

Correspondence

The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents. The names and addresses of the writers, not necessarily for publication, must in all cases accompany letters intended for insertion in these columns.

"IN ANOTHER PLACE."

[2902] In a world where the vast majority of newspapers are owned by people with axes to grind, it is pleasant to think that our technical journals may be honest, at least when making statements. Silence as a form of deceit is more or less permissible.

Your editorial last week, however, was as misleading as Lord Londonderry's own speech, for it, too, gave the erroneous impression that Britain had been the only nation to make any attempt to cut down air armaments. As far as my memory serves me, the total abolition of air armament has been advocated by Russia, Germany, and Spain. Italy made some small reservation, and the U.S. produced some suggestion which was tantamount to an abolition. Great Britain, whether we like the fact or not, has been one of the very few countries to stand out, and has, too, been obstructionistic in the matter of the internationalisation of civil aviation—whether this is feasible or not.

Even our most narrow-minded legal experts must agree that the will to disarm only stands between the world and peace.

Without suggesting that peace is desirable or that "patriotism" is a trained vice, I can still ask for honesty and give both devils and angels their due.

Manchester.

H. A. T.

December 19, 1933.

[We are very much obliged to our courteous correspondent for suggesting that FLIGHT is dishonest, though we cannot guess whether he would call that suggestion giving his due to a devil or to an angel. As for his arguments, they may do credit to the honesty of his heart, but they certainly do no credit to any more exalted part of his anatomy. He talks about "the erroneous impression that Britain had been the only nation to make any attempt to

cut down air armaments." Great Britain has not only made the attempt, but has actually cut them to the bone. How can any sane man believe that Russia's proposal to abolish all air armaments is more creditable than what Britain has done? Incidentally, Britain has also suggested "parity at zero," as Lord Londonderry said. If the internationalisation of civil flying is not feasible, how could it be a reproach if Britain did object to it? We are not "narrow-minded legal experts," but we certainly do not admit that "the will (? reluctance) to disarm, only, stands between the world and peace." We agree with Mr. Baldwin that disarmament by itself will not prevent wars.—Ed.]

EMPIRE AIR MAILS

[2903] In the face of many difficulties, mostly political, the air mail route to Australia has at last reached Singapore; the first airliner for Malaya left Croydon on December 9 with a heavy load.

In a few months the last section from Singapore to Australia will be open, and the most important air route in the world will be in operation.

Why not mark the completion of this great Imperial task by having all first-class mail matter leaving this country for Imperial destinations served by air mail carried by aeroplane instead of land transport?

In view of the enormous saving of time, few of the public would object to paying a higher postage rate providing that this rate was uniform, and providing that no special formalities were required, such as sticking on air mail labels.

The amount of traffic would probably allow of a daily despatch of mails between London and Cairo and from Cairo on alternate days to Australia and South Africa.

WALTER L. NAYLOR.

London, W.9.

December 13, 1933.



Book Reviews

By Air. By Sir Harry Brittain, K.B.E., C.M.G., LL.D., with an introduction by the Most Hon. the Marquess of Londonderry, K.G. (Hutchinson & Co., Ltd.) Obtainable from FLIGHT Office, 13s., post free.

THE British public has evidently grown more air-minded than one had suspected, and Sir Harry Brittain has gauged just what the said public wanted and has given it to them. The first edition of this book, we believe, was sold out almost before the print was dry on the pages. That is surely evidence enough of the public thirst for knowledge about the air, and evidence, too, of the author's good judgment.

It seems that what the public wanted to learn was just everything, everything about flying which is not technical, everything which has been recorded (technically perhaps) in the columns of FLIGHT week by week for years past. Sir Harry has gathered it all together and jotted it down in easy language, with an attractive style, and with 88 good photographs to illustrate it. The making of this book seems very simple, and the result is obviously very effective and successful. The author must be congratulated.

It follows that it is not easy to review such a book in a paper like FLIGHT. To the regular reader of an aeronautical paper it tells nothing that is new. Yet it is evidently just what the public has been wanting. There seems a lack of plan and method in the arrangement of the matter; but what plan can be better than the one

which brings success? It is perhaps the first comprehensive book on flying which can be called really popular.

A USEFUL INDEX

International Index to Aeronautical Technical Reports. Prepared by the Society of British Aircraft Constructors, Ltd., and published by the Royal Aeronautical Society. Obtainable from FLIGHT Office. Price 5s. 6d., post free.

SO vast has become the technical literature dealing with aeronautical subjects that the designer and student is often at a loss to know where to find what he wants. The S.B.A.C. and Royal Aeronautical Society have set out to remedy this state of affairs by issuing an International Index to Aeronautical Technical Reports. The title is slightly misleading in that the use of the word "Reports" indicates that the subjects indexed are official reports. This is not entirely the case, although in the nature of things the great majority of subjects indexed are official or semi-official reports of research institutions. But technical articles are included, and among them we are honoured to find some from THE AIRCRAFT ENGINEER (Monthly Technical Supplement to FLIGHT).

The Index is divided into two sections, of which the first deals with reports and articles in the English language (British and American), while the second is devoted to reports and articles in languages other than English.

The Index should prove very valuable to every designer and student of aeronautics.

Death of Lord Thomson's mother

MRS. THOMSON, the mother of Lord Thomson, who lost his life in the R.101 disaster, died at Teignmouth on December 27.

Wing Commander Shorten's death

WING COM. W. W. SHORTEN, R.A.F. Medical Service, who was stationed at Halton, was killed in a motor accident at Denham, Buckinghamshire, on December 27.