

CORRESPONDENCE.

[NOTE.—The following letter, received by the President, is published to correct mistakes made in the review of *Jahrbuch 1937/38 der Deutschen Akademie der Luftfahrtforschung*, published in the JOURNAL for October, 1938. Every care is taken in reviewing books received and the Editor is glad to have the opportunity of publishing the letter from Ministerial Director Herr A. Baeumker, Chancellor of the Deutschen Akademie der Luftfahrtforschung, to remove any misunderstanding. It should be noted that the Council are not responsible for any opinions expressed in any papers or reviews in the JOURNAL, the responsibility for which ultimately is the Editor's unless otherwise stated.]

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY.

DEAR MR. FEDDEN,—The book review in the JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY, No. 334, page 919, of October, 1938, contains statements which are not quite in accordance with facts.

The election of members of the Deutsche Akademie der Luftfahrtforschung is not carried out by the Government and will not be in the future. The methods of election in the main conform to those applying to the constitution of all academies.

On the founding of the academy the election was naturally spread over a comparatively wide circle, very much wider than is the case with an already existing academy which only has to replace members. Certainly one or other important personality is not yet suitably placed, or even perhaps not yet admitted to the academy. Provision was made from the first to revise the membership of the academy from time to time, to adjust deficiencies and especially to obtain outstanding younger men of talent. The Government, however, does not take any part either direct or indirect in these elections.

The lines upon which the academy is run and the inner organisation of individual groups are as yet by no means definitely established. No part of the Yearbook of the academy contains such a statement.

The objects of the Akademie der Luftfahrtforschung differ from those of the Lilienthal Gesellschaft inasmuch that in the academy the general scientific principles of flight are dealt with in a freer form (after the style of the old academies). Related subjects in particular and problems in natural science of all kinds receive special consideration.

On the other hand, the Lilienthal Society deals with direct technical problems of the day. The Lilienthal Society has to make clear just what aviation requires for practical utilisation now and in the near future. The work of the Deutsche Akademie is, as stated, based on fundamentals and accordingly is not bound down in its work to any time limit nor is its scope restricted.

That the members of the academy have to undertake a minimum fixed task—only one scientific lecture in a period of five years as a duty—is a condition which has to be fulfilled in most of the German universities. This ruling as regards the mode of work is therefore in no way new or dictatorial.

It would be totally misleading to assume that any official body, such as the German Air Ministry, imposes duties of any kind on this academy. The scope of the work of the academy is decided solely in accordance with the wishes of the members themselves. The German Air Ministry and other officials can only request the academy for expert opinion.

Whoever carefully reads the statutes of the academy will find that the real connection of the academy to the aeronautical directorate of the Reich is actually

only through the president, who according to para. 4, line 1, is the German Air Minister himself. The "supervision" provided for in para. 10 of the Statutes in no way goes beyond the principle which has been laid down for all German scientific academies for a long time. In the first place it refers to the control of the sums allocated from the Government grants in the sense of a properly ordered financial trusteeship. No departmental influence is hereby included.

The conclusions drawn in the last sentence of the review in the JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY are also inaccurate. A number of names are mentioned. Some of these personalities were in any case envisaged for nomination as members at a suitable date. Others of those mentioned have been out of Germany for a long while. One of those named is no longer alive. This professor was at one time definitely nominated for election as a member, but unfortunately he died before the formation of the academy. This was a man who was to have been nominated as a special professor for aeronautical research purposes, by the German Air Ministry, but unfortunately he did not survive to receive the appointment.

It may be stated categorically that the Deutsche Akademie der Luftfahrtforschung cannot be regarded in any respect as "a sort of Government Advisory Body."—Yours, etc.,

(Signed) BAEUMKER.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY.

SIR,—With regard to Mr. W. E. Gray's letter (your JOURNAL, 1938, p. 917), I am sorry to say that the opinion expressed by him, deduced from an otherwise correct observation, appears to be in complete disagreement with the opinions of pilots who have tried "Dart Kitten" aeroplanes.

That a wing shows a tendency to drop during attempts of stalled flights is largely due to small inaccuracies during assembly.

But one must not confuse this phenomenon with the aerodynamical fact of a *stall beginning at the wing tip* which will result in a premature loss of the lateral control and finish in a spin (the "all-too common incipient spin manner," Mr. Gray states).

Obviously, small inaccuracies in assembly (either by the manufacturer or by subsequent treatment of the aeroplane) which affect the aerodynamical qualities of cambered wing tips, such as to be found on the "Dart Kitten," will cause the dropping of a wing during a partial stall. This being due to the difference of the aerodynamic forces produced on the wing tips which are acting—Mr. Gray will agree—on a lever equal to approximately half the span of the machine.

Mr. Gray might have discovered that by proper application of the ailerons provided for this purpose it can be more or less counteracted.

I cannot but express admiration for the frank statement that to fly a "Dart Kitten" in a stalled condition is a "tricky and uncertain business." Stalling is a bad business anyway, it has killed many pilots and it should be excluded from flying performances. But it must be said that the special reference to the "Dart Kitten" seems to be contrary to the general opinion of pilots. Mr. G. M. Alington, for instance, has demonstrated in many prolonged stalled glides down to few feet above the ground, that there is nothing "tricky and uncertain" with the stall of the "Kitten."

The "Dart Kitten" can, of course, be forced into a spin by appropriate application of the very powerful rudder.

I have to apologise for the fact that Mr. W. E. Gray seems to have inferred from my reference to Mr. Relf's paper that my design is "fool-proof at the stall." I never intended to indicate that.—Yours faithfully,

A. R. WEYL.