



## RATIONAL UNORTHODOXY

FOR three important reasons the Stearman-Hammond "Y," which was demonstrated last week for the first time in this country, is of more than usual interest.

In the first place, it represents a type which has been built round the tricycle type of undercarriage—and, as "Indicator" suggested in his article on the subject last week, this development really demands a clean sweep of many existing ideas. Secondly, a very real attempt has been made in its design to simplify (or, rather, to modify) the control layout so that any normally intelligent car driver should be thoroughly at home in it within a short time. Thirdly, the machine represents the first production fruits of the U.S. Bureau of Air Commerce's drive towards safer and easier flying for the average man or woman.

Among less important reasons are that it is of the pusher type, with all that this arrangement represents in the way of unlimited forward visibility and comfort, and that it is one more machine to continue the trend towards all-

metal construction in the private-owner class. The fact that at the present time its price in this country is likely to be high is neither here nor there. If the demand in the States should justify the move, no doubt the Stearman-Hammond people will put the production on a mass basis and we shall be able to buy it for a sum which will be attractive to the ordinarily interested and well-off individual. Probably a twin-engined four-seater on the same lines would be a better all-round proposition for the world market.

This particular machine has been bought by K.L.M. for instructional purposes, since the next additions to this company's fleet—whether D.C.4s or Boeings is not yet settled—will undoubtedly have the tricycle type of undercarriage. First Officer C. C. Steensma, one of the company's pilots, flew it over and gave a very convincing demonstration of its various capabilities.

Unfortunately some complicated Customs ruling adequately prevented anyone from flying in the machine either



A good impression of the general lines of the Stearman-Hammond can be obtained from this aerial view which was taken immediately after the Croydon demonstration.