

THE MELBOURNE "AERO- PLANE."

CIRCUMSTANTIAL STORY.

LIGHTS IN SKY OVER TOWNSHIP

MELBOURNE, Wednesday.

Inquiries made into the story that an aeroplane passed over Melbourne on Saturday indicate that there is reason for belief. Though those who made the investigations were most

sceptical, they have become convinced that the persons interviewed were telling the truth. The matter is further complicated by a report from Riddell, 30 miles north, and mysterious lights were seen in the sky between 7 and 8 p.m. on Saturday. These lights, it is asserted, had the appearance of a quickly-worked railway signal, showing flashes of red, green, and white. A peculiarity was that there appeared to be a red light hanging from the main body.

The theory was advanced that possibly Mr. J. C. Dugan, a local aviator, who has his own machine, was taking a flight, but it has been ascertained that this gentleman was in Bendigo at the time of the reported appearance.

A telephone electrician was working on a ladder at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, when he happened to look upwards.

"Look at the aeroplane," he called out.

His assistants followed his gaze, and saw the plane travelling high and fast in a south-westerly direction. The machine had evidently passed over the city, as it was rapid-

ly approaching Government House. The men watched the aeroplane until it became a mere speck in the distance, and was finally lost to sight.

Mr. Henry Mantes, club attendant at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, has made the following statement:—

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following statement:—

"I was on duty at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Saturday morning. At 20 minutes to 9 o'clock my attention was directed to the aeroplane. It was travelling very fast in a south-westerly direction. When I first saw it the machine had almost reached Government House. I had seen two aeroplanes before, but the one that passed over the city on Saturday appeared to be smaller than those used by Hammond and Cugnet. Of course, I could not be certain of the size, as the machine was a considerable distance away when I had the first glimpse of it. I was struck by the fact that the aeroplane was flying so high. It appeared to be at a height of several hundred feet—I should say, at a rough estimate, nearly 1000ft. There is not the slightest doubt that it was an aero-

plane. However, as it was some distance away, and was travelling from us, it was impossible to see the aviator. The telephone electricians stopped work, and we all watched the aeroplane until it was out of sight. After passing over Government House, the aviator headed the machine almost due south. I should think that when the airship passed out of sight it would be over the bay. We did not attach much importance to the matter at the time, as we were under the impression that Hammond had returned to Melbourne."

A lady residing in Bromley-street, South Yarra, said:—"On Saturday afternoon, at half-past 5 o'clock, I was standing in my verandah when I saw what appeared to be an aeroplane over the northern horizon. It was very high in the air, and was moving fast. I ran inside the house to get field-glasses, but when I returned the object was too small to be distinguished. It was travelling in a south-easterly direction. A girl friend who was with me also saw the object, and watched until it was out of sight."