

Commercial Aviation

figures with the Fokker F12s used two years ago on the Amsterdam—Batavia route, show how rapidly air transport develops. The D.C.3, on a recent run to the East, used 5 per cent. less fuel, took 27 per cent. less time at a 35 per cent. higher speed and carrying a 73 per cent. greater pay load.

The Army Co-operation flying season is about to start, though civil pilots get enough R.A.F. co-operation at times when fast aircraft pop out of clouds, unheralded by any previous radio warning. The other day a pilot reported a spot of what appears to have been Navy co-operation right on one of the main air routes. Bursts of

gunfire were seen around what must have been Queen Bee aeroplanes, which clever little insects seemed to be holding their own pretty successfully. A large commercial aeroplane, flying innocently upon its lawful occasions in an area not meant for nautical wildfowling, must be a pretty tempting target.

A curious rumour reaches me to the effect that, at one of the other London airports, the locals think that Croydon pilots boycott the place even when the weather at Croydon is bad. The fact is, of course, that, in weather which is pretty poor everywhere, people don't like landing at a strange aerodrome.

A. VIATOR.

Radio in the Hebrides

A SHORT-RANGE radio station is now in operation at Sollas aerodrome, North Uist, working on a frequency of 348 kc/s (862 m.). Northern and Scottish Airways' pilots have long merited this essential assistance.

Meanwhile, as if to balance this new service, the Sumburgh (Shetlands) D/F station is temporarily out of action.

Swissair Increases

SINCE the Swissair traffic figures have shown, for 1936, an increase in the number of passengers and the amount of freight and mail carried, it is not surprising that this company has ordered two new 21-seater D.C.3s for the coming season. The figures, incidentally, show an all-round increase of 22.5 per cent. in terms of ton-miles.

Safety Tests for the Potez 62

THE official figures of certain tests carried out last year by the French Air Ministry at Villacoublay with the 14-seater Potez 62 have just been published. They are worth giving since this twin-engined machine has been very popular on the Paris-Marseilles service, and Air France have, in fact, acquired a fleet of eighteen of them. Fitted with Gnome Rhone K 14s, with an all-up weight of 14,070 lb., it kept an altitude of 4,500 feet for one hour with one engine stopped. With Hispano-Suiza 12 Xirs engines, and at 16,500 lb., it maintained a height of 8,400 feet for one hour with one engine stopped. The tests indicate the altitudes at which these super-charged engines are most efficient.

The Seventh

LAST week the Short *Cassiopeia* left Southampton for Marseilles and Alexandria with fifteen passengers and the usual mail for Africa. This boat was launched on the 22nd of last month and was in service on the 27th, and the machines are now being turned out one every fortnight.

Last week, too, it was officially announced in Australia that the Government had agreed to the use of flying boats throughout the journey to Brisbane and Sydney. According to present ideas, this innovation on the Eastern route will involve the use, among other more normal bases, of Lake Gallilee in Palestine, Lake Habaniyah at Baghdad, and Victoria Point instead of Bangkok. In Australia the boats will probably follow the Southern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria, stopping at the mouth of the Norman River, crossing the Cape York Peninsula, and thereafter flying down the east coast to the terminus.

Back into Aviation

AFTER a complete disappearance, as far as aircraft construction is concerned, since pre-war days, the German Ago Company has reappeared with a twin-engined six-passenger feeder-line type. This machine, known as the Kurier, is of low-wing all-metal construction, and has two 240 h.p. Argus engines.

Croydon Airways' Changes

THE chief pilot of Croydon Airways, Ltd., the charter and training company, is now Mr. R. Pierce, and it is probable that he will fly Mr. Lipton's Comet entry in the New York-Paris race next August. Mr. "Timber" Woods, we understand, has severed his connection with the firm.

An Automatic Aerial

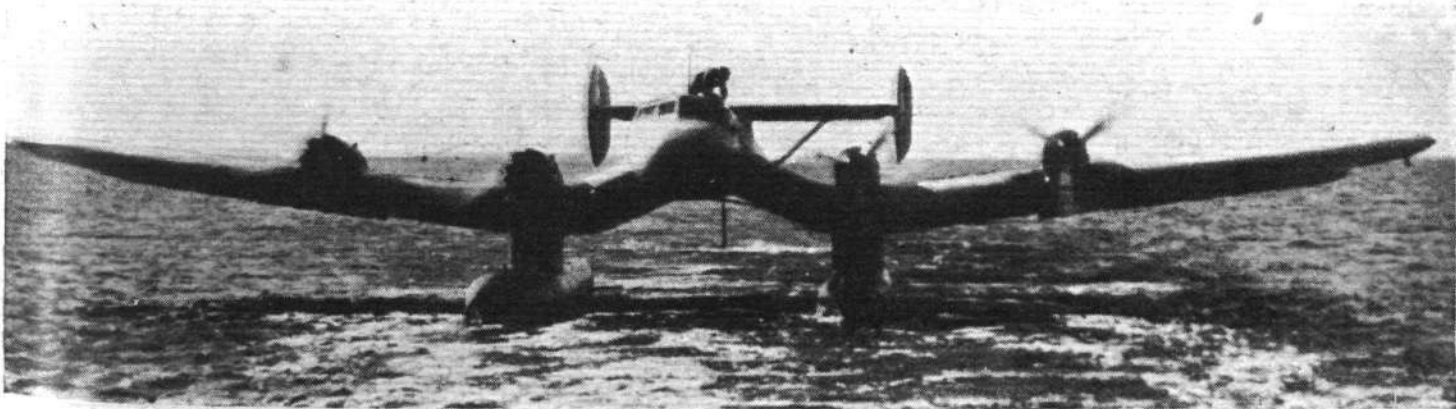
ANYONE who has had the job of winding in a transport machine radio aerial on a service with numerous landings will remember that it is no child's play—and least of all for the internal service pilot who acts as his own operator.

There appears to be nothing to replace the trailing aerial for serious work, but from America we hear of a quick-working, motor-driven aerial reel. Not only is this device, known as the Lear Motoreel, operated by finger-tip control, but it can also vary the length of the aerial to match different frequencies. Any given length can be pre-selected and the Motoreel will let out that length and no more. Warning lights on the dash indicate that the aerial is out and these do not flicker until the weighted "fish" is against the fairlead.

Maybury Junction

ALTHOUGH the Manchester Airport Committee's original £170,000 scheme for Ringway was held up by the Economy Committee at the beginning of last year, a proviso was made that the whole matter should be reconsidered after two years if it was then considered desirable to proceed with the complete scheme. The Airport Committee considers that it is now desirable, though their suggestion was made before the publication of the Maybury Report.

Meanwhile a storm has been rising in the West Riding trade circles because Yeadon airport has been completely ignored in the Maybury Report. There is, however, nothing in the Report calculated to discourage other operators from running branch lines to Yeadon or to any other "snubbed" airport. It is up to the West Riding to show that traffic potentialities exist; so far, the good people who are so upset have shown very little inclination to use the services which actually exist.



FOR THE NORTH ATLANTIC: Some very unusual features can be seen in this head-on view of the Diesel-engined Blohm and Voss Hamburger 139 float-plane which will be used over the North Atlantic. It has been designed for catapult use and has a range of more than 3,000 miles. The maximum speed is 135 m.p.h.