sad news of his death on Christmas night. Only a few days before his lamented death Mr. Bacon gave a public lecture in London, and it is supposed that his fatal illness was due to a cold caught on leaving the lecture room. Mr. Bacon was widely known by his many articles on the subject of ballooning which he contributed to the *Times*, *Morning Post*, *Nineteenth Century*, and other newspapers, and periodicals, also by his very popularly written books "By Land and Sky," and "The Dominion of the Air;" but perhaps even more so by his frequent balloon ascents, during which he studied various conditions of the air and displayed an undaunted courage. His skill as a balloon photographer was, perhaps, unsurpassed, and many of his photographs have been exhibited at the meetings of the Aëronautical Society of Great Britain; and at the soirée of the Royal Society in 1903, he had the honour of showing an exceptionally choice collection to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. But there was another side to Mr. Bacon's scientific work, one, perhaps, not so widely exposed to public view—his astronomical qualifications. He took part in eclipse expeditions of the British Astronomical Association to Vadso, Lapland, in 1896; to Buxar, India, in 1898, being in charge of the party; and to Wadesboro, North Carolina, in 1900, when he was again in charge.

Mr. Bacon possessed those admirable personal qualities—geniality and kindness—which gained him friends amongst all who knew him.

MR. THOMAS MOY.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Thomas Moy, one of the early adherents of the Aëronautical Society of Great Britain, who breathed his last on December 2nd, at the advanced age of 85.

Mr. Thomas Moy was throughout his life a keen student of aëronautics, especially of what related to the attempts to navigate the air by a body heavier than air.

In the early reports of the Society his name appears frequently in the discussions.