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A PIONEER OF AVIATION.

DEATH OF M. ADER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

PARIS, MAY 4.

M. Clément Ader, one of the pioneers of aviation, died yesterday at Toulouse at the age of 84. It is claimed in France that he was the first man to fly in a power-driven aeroplane; and he had come to be regarded in France as "the father of aviation."

An electrical engineer by training and engaged in the Government service in the Department of Ponts-et-Chaussées, M. Ader devoted himself passionately to the study of flight from a very early age. One of his first efforts was a man-lifting kite. He had a large birdcage built in his garden at Passy in order to observe the flight of birds.

In 1886 he began to build a flying machine, and after four years' hard work brought it to completion. It was called the "Eole." His enterprise attracted some attention, but the trials were held in great secrecy, and the public was not quite sure whether the "Eole" had flown the few feet which were claimed for it or not. A second model was built a year later, but was wrecked while being tried at Satory. However, the Government had become interested in his work and placed funds at his disposal for a fresh attempt.

Eventually, on October 14, 1897, a third machine, known as the "Avion," built by M. Ader, flew; it is claimed, though the question will ever remain in doubt, about 300 yards in the presence of representatives of the Ministry of War. It was a curious structure, with folding bat-like wings and twin screw propellers driven by a steam engine. M. Ader placed his plans at the service of the Government, but his machine did not inspire sufficient confidence, and his offer was refused. This was a bitter blow to him. He had had to face ridicule and incredulity enough during his unsuccessful attempts, but to be discredited after half a lifetime's work had been crowned with moderate success was more than he could bear. He gave up his research work, burned his plans, and went into retirement in his native village of Muret, in the Haute-Garonne.

As flight progressed the value of Ader's experimental work was recognized, and he has long been given his proper place in the history of aviation. Last summer he was made a Commander of the Legion of Honour; a monument is to be erected at Satory on the spot where he made his flights, and the original machine is preserved in the Musée des Arts et Métiers.

** All French military aircraft are now officially referred to as *avions* as a generic term for heavier-than-air machines of all types. The name was chosen in recognition of M. Ader's services to aviation.

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Clément ADER précurseur de l'aéronautique moderne vient de mourir

Clément Ader, auquel fut décerné le titre de « père de l'aviation », est mort, à Toulouse, dimanche, à l'âge de 84 ans, après une courte maladie.

Après avoir effectué des recherches sur l'électricité, Clément Ader concentra ses efforts dans l'étude du plus lourd que l'air. En 1886, il construisit l'*Eole*, la première « machine à voler ». Ses travaux aboutirent à l'avion actionné par un moteur à vapeur, qu'il créa de toutes pièces. Le 14 octobre 1897, l'aéroplane parcourut, au camp de Satory, une distance de 300 mètres.



M. Clément Ader
le précurseur français
de l'aviation

On se souvient que, à la suite de cette expérience, des polémiques s'engagèrent. Ader voulut offrir le fruit de ses travaux au gouvernement d'alors. Celui-ci ayant refusé de s'y intéresser, l'inventeur détruisit tous ses plans. Seul l'avion fut sauvé ; il demeure exposé aux Arts et Métiers.

Depuis de nombreuses années, Clément Ader s'était retiré à Moret, sa ville natale, où, au mois d'octobre dernier, M. Laurent Eynac vint lui remettre les insignes de commandeur de la Légion d'honneur.

Le gouvernement rendit ainsi un solennel hommage à celui dont le nom restera à jamais attaché à l'aviation.