SCIMITAR SIMULATOR—different from Air Trainers' kind—is this "tank," used for testing the steam catapults of H.M.S. "Victorious" and having the same weight as one of the new Supermarine fighter/bombers. A news-item (Col. 2 opposite page) gives further details.

SHIPMATES: Ranged on the flight deck of H.M.S. "Ark Royal" (right) are two Chance Vought F8U Crusaders and two Douglas A4D Skyhawks, based aboard U.S.S. "Saratoga." The American visitors are seen in company with Sea Venoms and a Sea Hawk.

object of the trials is to measure the effect of the catapults on the ship's steam system and to train the catapult crews.

Those taking part include an analysis team from the R.A.E., Bedford; officers from the Department of the Engineer-in-Chief, Admiralty; and representatives of the Flight Deck Machinery Trials and Training Unit, based on R.N.A.S. Lee-on-Solent. When *Victorious*, which was commissioned in January, goes to sea in June her catapults will be used by aircraft for the first time. Scimitars (whose working-up at R.N.A.S. Ford is described on pages 449-451) will be among the aircraft types embarking in the carrier.

Vulcan's Swift Trips

SINCE the opening of Embakasi, Nairobi, Airport (described in *Flight* for March 21), some details have become available of a notable flight by one of the Vulcans of No. 83 Sqn. which took part in the display. The aircraft, with A.V-M. "Gus" Walker on board, flew 1,215 miles from Nairobi to Salisbury, Rhodesia, at an average speed of 593 m.p.h. and made the return trip at 608 m.p.h.

Exports "All-time High"

EXPORTS by the aircraft industry for January and February reached what has been described by the S.B.A.C. as "an all-time high"—£24,157,745 compared with £16,742,595 for the same period last year. February's figure, £12,978,483, was the biggest ever for that month and the third largest monthly total on record. Sales of aircraft and parts reached the high level of £8,780,719; engines accounted for £3,694,019; electrical parts £290,045; tyres £43,472 and aeronautical instruments £170,228.

India was the best customer during February, buying £1,979,625 worth of aircraft and parts, followed by Canada (£1,633,713) and the U.S. (£1,009,515). Some 22 per cent of the January-February total for aircraft and parts—amounting to over £3,360,000—was paid in dollars.

Percy Pilcher Museum

AT Stanford Hall, a William and Mary stately home on the Leicestershire-Northamptonshire border, an aeronautical museum has been set up to honour the memory and pioneer work of Percy Sinclair Pilcher. It contains a full-scale replica of his glider "The Hawk"; a mural painting symbolizing him as Icarus Secundus; early photographs depicting his experiments; and a widely-culled selection of press-cuttings describing the replica, which was built by apprentices of Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft, Ltd., and is suspended from the ceiling with a Pilcher-like figure flying it.

On March 26 the replica was formally handed over to Lord Braye, the owner of Stanford, by Mr. E. T. Jones on behalf of the Royal Aeronautical Society. It was Pilcher's friendship with Lord Braye's father which brought him to use the surrounding parkland for experimental flying, and the present owner's enthusiasm for aviation has led him to establish the museum; and it was before members of the (then) Aeronautical Society that Pilcher was demonstrating when he met with a fatal accident on September 30, 1899. A stone monument, set up by the Society, stands in nearby fields on the Northamptonshire side of the Avon to commemorate Pilcher; and in the museum he now has a more human and interesting memorial.

Lord Braye said at the handing-over ceremony that, having been a pilot himself, it always was his ambition to "bring Pilcher to the fore." Mr. Jones said that he was handing-over the replica on behalf of his present successor as R.Ae.S. president, Sir George Edwards, but that the Society was only its conveyor—the real donor being Mr. H. M. Woodhams, managing director of Sir W. G. Armstrong Whitworth Aircraft, Ltd. "Pilcher had very great and forceful ideas," said Mr. Jones, "and had he not demonstrated when weather conditions were not entirely suitable he might have achieved the first powered flight."

Stanford Hall and the museum are to be open to the public from next Sunday (April 6) onwards, and thereafter on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons until the end of October. The estate lies south of the A427 road from Rugby to Market Harborough. A photograph of the replica of "The Hawk," at Baginton, was published in *Flight* for March 14 and a commemorative article on Percy Pilcher appeared on March 9, 1956.

More Solid-Propellant Missiles

ACCORDING to Maj-Gen. Bernard Schriever, commander of the Ballistic Missile Division of the U.S.A.F., a design competition will shortly be held to determine contractors for the "second-generation" ICBMs and IRBMs with solid-propellant motors. The prime contractor for the first U.S. Army second-generation strategic weapon (the solid-propellant Pershing) was named last week as the Martin Company (Baltimore division). The Army has special authority to develop the Pershing, since its range is at least 300 miles in excess of the Army's "legal limit" of 200 miles.

Musick Trophy Awarded

ON the occasion of the Royal Aeronautical Society's Commonwealth Memorial Lecture on March 27 (see page 444) the Musick Memorial Trophy was presented to Mr. G. G. Roberts, technical director of Smiths Aircraft Instruments, who shares the award with Mr. J. E. N. Hooper of the Royal Radar Establishment for the work which they did on cloud-and-collision-warning radar.

The Trophy, which was raised by public subscriptions in Auckland, New Zealand, is in memory of Captain Edwin Musick and six of his companions who were killed when the *Samoan Clipper* was lost on its first commercial flight from America to New Zealand in 1938. The award is made by the Royal New Zealand Aero Club who obtain nominations from the R.Ae.S. and the I.A.S. in America and is made annually to the group or individual making the most practical contribution, development or improvement to the safety of aircraft with special regard to trans-oceanic aviation.

Comets at Work

AN incident which occurred on an R.C.A.F. Comet recently has focused attention on the robustness of the modified fuselage. While the aircraft was flying at 41,000ft, 15 miles south-west of Ottawa, a dinghy contained in the port wing blew out and the stowage panel punctured the fuselage and caused a pressure leak. The aircraft, one of the two Comet 1As of 412 Squadron R.C.A.F., landed without further incident. The commanding officer of 412 Squadron is attempting to trace parts of the dinghy.

Royal Air Force Transport Command Comets were also in the news recently. Some aircraft were found to be suffering from minor external corrosion on the underside, apparently owing to incompatability between the paint and some fluid—it is suggested that hydraulic or de-icing fluid is a likely cause. The trouble is not serious and quite simple repairs are being carried out to the aircraft in rotation. Polished Comets, such as B.O.A.C.'s 2Es, are not affected. Transport Command's ten aircraft have now accumulated 10,000 flying hours.