

Accidents

During the period under review, 12 accidents occurred to which the Air Navigation (Investigation of Accidents) Regulations, 1922, were applicable, and the Report points out that this total is about half that of the previous year. Only one of these accidents resulted in loss of life, but in this case the pilot and seven passengers were killed. None of the other accidents, it is stated, caused more than trifling injuries to pilot or passenger. Of the 12 accidents four occurred on established air routes, one on a Hire Service; six on short passenger flights and one during a constructor's trials, and it is estimated that four were due to error of judgment on the part of the pilot, two to defects in aircraft structure or controls, two to defects in engine or installation, one due to weather conditions, and three to other causes.

Part I of the Report concludes with statistical tables of British Civil Aviation. During the year under review the figures for air transport on regular and irregular routes are: No. of machine flights, 4,677, machine miles, 890,000; passengers carried, 13,478, and cargo carried, 508 tons. All these figures, with the exception of the cargo carried, which shows a slight increase, show a disappointing decrease, and it is rather significant that compared with the Air Transport figures those of flying for hire, which would consist mainly of joy-ride flying, account for 23,519 machine flights, 139,000 machine miles, and 43,766 passengers carried. Thus, without any Government subsidy, or assistance of any kind, the joy-riding concerns carried more than three times as many passengers as the subsidised air lines. The flights were, however, of much shorter duration.

A table relating to flights and passengers carried between Great Britain and the Continent shows an increase from 14,777 to 17,835 passengers carried, but the British share of this passenger traffic is disappointing having fallen to 58 per cent., from the high level of 79 per cent. previously reached.

A table giving the statistics of imports and exports by air indicates a large increase in cargo carried by air transport services. The total value of imports and exports was estimated at £1,328,395; an increase of £445,162 over the previous year's figure. The principal part of this increase was contributed by exports to, and imports from, France. The table giving statistics of the "efficiency" of the subsidised services is of comparatively little interest on account of the basis employed. Although this basis has been changed this year, to the completion of a stage flight without interruption, it is of little more real value than the "efficiencies" shown on the old basis, and the only basis of any real value would obviously be one giving the number of flights completed as a percentage of the number of flights scheduled. On the basis chosen it is shown that out of 4,328 stage flights commenced, 4,064, or 95 per cent., were completed without interruption, and out of the 264 stage flights interrupted, 105 were completed on the same day after the interruption.

The statistics relating to the causes of the involuntary landings on regular air services show that a total of 286 such landings occurred, this figure not including landings for refuelling. The causes of these landings were: Weather, 50 per cent.; engine or installation failure, 34 per cent.; and other causes, 16 per cent.

Concerning the safety of flying, it is interesting to find that from May, 1919, to March 31, 1925, the number of accidents involving the death of passengers was four, and the mileage flown was 3,698,000 miles. The Report points out that this is equivalent to one fatal accident in a distance flown of 924,900 miles, equal to 37 times around the world. For the third year in succession no fatal accident occurred in joy-ride flights. One passenger was, however, slightly injured.

Part II of the Report deals with Civil Aviation in Foreign Countries, but although of very considerable interest, space does not permit of reference to it here.

Brennan Helicopter Crashes

THE Brennan Helicopter, which was built (in great secrecy) for the Air Ministry, was brought out for a trial flight at Farnborough, on October 2. After a preliminary test on the ground, the helicopter, with Mr. R. Graham in the pilot's seat, rose a few feet, and then turned over sideways and crashed into the ground. Some damage was done to the machine, but the pilot escaped unhurt.

Capt. Amundsen Honoured

ON September 30, Capt. Amundsen gave a lecture on his Polar flight before an audience of about 3,000 at Edinburgh,

when he was given a great reception. He was also presented by Lord Salvesen, president of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, with the Livingstone gold medal—the highest award of the Society—in recognition of his work on behalf of science.

Air War in Morocco

DURING last week's big French advance against the Riffs in Morocco, the offensive was assisted to a considerable extent by the use of aircraft. The latter formed a barrage of bombs and machine-gun fire just in front of the advancing French infantry, causing big losses to the Riffs, whose positions were rendered untenable time and again.

Bristol, "Cherub" in Germany: At the recent International meeting at Munich, the Messerschmitt M.17 monoplane, fitted with Bristol "Cherub" engine, obtained first place in both the altitude and the speed competitions, and, according to Herr Messerschmitt, the "Cherub" "ran like clockwork from beginning to end of the competitions." The pilot was Herr Karl Croneiss.

