



...ier Sabre engine, is capable of over 480 m.p.h. as in production during the year.

One of the most attractive light aircraft yet produced, the Miles Gemini seems assured of success.

the Hermes IV (a long-fuselage version with Hercules 263s, pressure cabin and tricycle undercarriage), and the Hermes V, a similar aircraft with Bristol Theseus airscrew-turbines. The firm was rewarded during November, with an order from the Ministry of Supply for twenty-five Hermes IV's and two prototypes of the Mk. V.

By the end of 1945 the Avro Tudor I was already becoming familiar to *Flight* readers, but the Mark II version was a 1946 product and differed from the Mark I in having a greatly lengthened fuselage (105ft 7in against 85ft 6in) seating up to sixty passengers. Cruising speed showed a drop of only 10 m.p.h. at 15,000ft, demonstrating that wetted area is relatively unimportant on a large machine provided that careful attention is paid to aerodynamic design. All-up weight—at 80,000 lb—remained the same.

Particularly attractive in operational characteristics as in appearance, the four-Gipsy Miles Marathon was flying its prototype trials and its makers announced the development of a twin-Mamba version which seems assured of a rosy future.

The delightful little three-passenger Gemini, with twin Cirrus Minors, was Miles' 1947 offering to the private-owner and charter operator. Unique among small aircraft the Gemini cruises at 135 m.p.h.

Finally, two other "1946" types, at opposite ends of the scale, merit notice. The Short Solent, twelve of which have been ordered for B.O.A.C.'s far Eastern route, weighs 75,000 lb and has a span of 112.8ft. This magnificent boat, powered by four Hercules 637's will cruise at 210 m.p.h. over a non-stop range of 2,500 miles. Passenger comfort is of an exceptionally high order.

The little Chrislea Ace is a high-wing three-seater with a tricycle undercarriage, all-round vision and single-wheel control.

#### Research Aircraft

On May 15th, test flying was initiated on the DH 108 high-speed research aircraft. While having a Vampire fuselage, this type reflected German influence in the design of its sharply swept-back wing which obviated the necessity for a tailplane. The 108 was, in fact, designed and built solely for the purpose of studying control and stability problems in aircraft with swept-back wings. Mr. Geoffrey de Havilland conducted the initial tests quietly and systematically but, by the time of the S.B.A.C. Display at Radlett, it was evident that he had the greatest confidence in the flying qualities of the aircraft. On September 27th he took off in the second prototype from Hatfield, having announced that he intended to dive the machine at a high Mach Number and to fly at high power near the sea to check the speed and behaviour in record-attempt conditions. About fifteen or twenty minutes later, the aircraft was seen to break up and fall into the Thames, north-east of Gravesend. The manufacturers have since stated that they intend to continue with full effort the research work on which they were engaged with the 108.

Flying continued on the Handley Page Manx tailless aircraft with two Gipsy engines and a very great deal of

Precursor of the Hermes civil transport, this magnificent Handley Page Hastings military transport did its initial trials during 1946.

Percival Prentice three-

