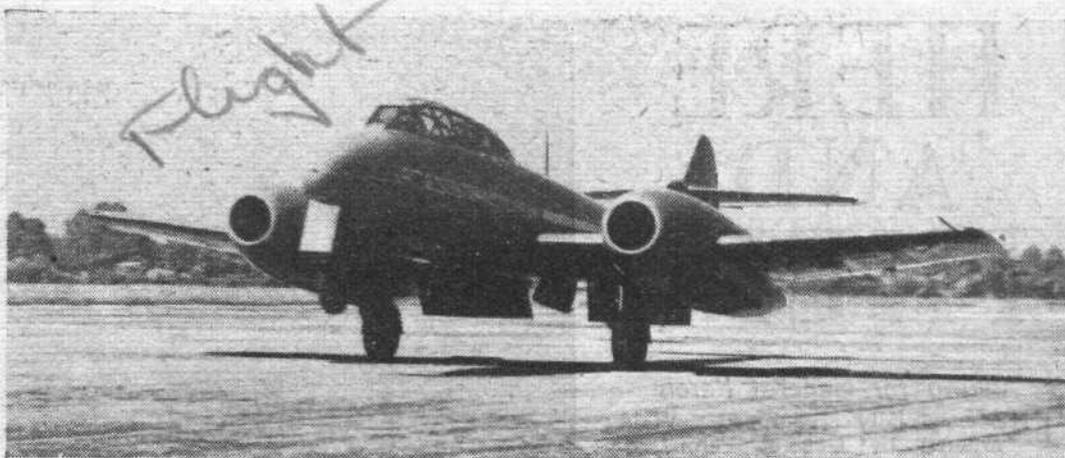


After touching down at 120 m.p.h., with more than half the fuel load remaining, the Meteor Trainer is seen before the nosewheel has made contact.



vice department, who has had to be de-pressurized in the Farnborough chamber in view of Waterton's intention to fly the first leg (Tangmere-Marseilles) non-stop at 30,000ft. En route to the Turkish Air Force field at Ismer, the Trainer will pause for fuel at Rome and Athens. In addition to the 180-gallon ventral tank, two 100-gallon wing tanks will be installed. Mr. Eric Greenwood will go on ahead in the Rapide

with other representatives of Gloster and Rolls-Royce. Turkey undoubtedly has a treat in store.

CONFIDENCE TRIP

Successful Mission to South America in Tudor IV

IT is both easy and natural to view the recent trip to South America by Sir Frank Spriggs and Sir Roy Dobson in a Tudor IV as a gesture of bravura, since the decision to use a Tudor for this purpose was made at a time when this type of aircraft had been hastily grounded following the loss of the B.S.A.A. *Star Tiger*. Nevertheless, the decision was a bold one and the fruits of its success are thus the sweeter.

Hawker Siddeley Aircraft have concluded signed contracts for the sale of their aircraft and aluminium houses in South America to the value of £14,000,000 and a trade mission by directors of the group had been projected for some time. What more natural than that a group aircraft, the Tudor, should be used for the purpose? British South American Airways were approached, a standard 32-seat Tudor IV, *Star Panther*, was chartered, "Hawker Siddeley Aircraft Co., Ltd." was painted over the door, and with a B.S.A.A. crew of six, plus a Star girl stewardess, everything was arranged.

Taking off from Heathrow on Saturday, April 17th, the *Star Panther* followed the normal B.S.A.A. route to Buenos Aires via Lisbon, Dakar, Natal and Rio de Janeiro.

One quite interesting point made by Sir Frank in talking of the trip, was that the various radio stations with which contact was maintained, seemed incredulous over the flight altitude and consistently asked for repeat confirmation of the altitude figures given. In this connection, the maximum altitude attained on the flight was 24,000ft and out of the total of 60½ hours' flying time, no less than twenty-eight hours were spent at about 20,000ft. The whole flight was made "above weather" whilst, it appeared, pretty well all other aircraft flying the scheduled routes were averaging 12,000ft and flying "in the dirt." Pressurization has very real value.

Sir Frank reported that the Tudor went like a sewing

machine throughout; there was never a hint of trouble in any shape whatever and the comfort and noise level were, in his opinion, better than that to be found in the finest trains. Night landings were made at various times and some of the airfields visited were of by no means high standard, so that the ground manoeuvrability of the Tudor was well tried. The commander of the aircraft, Captain D. M. Walbourn, had not the slightest difficulty with *Star Panther* and it was demonstrated that at any airfield where an American machine of comparable size could go, there could the Tudor IV go also.

The Argentine Air Force have had Meteors for some little time, of course, and are more than pleased with them. Many of the pilots were trained on Meteors by Hawker Siddeleys in this country and they fly their aircraft extremely well. In addition to Meteors, Argentina also have some Avro Lincolns and, as a result of this trade mission, it is possible that orders will be placed for Avro Athena trainers and for the two-seat Meteor trainers. The South Americans are very jet-minded and this accords well for the future export of our industry's products. Argentine officials were given a trip in the Tudor and were said to be very impressed with its qualities. The order they had placed for Tudors was cancelled following the grounding of the type, but whether the cancellation is rescinded is chiefly a financial matter, particularly since alternative orders for American aircraft have been placed. In the light of this, the repercussions of a panic decision are clearly evident.

Star Panther's passenger list was as follows: Sir Frank Spriggs, K.B.E., Lady Spriggs, and their daughter Miss June Spriggs; Sir Roy Dobson, C.B.E., and his daughter, Mrs. Broadhead; Brigadier-General Crossland, Miss Diana Crossland, Major A. G. P. Collins and Mr. R. Conner.

The aircraft returned to Heathrow on Sunday, May 9th.

TOWARDS CHEAPER PRIVATE FLYING

SOME further details of the Royal Aero Club's new maintenance schedules for privately owned aircraft, referred to in *Flight*, May 6th, are now available. The broad outline of the scheme includes a monthly check; a six-monthly inspection with an over-riding maximum of 120 hours; a twelve-monthly inspection coinciding with the renewal of the C. of A., and a three-yearly complete overhaul now associated with the C. of A., with an over-riding maximum of 500 hours. The engines and accessories must be maintained in terms of hours as laid down in the makers' handbooks; since there are often certain features of the airframe associated with the engine, and peculiar to certain aircraft, it is the intention of the R.Ae.C. to prepare engine schedules transcribed from makers' handbooks.

The first of these schedules applies to privately owned single-engined aircraft of total maximum authorized weight of 3,500 lb, and is called "General Maintenance Schedule, R.Ae.C/1, Issue 1"; it is effective from June 1st, 1948, and covers airframes only. Any modifications, rectifications or special inspections considered essential by the A.R.B. must be completed within the time specified and a record of the work entered and certified in the log-book. Details of rectifications performed during the monthly inspections should also be enumerated, as well as those not carried out or otherwise outstanding, in the log-books. Engines and V.P. airscrews are to

be maintained in accordance with makers' recommendations as approved by the A.R.B., and instruments and accessories must be overhauled in accordance with A.R.B. regulations.

The select committee appointed by the R.Ae.C. is continuing its work in conjunction with the A.R.B., and schedules relating to private aircraft in the higher weight categories will be issued.

ASTRAL PERFORMANCE

ON Tuesday evening last, the Adastral Players made an excellent job of Frank Harvey's *Saloon Bar* at the Scala Theatre. It was their 29th major production. This particular play has the great attraction for amateur dramatic groups of requiring a large cast—there are twenty-five characters, five of whom are principals—but involves the difficulty of combining drama with comedy and the latter, more than any other stage quality, calls for a delicately skilled touch.

Percival Griffiths and Dorothy Henzell both did more than well, but the triumph of the evening belonged to Frank Barnard whose performance in the leading rôle was the more outstanding in view of it being his stage début. *Saloon Bar* is not an easy play for amateurs: there is little physical action and thus the development is somewhat wordy, but Miss Alison Munro produced her characters expertly and, after the first quarter of an hour, the pace was carried at a steadily increasing tempo. Altogether it was an evening much appreciated by those on each side of the footlights.