25 December 1953 835

" Flight" phatograph

The Canadian guards of honour provided at stations visited were
extremely smart both in dress and drill.

the next stop, where No. 3 Fighter Wing, R.C.A.F. is stationed,
but on arrival a G.C.A. landing had to be made. Conditions
actually were so bad that the end of the runway was the first object seen after entering the cloud layer from above. Here, again, Mr. Claxton was received with a guard of honour, drawn up opposite the door of the North Star. He was greeted by A.V-M. H. L. Campbell, R.C.A.F., A.O.C. No. 1 Air Division, and by G/C. A. C. Hull, who commands No. 3 Fighter Wing.

i* The low cloud precluded any flying programme, but the Sabres I went to their readiness platforms and the ground defences went | into action—with a superfluity of damp-squib pyrotechnics— L against an imaginary attack by enemy paratroopers. A car was | set on fire to give exercise to the fire brigade, which arrived L with sirens going in the best Hollywood tradition.
j * Next on the programme was a demonstration of gunsight cali-bration at the butts. After a few sighter shots had been fired,
; Mr. Brooke Claxton climbed into the Sabre cockpit and fired a ' number of bursts.
$ The final demonstration comprised the refuelling and re-arm-. ing of two Sabres of No. 413 Squadron. Very keenly performed, ' this operation was completed in 6i minutes.
Ir Afterwards, in the camp theatre, the Wing assembled to be : addressed by Mr. Claxton. He remarked upon the astonishing progress that had been made since his previous visit (last April)
I and went on to say that he and the Canadian people were ! determined that their forces abroad were to have "conditions as good as we can make them and nothing second-rate, either as regards aircraft, clothing, food or buildings." The programme,
• he said, would cost approximately 50 million dollars. Some 1 other figures he gave were: Canada has 20,000 men abroad in

;

' seven different countries—1,500 in Britain and 8,000 in Germany. i^To make service in Europe even more attractive 1,500 married i quarters are to be built.
\^t Zweibriicken is also the home of the R.C.A.F. No. 1 Air Division, R.C.A.F. Instrument Rating Flight, about which we intend to ji. publish a separate account in the near future. It was by the '* kindness and skill of one of the unit's instructors that our

representative was able to go to Geilenkirchen in a Canadair T.33 (Nene)—under very QBI conditions—to watch No. 3 Squadron R.A.F. receiving its Queen's Standard.
- Baden Sollingen, where No. 4 Fighter Wing, R.C.A.F., is based, was the next station scheduled to be visited but this, also, : was completely fog-bound. The Minister accordingly decided to make the journey by car, sending the North Star on to Gros Tenquin to await him and to take him on to Paris for the NATO conference held last week.

TH E WOR K OF TH E WRIGHTS (Continued from page 833)

published in April, 1901, the first paper ever written by Wilbur Wright, and leading members of the Society had kept in regular correspondence with the brothers and Chanute. In April 1904 the Journal published an accurate account of these first flights, sent to the President, Major Baden Powell, by Orville Wright himself.
The world had almost forgotten the Wrights when, in 1908, Orville in America and Wilbur in France, began flying again, Orville to satisfy the United States War Department they really had an aeroplane, and Wilbur to satisfy a French syndicate that he could fly. On August 10th, 1908, Wilbur Wright made two short flights at Le Mans, one a complete circle and the other a figure of eight. "The newspapers and the French aviators nearly went wild with excitement," he wrote to his brother. "Bieriot and Delagrange were so excited they could hardly speak, and Kapferer could only gasp and could not speak at all . . . You never saw anything like the complete reversal of position that took place after two or three little flights of less than two minutes each." Orville Wright in Washington caused just as much excitement. Lt. Col. C. O. Squier, who had been working with the Wrights on behalf of the United States War Department, speaking at the first Wilbur Wright Memorial Lecture in 1913, said:
"The Wright brothers came to the War Department and informed us of what they could do, and they so convinced the authorities that money was found to give them this first contract. The contract promised to pay £5,000 for any heavier-than-air machine capable of carrying two people weighing in the aggregate 350 lb with petrol sufficient for 125 miles at a speed of 36 m.p.h. The issue of the contract was criticized severely, and the War Department was supposed to have lost its head. "In due course the American machine was delivered to the Govern-ment. People heard many rumours about it, but never having seen any-one fly, did not believe in it. On September 19th, 1908, Orville Wright went out early in the morning and flew for 58 minutes: only a few soldiers observed him. The effect was marvellous: it disorganized Washington completely. That afternoon he flew again at half-past four, in the presence of every single man, woman and child who could get to the aerodrome."
Not only Washington, but London, Paris, Berlin and other world capitals were disorganized, for there were too many shrewd politicians who were well aware of the portent in the skies. That year, 1908, was a year of unbelievable excitement, enthusiasm and interest in flying, a year which only comes when the world is suddenly confronted with something entirely outside its previous exnerience.
In May 1912 came the tragedy of Wilbur Wright's death from pneumonia at the early age of 45. His constitution had been weakened by the worries of constant litigation and business. Three

years later Orville Wright sold all his business interests, so that he could carry out that aeronautical research he felt inclined to do, free from all business considerations.

After describing the refusal of the Smithsonian Institute to recognize the Wrights' achievements until the eventual retraction of Langley's claim in 1948, Captain Pritchard concluded: "every aeroplane which is flying today owes to Wilbur and Orville Wright the fundamental discovery of its method of control. The warping of the wing tips in 1900 and the forward horizontal plane have been replaced by the aileron and elevator or other mechanical aerodynamic equivalent as experience has grown.
"These were men whose like may not be seen again for many years."

SETBACK FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S CLUBS

T

HE South African Department of Defence recently notified
the eight flying clubs which have been training pilots for the South African Air Force that it intends to carry out all such training departmentally in future. The announcement is regarded as a serious blow to private flying in the Union, and one from which many clubs may not recover. The news was unexpected; in July last the Union Government was known to be considering the introduction of a civil air guard system. Under this •scheme, club flying would have been subsidized in return for participation by aircrew and ground staff in military manoeuvres once a month. In the event of an emergency, club members would have been liable to be called out for crop-dusting (e.g., against locust swarms), ambulance or military spotting work. Evidently this project has been shelved.
Since the end of the war, the South African Aero Club has urged the Government to assist private flying in some way, and has pointed out that there remain only 14 out of the previous total of 24 clubs. Two of the clubs affected by the recent decision, those of Johannesburg and Cape Town, had purchased surplus Chipmunks from Rhodesia earlier this year, intending to use them for their S.A.A.F. training work.
It is stated that the last intake of pupil-pilots under the club training scheme will be that scheduled for December. When this course is completed, the South African Air Force will take over the flying training. One advantage of the previous scheme has been the geographical convenience of the clubs, which has reduced the adverse effect of training on civil occupations.