

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor of "Flight" does not hold himself responsible for the views expressed by correspondents in these columns. The names and addresses of the writers, not necessarily for publication, must in all cases accompany letters.

Those Saucers

I HAVE noticed with some interest that the "flying saucer" question has achieved considerable prominence once again, and I was both interested and amused to read the paragraph entitled "Pint-sized Pilot Pickled" in your issue of March 16th.

With very few exceptions, I take a very dim view of reports on most aeronautical matters as seen in the majority of our daily papers, but there are so many reports of these "soucoupes volantes" (as the French have it) which do sound reasonably feasible that I think there must be something behind it all.

Of all the thousands of "types" who are supposed to have viewed these wonders of the ether with astonishment, surely some competent being of the aeronautical world must have seen some of them, if there is any truth in the subject at all? I have not yet read or heard of any official or really authoritative article on the subject.

Very wisely, I think, *Flight* has not voiced any definite opinion on this question.

May I conclude by saying I consider your magazine to be far and away better than any other comparable journal in the same class, and humbly wish you and your editorial staff the very best of luck with your publication always? I know I could not do without it!

FRANCIS V. POUND.

Harrow Weald, Middlesex.

ONE is a little shaken to find the worthy Mr. Charles Gardner, of all people, warning us ("Crockery Corner," *Flight* Correspondence, March 30th) of impending doom at the hands of saucer-borne, pint-size Martians. Does he not recall what happened a few years ago in the United States when an equally illustrious radio commentator issued a similar warning? I do not suggest, of course, that *Flight* readers would rush in hordes to jump off the British equivalent of the Brooklyn Bridge, or whatever it was that the more trepid of the American listeners did when listening to a "Martian invasion" play.

My own view is that the danger is overrated. Just think. The very first little man to touch down would find himself surrounded by a horde of M.C.A., Customs and Immigration officials demanding his I.C.A.O.-approved pilot's licence, general declaration, passenger manifest, disembarkation card, cargo manifest, baggage manifest, international certificate of inoculation, passport, visa, and sworn oath that he was carrying neither nylon stockings nor uncooked meat.

He would be back in his saucer, pressing all the atomic-assisted take-off buttons at once, and radio-ing "Scrub the op, chaps," before you could say Pakenham.

London, W.1.

FEARLESS FREDDIE.

Reserve Recruitment

I HAVE noticed recently the publication of several letters by ex-Service personnel regarding the almost prohibitive conditions required for entry of pilots into the R.A.F. Reserve Forces. I agree with these correspondents that the qualifications required practically prohibit the entry of partially trained aircrew into the Reserves unless they qualify privately at great expense. But what of the poor young fellow who for obvious reasons has decided, after leaving school at the age of 16 or 17, to undertake a course of further education in higher technology or in one of the many branches of engineering and has consequently been deferred from National Service until he has completed his technical training? As in my own case, for example—that of an aeronautical student at one of the several technical colleges now teaching this branch of engineering.

I and many of my fellow students taking a broader outlook on aviation decided initially to educate ourselves both technically and practically, including practical flying training. But can we do all these things? Definitely not, if the cost of flying remains at its present exorbitant level. I myself was extremely lucky in winning one of the few Air League flying scholarships last year and by means of which I obtained my Private Pilots' Licence. But where am I now? Almost back where I started. I have made repeated attempts to join the R.A.F. Reserves but of course I am not sufficiently qualified. What, then, am I to do? This question must surely be worrying the organizers of the recently announced flying-scholarship scheme, for if the State is to provide means for young fellows like myself to obtain flying training, surely their support will

abide with the young State-sponsored fledglings until their qualifications meet with the requirements of the R.A.F.V.R.; or, alternatively, the R.A.F.V.R. might reduce its present standard of qualification to a level which permitted the scholarship trainees to continue their training under R.A.F.V.R. supervision.

Perhaps I may summarize the points outlined above as follows. An air-minded fellow on leaving school decides that, in spite of the temptation immediately to enter the R.A.F. as aircrew under a short-service agreement, he might undergo further education in aeronautical engineering with a hope of obtaining flying training. If he proved worthy, then would the State air-scholarship scheme provide the necessary means, in conjunction with the R.A.F.V.R., to give him a good, sound training and maintain the standard he would attain? If this were so, he would, at the end of his technical training, enter the R.A.F. either for short- or long-term service. If he chose a short period of National Service, on leaving the R.A.F. he would be in a position to give valuable service to the aircraft industry.

This system, I have no doubt, would produce both military and civilian personnel capable of undertaking technical posts or flying duties or both, with the necessary education and grounding that is required in modern aviation.

Bridlington, Yorks.

R. C. L. SAMPLE.

Which Way Up?

WITH regard to the photographs which I recently secured of a Meteor Mk 8 looping in formation with a Mk 7 (and which were published in *Flight* of March 9th), your correspondent, Mr. Will Lynch, A.R.P.S., has, as you suggest, raised a matter which has always been very debatable, particularly among photographers.

It is generally accepted by many that a photograph should appear in the position in which the photographer saw the subject when making the exposure, in which case the suggestion put forward by Mr. Lynch would be in order, although I would not venture to say in this case that the vivid impression would be increased. I thank him for taking such an interest in the photographs but I would hasten to say that if they had appeared as he suggests I would have been rather disappointed; in fact, I take this opportunity of paying tribute to *Flight* for the very excellent set-up and reproduction.

Whilst I do not intend to dogmatize, it is my opinion that air-to-air photographs should be printed, where possible, with the sky-line level. This serves to indicate immediately the attitude of the aircraft in the photograph, a point which is readily appreciated by "flying types" especially. I feel that the whole thing depends on what the picture is intended to depict. In this instance I wanted a picture of a Mk. 8 executing a loop, something a bit different from the usual line of air-to-air shots. The fact that I was being looped in formation in a Mk. 7 was, to me at least, of secondary importance; it seemed the only practicable way of going about the job, although of course the conditions thereby introduced were not exactly ideal for handling a large camera! Skilful handling of the aircraft by the pilots, however, helped keep the *g* at a reasonable figure.

The resulting pictures, regarded purely as impressions of a Mk. 8, have a certain amount of pictorial value too, and can be used quite easily without explanatory captions: The first



One of the two pictures under discussion. Left: as it was. Right: as it might have been.

Gloster Aircraft
Photos