

**THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL BALLOON RACE.**  
BY THE PARIS CORRESPONDENT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.



ALLOONING as a sport received a great impetus as a result of the recent international race for the cup offered by Mr. James Gordon Bennett. Sixteen great balloons representing seven different nations, each one having been selected, both as to the material and the champions, with the greatest care by the aeronautic clubs in the respective countries, took part in the race. Founded on about the same lines as the Automobile Cup Race, the present contest was to be an annual one. Each aeronautic club selects its champions, and has the right to enter three balloons or any other form of aerial flier. The International Aeronautic Federation organizes the events each year and receives the entries, and the race is held in the winner's country. The present event being the first one of the kind, it was decided to hold it in France, under the direction of the Aero Club.

The balloon which covers the longest distance wins the cup for its club during that year, and should the club be a winner three times in succession, it holds the cup as its property. Mr. James Gordon Bennett offered the handsome work of art which is illustrated here, having a value of \$2,500. It has been executed in silver by the Aucoc firm of Paris, from the design of Leon Pilet and Robinet, and represents an airship led by a winged genius bearing a torch. While the Cup can become the property only of an aeronautic club, the winning pilots will receive a number of prizes in person, and the first prize for the cup-winner is \$2,900, representing the fixed amount of \$2,500 and one-half the engagements. The second and third prizes are \$270 and \$135 respectively. Many other recompenses in the form of medals are awarded, including the gold medal of the Aero Club of Southwest

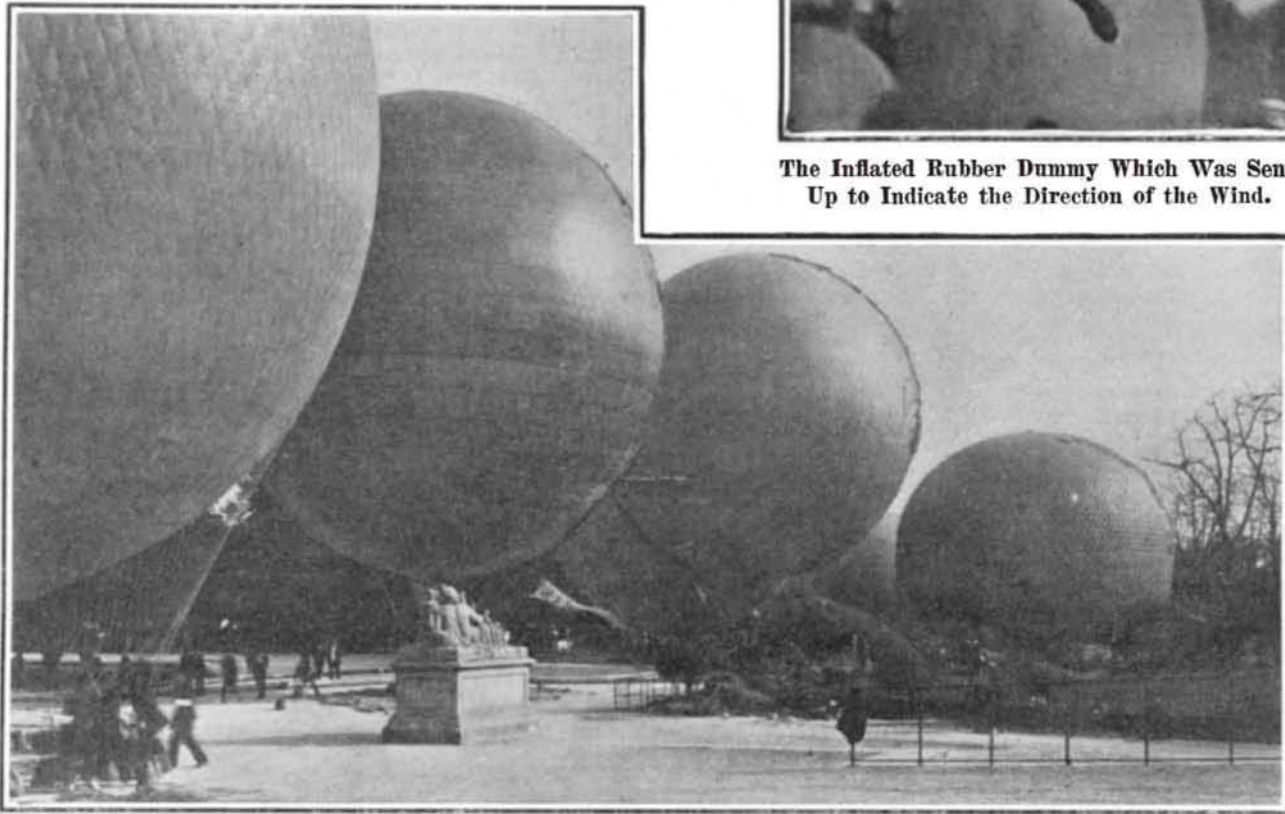
France, the Sports medal, the Auto medal, meteorologic prizes, medal of the Aero Club of France, and others. Joined with the present event is the Gaulois cup for distance, also the Santos Dumont prize of \$300 for the first aerial voyage of 48 hours. The record for distance to be beaten is 1,195 miles, made by Count de la Vaulx in 1900, from Paris to Korostychev, Russia.

Seven different nations were represented in the contest this year: Germany by the Deutscher Luftschiffer Verband, America by the Aero Club of America, Belgium by the Aero Club de Belgique, Spain by the Real Aero-Club de Espana, Great Britain by the Aero Club of the United Kingdom, Italy by the Societa Aeronautica Italiana, and France by the Aero

Club of France. The champions, whose names are given below, were chosen from among the most prominent aeronauts in each country, most of them having a long experience in ballooning. With such strong teams as these, the contest promised to be an exciting one. America had entered Santos Dumont and Lieut. Frank P. Lahm, and the latter was successful in carrying off the cup. Lieut. Lahm was graduated from West Point as a cavalry lieutenant, and after a two years' campaign in the Philippines, re-entered the Academy as instructor. Devoting his attention to aeronautics, he soon became prominent in such events and made many fine ascensions. Having come to France in order to take a military course at the Saumur Academy, he continued ballooning in France with great success. With him in the car was Major Hersey, well known as an officer of the Weather Bureau, who is also second in the Wellman Polar Expedition. The start took place at four o'clock precisely. First to lead off was the "Elfe," mounted by the aeronaut Von Willer, the Italian champion representing the Societa Aeronautica Italiana. The balloon left the ground when the



C. S. Rolls the English Aeronaut. His Record Was 290 Miles.



Some of the Balloons Which Took Part in the Great Race for the Gordon Bennett Cup.

**FIRST INTERNATIONAL BALLOON RACE.—WON BY AMERICANS.**

word was given, and amid great cheering it rose slowly above the grounds of the Tuileries. A rather strong wind was blowing to the west, and the balloon took this direction at once, mounting on an inclined path. It soon rose to a considerable height, at the same time being carried out of sight in the direction of the wind. The other balloons followed, at intervals of five minutes. The start was well managed by the military and civil equipments, and each competitor was brought into place at the starting point with great precision. As soon as one balloon rose up from the ground, a second, which had been already placed near by, was carried upon the spot and was soon ready to leave. Next followed the German balloon "Düssel-

dorf," the French equipment on the "Walhalla," and the rest of the competitors as will be seen in the following list:

(1) Italy: Pilot, M. Alfred Von Willer; aid, Lieut. E. Cianetti, upon the balloon "Elfe." (2) Germany: Pilot, Capt. H. Von Abercron; aid, M. Oscar Erbslöh, on the "Düsseldorf." (3) France: Count Henry De la Vaulx and Count D'Oultremont, on the "Walhalla." (4) Spain: Lieut. E. Herrera and aid, upon the "Ay-Ay." (5) Great Britain: Hon. C. S. Rolls and Col. Capper, on the balloon "The Britannia." (6) America: Pilot, Santos Dumont, with his mechanic Chopin, the "Deux Ameriques" provided with two propellers. (7) Belgium: M. Van den Driesche and L. Capazza, on a balloon which replaced the "Ojouki." (8) Germany: M. Scherle and Dr. Schmeck, on the "Schwabben." (9) France: Count Castillon de Saint-Victor and Ernest Zens, upon the "Foehn." (10) Spain: Pilot, M. G. de Salamanca; aid, M. Montojo, on the "Norte." (11) Great Britain: "The City of London," mounted by F. Hedges Butler and P. Spencer. (12) America: Lieut. Frank P. Lahm; second, Major Hersey, mounted on the balloon "United States." (13) Germany: the "Pommern," piloted by Baron Von Hewald and Dr. Steyrer. (14) France: M. Jacques Balsan and Abel Corot, on the "Ville de Chateauroux," provided with an interior ballonnet. (15) Spain: Pilot, Capt. Kindelan y Duani; aid, De la Horga, on the "Montañer." (16) Great Britain: the "Zephyr," Prof. A. K. Huntington and Mr. Pollack.

The result of the race and the part of the continent to be covered by the balloons depended naturally upon the direction of the wind, and this was far from favorable. Although the sky was clear, and the other conditions reasonably good for this time of year, the wind drove the balloons toward the north, taking them to the Channel coast of France, and the aero-

nauts were obliged to decide whether they would risk crossing the Channel during the night, or whether they would stay on this side. Landing on the coast of Normandy, many of them were not familiar with the country, and not finding their bearings, feared to cross as they supposed they would be carried out upon the Atlantic. Seven of the balloons crossed the Channel and sailed over the south and east of England. None of them went farther than that, as the aeronauts who reached the coast of the North Sea thought it was not advisable to cross, as they would no doubt be under a great risk, and might be even driven back on the coast of Holland.

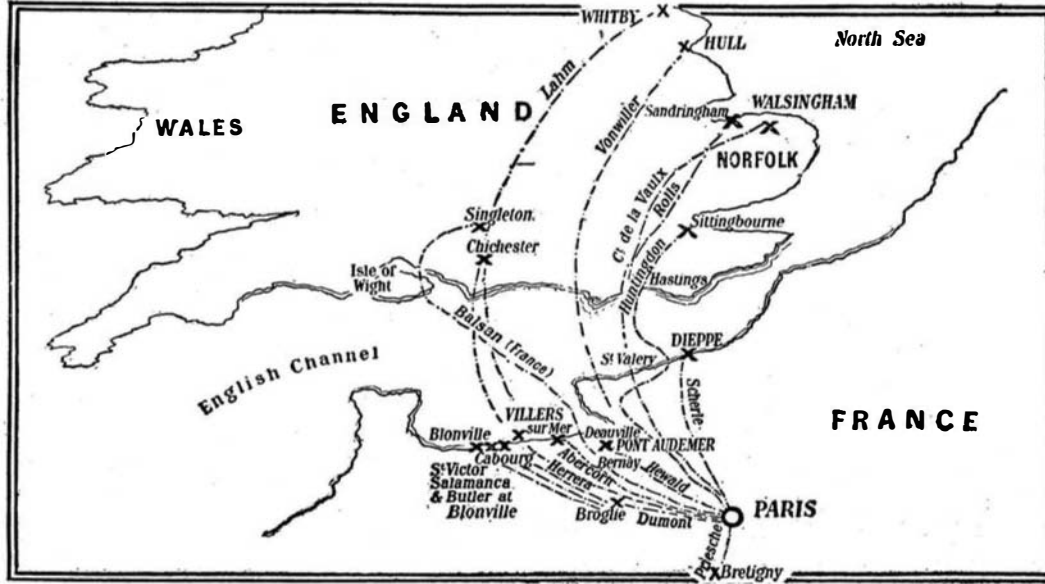
Lieut. Frank P. Lahm succeeded in reaching Flying-hall, in Yorkshire, which was the point farthest north, and he thus won the cup, having covered the distance of 395 miles from the starting point in a straight line. He remained 22 hours 28 minutes in the air. Next came the Ital-

ian champion Von Willer, who landed also in Yorkshire at New Holland, making the distance of 360 miles. Count de la Vaulx, the French aeronaut, and C. S. Rolls, the English champion, both made about the same distance, one landing at Walsingham and the other at Sandringham, Norfolk. The distance is near 290 miles. Next came Prof. England, with 210 miles, landing in Kent; Jacques Balsan, France, at 204 miles; and Capt. Kindelan, Sp. chester, 198 miles. The rest of the balloons which entered the race, not cross the Channel landed near or near the coast of Normandy.



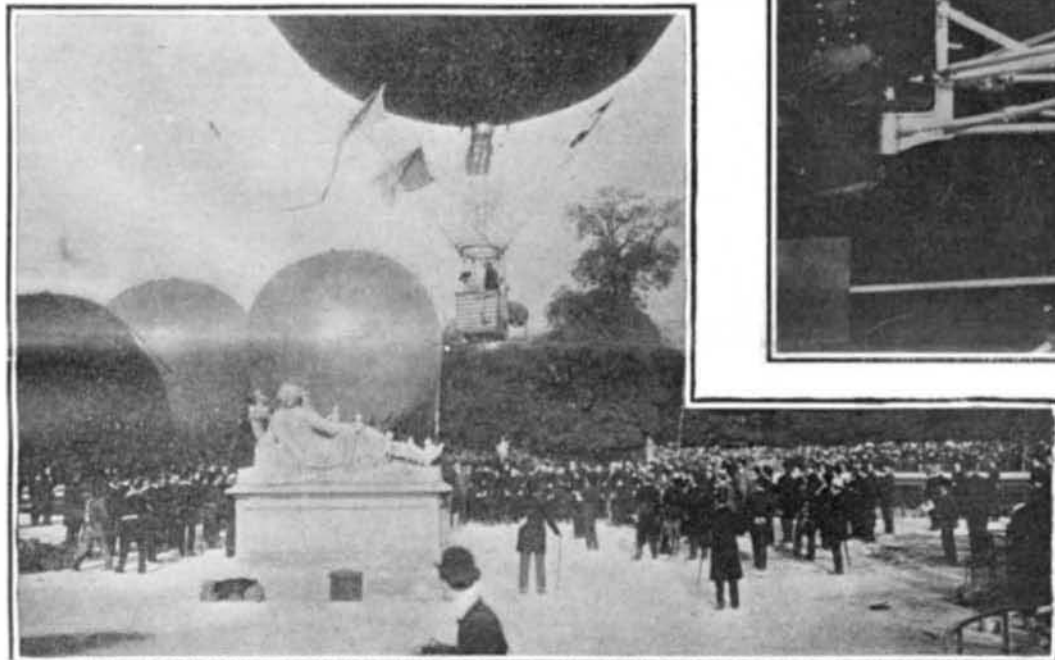
The Inflated Rubber Dummy Which Was Sent Up to Indicate the Direction of the Wind.

spherical type, and had the usual form of rigging and basket, as will be noticed in the different illustrations. The total cubical contents of the sixteen balloons is near 47,000 cubic feet, and the value of the gas used in inflating them is estimated at \$1,400, while the total value of the material engaged in the race is \$16,000. The largest balloon contains 3,000 cubic yards, and the smallest 1,950 cubic yards. There are twelve balloons of varnished cotton, two of rubber-covered cotton and two of varnished silk. Eleven of them are entirely new and were built specially for the event. Santos Dumont made a sensation at the starting grounds with his new spherical balloon. Faithful to his principles, he adapted a motor and propeller to the basket, which thus presented an unusual form. Fastened to one side of the basket is a framework of aluminium tubes, holding a propeller at either end, while the motor is placed near the middle of the frame against the basket. A shaft running from the motor on each side drives the propellers, and the latter are placed this time in a horizontal position. The propellers are not intended to raise the balloon, but on the contrary, to lower it and keep it near the ground if need be, or else to afford a better control of the balloon's height than can be given by ballast. The motor is to be set in motion only when the aeronaut wishes to

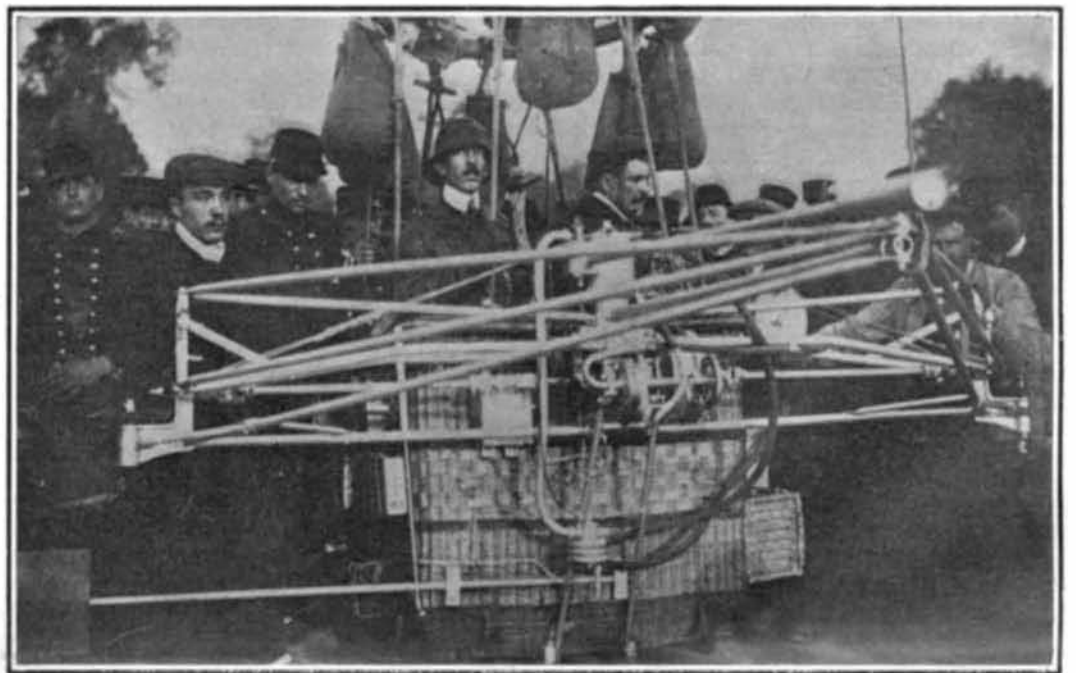


The greatest distance covered was that by the American Lahm (395 miles).  
**Gordon Bennett Balloon Race. Map Showing Where the Competitors Landed.**

descend. A thorough test of this contrivance must still be made before its merits can be judged. Santos Dumont found this arrangement to work reasonably well on the trip, but unfortunately he had an accident before reaching the Channel coast, as his arm caught in the gearing. He escaped with a few bruises, but found that he was unable to go farther and so was obliged to land. His balloon, entered for the Aero Club of America, held about 2,800 cubic yards, being one of the largest. Built of varnished cotton, it weighs 1,600 pounds exclusive of liquids. The propellers, measuring 5 feet in diameter, are run by a 6-horse-power De Dion motor, and run in



**The Great Crowd That Watched the Ascension of the Balloons. In This Picture Von Willer Has Just Started.**

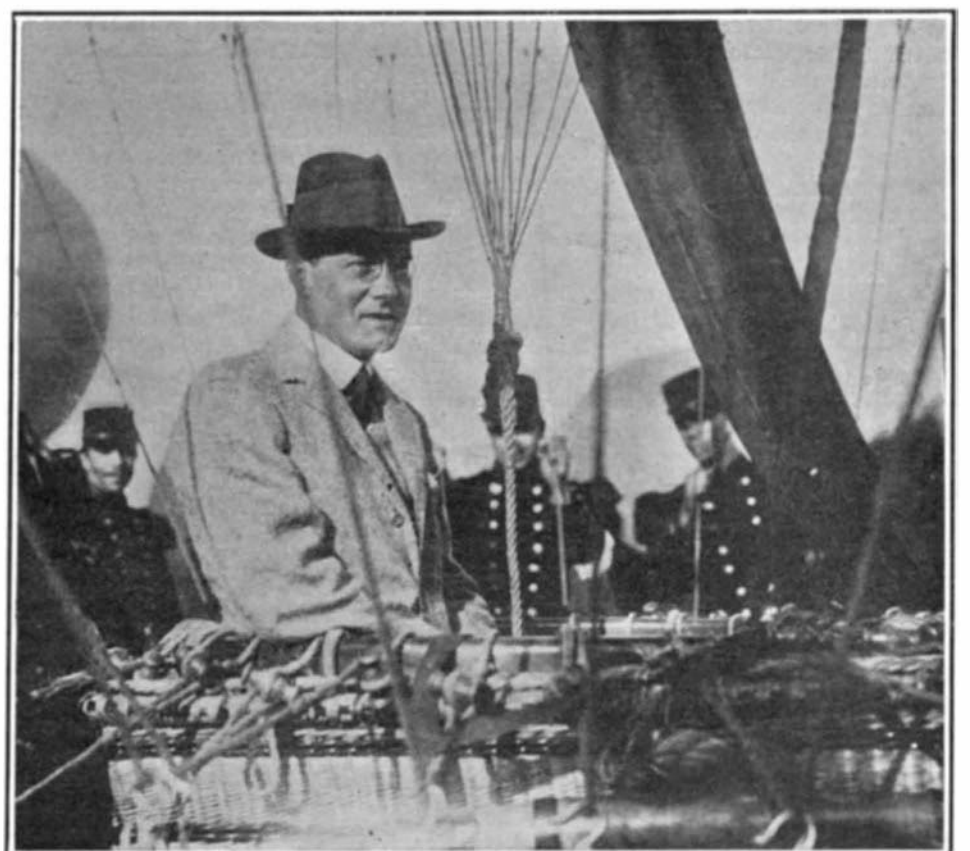


**Santos Dumont in His Car. His Was the Only Balloon Provided With a Motor and With Propellers.**

opposite directions. Lieut. Frank P. Lahm, who carried off the honors and brings the cup to America, was well satisfied with his trip, and crossed the Channel by moonlight, sailing near the surface of the water. He reached the English coast about 3:30 in the morning, passing over Chichester, Nottingham, and Mansfield. The wind grew stronger and near the ground it blew toward the west, while at 3,000 feet height it was in the opposite direction. Thus the balloon reached the coast, and the aeronauts were obliged to descend, not wishing to make the trip over the North Sea. After alighting at Flyinghall, near Robin Hood's Bay, the balloon and the party returned to Paris.



**Lieutenant Lahm (the Winner) and His Companion Major Hersey Just Before the Start.**



**Von Willer of the Italian Team Standing in His Car. He Covered a Distance of 860 Miles and Was Second in the Race.**