

up, this causing a whipstall. With the motor wide open it took all my strength to hold the stick as far forward as it would go, thus managing to keep from whipstalling. In this manner I struggled along until about a hundred feet of altitude was obtained. At this point there was quite a strong wind, which was very helpful in getting the nose down and turning round; then another turn for landing. In the meantime it had begun clouding up as though getting ready for a blow. To get back to the surface I still had to keep the motor wide open and the stick all the way forward. In attempting to land, the motor could not be slowed down at all, because, as was said before, the ship would have been whipstalled. Nevertheless, when back

near the surface the nose came up, and nothing could be done about it. The result was a whipstall at about a hundred feet. Seeing that a crash was inevitable, I cut the switch. The Giro fell off to the left, landing on the left wing and tail.

After investigation, the crash was found to be due to the fact that snow had drifted in the tail-end of the fuselage, resulting in the tail-heaviness.

Up to the flight of September 17, including three months' operation the preceding Fall, there had been drifts with winds as high as 50 m.p.h. The Autogiro was on the surface during all this drift and had taken no snow inside at all.

ALL in the DAY'S WORK

Some Varied Incidents in the Duties of R.A.F. Squadrons Overseas

THE daily newspapers give but little news of the work of R.A.F. squadrons overseas, for their business is rarely sensational enough to attract the notice of Press correspondents. Yet their doings are full of interest, and adventure is accepted as a normal part of the day's work. Very rarely has "air action" to be taken, and things on the ground have to reach a pretty bad pass before a single bomb is dropped. But watch and ward over the deserts and the mountains goes on unceasingly. Not a little blood would be spilt in obscure tribal frays if the R.A.F. squadrons were to be withdrawn. It is the possibility of "police bombing" which quells the ardour of raiders and rebels, and so saves life.

The Aden hinterland is always a likely scene of strife, and before the days of air power there was little which Britain could do to prevent the fighting. Air Commodore Portal, D.S.O., M.C., the A.O.C. Aden Command, has at his disposal No. 8 (Bomber) Squadron, equipped with the Vincent aeroplane, a section of R.A.F. armoured cars, some Protectorate Levies, and some regular military units which are intended for the defence of Aden against attack from the sea. For effective control of the tribes in the hinterland he depends mainly on No. 8 B.S. The following are typical instances of the sort of thing which is constantly going on in the hinterland. Last summer the Acting Resident received a most impertinent letter from a certain petty sheikh in which the writer threatened to fire on any aircraft which might presume to fly over his territory. It is usually those who want to disturb the peace who object to the sight of the guardians of the police, and it was a fair inference that this sheikh was cogitating mischief. He was ordered to come and explain his conduct. Meanwhile a strip mosaic of his village and surrounding parts was made, so that if air action should become necessary it would be easy to identify the guilty party. However, the sheikh's heart failed him, and he persuaded the head sheikh of the tribe to which he belonged to come in with him and put forward a suitable apology.

Persuasion

Two sections of another tribe had always resented an agreement made with the authorities to respect the inviolability of the trade routes, and they combined to attack a caravan, and killed and wounded six travellers. The Sultan of their tribe was ordered to collect a heavy fine from the guilty sections and to take hostages from them. At first he disregarded the order, for raiding and plunder, in which murder is a scarcely regrettable incident, seem a sacred right to some of these tribes. So an ultimatum was sent direct to the raiders to say that, unless the fine and hostages were sent in by a certain date, No. 8 B.S. would pay them a visit and talk to them in language which they



Fairey III F's of No. 45 (B) Squadron over the Pyramids.

could not fail to understand. They came in and paid up.

Sometimes the patrols find trouble and settle it without even knowing that any was brewing. Another tribe had looted some camels from traders from the Yemen, when two Vincents happened to fly over them on patrol. The airmen knew nothing about the raid, but the conscience-stricken raiders thought that vengeance was about to overtake them. Hastily they went to the Sharif who ruled over all their tribe, and begged him to take the loot and restore it to its owners. This was done, and the Yemini merchants doubtless feel due gratitude to the Royal Air Force.

In the very same week as the above incident, a local Sultan was very properly trying to restore peace among some of his tribesmen who were quarrelling and perhaps had already come to blows. The Sultan was not finding it an easy matter, when by chance two Vincents landed at the headquarters of the district on a visit. The mere sight of them immediately strengthened the Sultan's hand, and the recalcitrant tribesmen forthwith accepted his terms.

Flights of Mercy

Flights of mercy are almost as common as flights to preserve the peace. The Sharif who restored the Yemini camels was taken ill about the time of that incident, and a medical officer flew out to attend to him. He completely recovered. On another occasion an Arab boy with a badly diseased leg was brought in to hospital at Aden. Again, a firm of Indian merchants grew anxious over the non-appearance at Berbera of a steamer carrying passengers and goods, and asked for the help of No. 8 B.S. The steamer was found, late, but on its way.

From India come similar stories of mercy flights. Kashmir is a wild country in the mountains beyond Gilgit, and last summer it was afflicted with an outbreak of bubonic plague. A supply of plague vaccine was straightway flown up to Gilgit in two aeroplanes. A training flight to Gilgit has several times been undertaken by the Hart wing (Nos. 11 and 39 B.S.), but the journey involves crossing tremendous mountains where no forced landing grounds