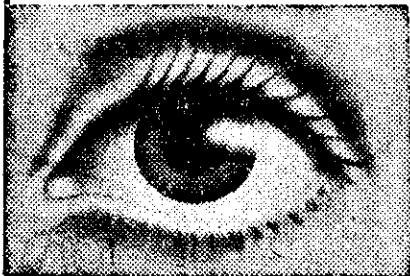


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EXCITED BUT SILENT

Air Experts and Jet Plane

No one knows yet what jet propulsion may do to aeronautics. We know only that the experts are excited about it.

Excited but silent. The day after the revolution was announced the BBC arranged for two or three of the men most closely associated with it to come before the microphone in the Science Notebook session. They came—including Group-Captain Whittle himself. But this is all they said:

Announcer:

HERE'S news of a revolutionary development in aero-engines—jet propulsion. No one can say yet exactly what the successful development of this invention may mean. Its possibilities are far too vast, and no one can describe the engine or the plane it flies. They're both on that list that is marked "Very Very secret." But here is the aeronautical expert, Mr. E. Coulston Shepherd, to give you his ideas about it.

Mr. Shepherd

As you've heard, this method of propulsion means that an aeroplane needs no air screw. The engine has to make a stream of gas instead. You may use an internal combustion engine in the aeroplane as a help to manufacture this stream or jet, or you may make the flow of the gas itself turn the compressor. This is a matter of choice and ultimately

of experience. Inventors have plumped for both methods. Which method Group-Captain Whittle employs I'm not yet allowed to tell you, and I shan't really help you to make your own guess if I say that in a patterned specification of 1936 he combined both ideas. Anyhow there's no air-screw, and the aeroplane is driven forward by the blowing out of a powerful stream of gas behind it. It's very much as though you blew up an ordinary toy balloon and then let it go. You remember how the air rushing out of the neck sends the balloon through the air. This principle applied to the aeroplane means that there is less head resistance (there aren't any screws of course) and there is therefore no twisting slip-stream to disturb the flow of air over the wings and past the body. You should get a faster airflow over the wings, which might be a positive advantage. Quite apart from the terrific power that may be generated by a jet, these things should mean more of a lift and more speed for a given power. In Italy and Germany speeds above 500 miles an hour and an amazing rate of climb were promised. We in this country have made so many flights in a jet-driven fighter that we know how much is to be expected of it. I'm betraying no secrets when I say that we're expecting a great deal. In fact production is now contemplated. Our jet propulsion unit works and works well. And the might of the R.A.F. will eventually be greatly increased by it.

(Continued on next page)



The powerful four-bladed propeller of the Thunderbolt, America's new fighter plane. Will its nose soon be put out of joint?