

running at 20 miles per gallon, only reached a figure of seven ton miles per gallon, while an aeroplane only reached a figure of two ton miles per gallon, so that there was room for considerable improvement in the aeroplane as a form of transport.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY.

DEAR SIR,—It is not realised so generally as the fact may be deemed to deserve, that the centenary of the death of James Sadler, the “First English Aeronaut,” falls on March 27th of next year. Sadler was the first Englishman to ascend into the air in a balloon, of which (to adopt Cavallo’s words) he was not only “the sole projector, architect, workman, and chymist,” but pilot to boot. He was also the first English balloonist to make considerable flights through what Cayley finely called, “that uninterrupted navigable ocean which comes to the threshold of every man’s door.” If his aerial flights were performed accomplished in an aeronautical machine that has now passed into obsolescence, he deserves not the less some measure of that immortality conferred by Horace on the sailor who, with threefold courage, first “adventured to sail upon the sea.”

But the state of hopeless decay into which Sadler’s tombstone in the churchyard of St. Peter’s at Oxford has been allowed to fall, is significant of the general attitude of indifference towards his memory. As to the tombstone, the Royal Aeronautical Society undertook, some months back, to bear the cost of restoration, which will shortly be done. But it is felt by some that a small memorial in the form of a tablet of stone or wood, might justly and fittingly be placed in the church of St. Peter’s as a tribute to his memory on the centenary of his death. The project has the support of Mr. Harold Sadler, the grandson of the aeronaut’s son, Windham Sadler (himself an aeronaut, who was killed in a ballooning accident in 1824); of Mr. Henry Sadler Alford, a great-great-grandson of James Sadler; Major B. F. S. Baden-Powell, a former President of the Aeronautical Society, and an experienced balloonist; Colonel the Master of Sempill; Lieut.-Colonel Lockwood Marsh, and others. To carry out the idea it will be necessary to raise the moderate sum of £50 or so, of which about £10 has been already promised.

May I be allowed, through the columns of our JOURNAL, to invite further subscriptions—which may be addressed to me at Albemarle Street—in order to ensure this belated tribute to the Englishman who, animated by the same spirit that has long since become a tradition amongst all British pilots and sailors on the sea, first dared to demonstrate to his countrymen the possibilities that lay in the navigation of the air.

115, Chancery Lane, W.C.2.
December 6th, 1927.

Yours truly,
J. E. HODGSON,
Hon. Librarian

P.S.—May I add that on merely mentioning the matter quite incidentally to an aeronautical friend in New York, he promptly and generously wrote asking to be allowed to contribute and enclosed a draft for ten dollars.