English Electric Canberra Avro Vulcan

name is identified with the Canberra. Thus Flight's Farn-borough report of 1949: "W/C Beamont's introductory per-formance in our first jet bomber was historic. The initial climb would not have shamed a Meteor; then the beautiful medium bomber bore down fast along the runway and rolled away (one roll in each direction) its blue shape seeming, chameleon-like, to change its hue against the varicoloured clouds." Any-one who saw that will never forget it; nor the moment later in the week when bits of the automatic observer came hurtling down when Bea opened the bomb doors. Could it really be twenty years ago this September? Incredible. Like the Canberra.

de Havilland Comet (July 27, 1949) Verdict of historian Charles Gibbs-Smith (1959): "This country had the distinction of introducing the first pure jet airliner, which was the first to fly and the first to go into service on an airline. Despite the subsequent tragedies which befell several of these aircraft, and the consequent delays, the first flight of the Comet in 1949 was an important event. It was, perhaps, poetic justice that Great Britain, who had introduced the turbojet into the United States, who had had to desist from building transports during the war, and also had seen American transports monopolise the airline traffic, should at least be permitted by history to intro-duce the first turbine transports, turbojet and turboprop. The Comet, which is certainly one of the most beautiful aricraft ever to fly, was originally engined by four D. H. Ghosts, and attained an average speed of 440 m.p.h. for the 1.500 miles from England to Libya in 1949. The improved version, which went into service in 1952, carried a crew of four and 36 to 48 passengers over stage lengths of 2.100 miles at over 450 m.p.h.

The Comet, after suffering various vicissitudes, is now emerg-ing in new forms for airline service.*' Verdict of Jamie, six-year-old son of Flight's present editor, on passage to Cairo (1962): "This Comet does a good lunch."

The /lashing fifties
Avro Vulcan (August 30, 1952) In a technical sense the fifties were the greatest years in British aeronautical history. They have their epitome in the Vulcan bomber (Avro Type 698), though they brought forth also Victor, Hunter, Lightning and Buccaneer. After its shattering arrival at the SBAC Show of 1952 we declared that the 698 had opened the eyes of the world. It had indeed, and this is how it came upon the scene (Flight's report): "Tuesday was the day of days—the day which will always be remembered for one of the most signfi-cant flying demonstrations in the whole history of British aero-nautics. The reader may care to imagine this late-summer afternoon, with woolly clouds strewing the sky beyond Laffan's Plain, three angular silhouettes orbiting low on the horizon. Joining formation, they headed for the airfield—in the lead a white triton, with a red minnow on the left and a blue one on the right." The minnows, of course, were Avro 707 delta-research aircraft, and many readers will remember "Roly" Falk, who was flying that first great white Avon-engined Vulcan alone, parting company with them and sending the world's first delta bomber flashing about the summer sky—on its fourth flight. Flashing fifties they were. But the Vulcan is already seventeen. And Flight is sixty. Swinging sixty.