

IN PARLIAMENT

South America Air Mail

MR. ALLEN asked the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that all Great Britain's chief Continental competitors are able to send an air-mail letter to South America for 1s. 6d., their initial weight being five grammes, whereas the minimum cost from this country is 4s., the initial weight being half an ounce; whether he has considered the representation of the London Chamber of Commerce that British firms are sending letters to France to be posted there in order to take advantage of the Continental low initial rate; and what, if any, cost would be incurred by the British Post Office in instituting a 4-ounce initial weight for air mail from this country?

Mr. Viant: I am aware of the fact that it is possible to send letters by air from certain European countries to South America at a lower minimum charge than it is from this country, but only the lightest letters come within the limit of 5 grammes, which is the equivalent of just over one-sixth of an ounce. On the other hand, it is appreciably cheaper to send a letter weighing approximately 1/2 ounce from this country than from any other European country. In my opinion, the remedy for the high initial fees lies, not in a reduction of the unit of weight, but in a reduction of the very high charge for transport on this service, which is 10 times greater than the charge made on the Indian Air Mail service. The answer to the second part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the third part, any additional cost incurred would be reflected in the fees charged to the public.

Air Forces' Comparative Statistics

MR. MONTAGUE, on March 11, in reply to Lieut.-Col. Gault, said the present first-line establishment of the Royal Air Force is approximately 790 aircraft; or—divided by categories—bombers and general purpose aircraft, 348; Army co-operation machines, 120; fighters, 156; flying boats, 25; Fleet Air Arm, 141.

Owing to differences in statistical methods and to other factors such as fluctuations in strength, which occur from time to time, it is difficult to supply precisely comparable figures for other countries, but the following table, based on the latest information available, gives the approximate total figures for the first-line strength: France, 1,320; Italy (including a temporary excess of about 100 aircraft over normal establishment), 1,100; United States of America, 1,050; Union of Social Soviet Republics, 1,000 (estimated).

Under the Treaty of Versailles the armed forces of Germany must not include any military or naval air forces.

The official information at my disposal does not enable me accurately to sub-divide the above totals between categories.

Royal Air Force Accidents

MR. MONTAGUE, in reply to Mr. Wells, said during the year ending 31st December, 1930, there were 46 fatal accidents, involving 64 deaths, in the Royal Air Force.

The R101 Report

MR. MONTAGUE, on March 12, replying to Sir W. Mitchell-Thomson and Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy, said:—The report of the committee of inquiry into the loss of R101 has not yet been received by the Air Ministry, but I understand that it is complete and in the hands of the printers, save for a section dealing with the experiments carried out recently at the National Physical Laboratory. These experiments are considered to be of material value, and the Secretary of State concurs with the Court of Inquiry in thinking that the report ought to include a reference to their results. On this basis, he is informed that the Court hope that the report will be available for publication by the end of the month.

Privately-owned Aircraft Statistics

MR. MONTAGUE, on March 18, in reply to Sir V. Warrender, said the number of registered privately-owned aircraft, including aircraft owned by civil flying schools and light aeroplane clubs, on December 31, 1928, 1929 and 1930 was 223, 328 and 499 respectively.

The number of persons killed while piloting or flying in privately-owned aeroplanes, including machines the property of flying clubs or used for instructional purposes, during the years 1928, 1929, and 1930 were respectively 10, 11 and 15.

A New Flying Suit

ONE of the chief drawbacks which has been levelled at the ordinary "Sidcot suit" type of flying clothing is that it is difficult and cumbersome to put on and take off and still more so to walk about in. Most of these faults have now, however, been overcome in a suit called the "Kestral," manufactured by D. Lewis, Ltd., 124, Gt. Portland Street, W.1. It looks rather like a soft leather "Sidcot" suit, but the tunic or body garment is actually independent of the trousers and can, if desired, be worn separately. All fastenings are made with rust-proof open-ended zippers with flaps behind them, ensuring protection from the wind. When on it looks exactly like the one-piece suit, but has none of its attendant disadvantages. The leather from which it is made is showerproof, with a fast dye and of exceptionally light weight. Altogether it appears an extremely suitable garment for those who like flying in machines with open cockpits.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS

AEROPLANES, airships, balloons and parts thereof (not shown separately before 1910).

For 1910 and 1911 figures see FLIGHT for January 25, 1912.

For 1912 and 1913, see FLIGHT for January 17, 1914.

For 1914, see FLIGHT for January 15, 1915, and so on yearly, the figures for 1930 being given in FLIGHT, January 16, 1931.

	Imports.		Exports.		Re-exports.	
	1930.	1931.	1930.	1931.	1930.	1931.
Jan.	£ 2,987	£ 7,965	£ 147,935	£ 142,596	—	£ 1,074
Feb.	£ 2,460	£ 3,303	£ 226,049	£ 110,587	1,000	1,293
	5,447	11,268	373,984	253,183	1,000	2,367

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Avigation. By H. H. Holland. New York and London: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Ltd. Price 12s. 6d. net.

Flying from the Ground Up. By R. S. Bowen, Jr. New York and London: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Ltd. Price 10s. net.

Catalogue

Aircraft Equipment. Brown Brothers, Ltd., Great Eastern Street, London, E.C.2.

NEW COMPANIES REGISTERED

ANGLO-AFRICAN AIRWAYS, LTD., 66, Victoria Street, S.W.1.—Capital £20,000 in £1 shares. Objects, to exploit, survey, establish and maintain aerial routes, demarcation of airways, aerodromes, and repair and store depots in British, Colonial and foreign countries; to negotiate with British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Portuguese, Spanish, other foreign and colonial governments and companies for rights to use and operate in or over their respective territories; to negotiate and operate air routes in co-operation with British and foreign companies for the transport by air, railway, motor, etc., of passengers, mails, freight, etc.; to own and operate flying machines, motor vehicles, etc. First directors: Lt.-Com. E. W. B. Leake, Holly Bush, Ayrshire; Lt.-Col. H. F. O. Thwaites, Elmhurst, Cold Blow, Sussex; P. D. Thomas, Yardley, Bishops Avenue, East Finchley (director of James Hope & Co., Ltd., etc.) Acting Secretary: P. E. Evans.

C. D. BARNARD AIR TOURS, LTD., 625, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square, W.C.2.—Capital of £100 in £1 shares. Objects, to acquire lands suitable for aerodromes, landing grounds, air parks and flying clubs; to enter into and carry into effect agreements with the Secretary of State for Air or with any other Government authority or department relating to the operations of the company; to carry on and to make arrangements for air transport services of all kinds, etc. Directors: C. D. Barnard, Grasmere, civil air pilot (director of Brian Lewis & C. D. Barnard, Ltd.), Mrs. M. E. Barnard, Grasmere, both of The Avenue, Radlett, Herts.

CIRRUS-HERMES ENGINEERING CO., LTD., 274, Gresham House, E.C.2.—Capital £1,000 in £1 shares. Aeronautical, mechanical and electrical engineers, manufacturers of and dealers in implements and machines required for use in the aeroplane industry, manufacturers of and dealers in aeroplanes and aircraft, etc. Directors: H. L. Watkins, E. D. Basden, Henry Morgan, F. W. E. Morgan, W. H. Watkins. Solicitors: Churchill Clapham and Co., 1, Broad Street Place, E.C.2.

SOUTH WALES AIRWAYS, LTD.—Capital, £100 in £1 shares. Proprietors and builders and manufacturers of aeroplanes, seaplanes and air ships, mechanical road vehicles, ships and vessels, etc. Directors: R. H. Thomas, Mrs. Nehata Thomas, both of 9, Dunraven Place, Bridgend, Glam. Solicitors:—Grover, Grover & Williamson, 26, Charles Street, Cardiff.

AERONAUTICAL PATENT SPECIFICATIONS

(Abbreviations: Cyl. = cylinder; i.c. = internal combustion; m. = motors. The numbers in brackets are those under which the Specification will be printed and abridged, etc.)

APPLIED FOR IN 1929

Published March 12, 1931

- 1,783. M. O. DARBY and A. A. SIDNEY. I. C. engines. (343,097.)
- 24,382. P. SCATIZZI. Flying machines. (317,059.)
- 33,134. POPELAKOVA (née BURIANOVA). Aviators' equipment. (343,019.)
- 35,988. P. H. SANDS. Louvre ventilators for aircraft, etc. (343,195.)
- 39,799. ECLIPSE AVIATION CORPORATION. Engine-starting apparatus. (343,254.)

Published March 19, 1931

- 34,106. SCHNEIDER ET CIE. Anti-aircraft guns and vehicles for the transport thereof. (343,433.)
- 37,263. J. S. CHICK. Control of aeroplanes. (343,630.)
- 38,935. H. S. HELE-SHAW and T. E. BEACHAM. Variable-pitch airscrews. (343,653.)

APPLIED FOR IN 1930

Published March 12, 1931

- 1,963. W. W. TRIGGS (Eclipse Aviation Corporation) Engine-starting mechanism. (343,281.)
- 3,461. A. W. HATFIELD and T. R. SWIFT. Bomb or projectile for aircraft use. (343,294.)

Published March 19, 1931

- 6,925. R. BEAUCAIRE. Starting and landing apparatus. (343,763.)
- 8,257. ROTH-BUCHNER A.-G. Reversible propellers. (343,777.)

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