

AN AIRY MATTER.

It is a strange thing that nearly every hero turns out to have a "rust" and heroes with rusts never look back for nearly so long to victory. Among flying men, most reputations are made in the clouds; that's why some of them are, in fact, pretty "cloudy." Unfortunately, the little Frenchy, Guillaux, who is capturing Australia's applause just now by flying upside down and inside out, and every other way that is calculated to attract good silver, has one of those rusts which, even though it refers to aerial doings, isn't dismissed too airily in the Old Country. In September of last year the race for the Pommeroy Cup was flown in France, and the event was claimed to have been won by Guillaux, who was acclaimed as something of a better tier than the archangel Gabriel. The tumultuous applause, however, had scarcely died away, when one of the other competitors, a well-known aviator named Hrindejone des Moulainais, put in a protest against Guillaux on the ground that the amiable little frog-eater, whose foot, or finger, or any other anatomical part of him, Melbourne this week is fully prepared to kiss, was guilty of a despicable piece of deception and imposture. The French aviation authorities investigated the trouble, and it was announced in October that Guillaux had admitted having overstated the distance which he had covered in the race for the Cup by altering the name of a town in the certificate supplied to him by the burgomaster. It does seem an infernal pity that things like this should rise up out of their sleep; but it's an unfortunate and inevitable way they've got. However, whether Guillaux rigged his passport or whether he didn't, his ability as an aviator hasn't been affected one way or another. And Australian crowds dearly love a hero with something about him that has to be mentioned in a confidential whisper. If the hero is not guilty of the cause of the whisper, then he is still acceptable; but if he is fair up to the neck in it he is more than a hero—he's an absolute tin god. No doubt it is for one of these reasons that the ascension of Elisha in his chariot of fire wouldn't be a circumstance nowadays in Victoria alongside the heavenward flights of Guillaux.