

engaged in the air-craft industry in Great Britain, and if it is important, as has been said, immediately to make arrangements for air traffic from London to Egypt, it would probably be much simpler for Great Britain to make special arrangements with the countries between Great Britain and Egypt for that purpose, and probably very much more satisfactory arrangements could be made for that kind of a service with the few countries interested than could possibly be made in a world wide convention.

In addition to these statements it is quite conceivable that even with the present stage of development in air traffic, and with the large expense in connection therewith, it might be very important for the commercial interests of Great Britain to have speedy communication for passengers and letters or small parcels with countries comparatively close by, such as France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. There does not appear to be any reason why an effort should not be made for immediate arrangements with those countries, which doubtless could easily be done on a reciprocal basis, without worrying about the opinion of the United States, or Japan, or any of the other numerous Allies gathered together in Paris for a very different purpose.

In regard to air traffic regulations, whether national or international, very much more care will have to be taken than is yet apparent in the parties interested in this convention. I noticed in a report of a meeting held in London the other day that Lord Balfour¹ expressed the opinion that a man might be equally injured by something falling from an aeroplane whether it was flown for pleasure or profit. While another case was also reported, April 21st, of an air-man flying over Chester causing damage to telegraph wires, and flying at such a low altitude as to endanger the public. It would therefore look as if there was ample room for work and experience in connection with domestic flying, while international flying should be left until some experience is gained in connection with the matter. For example, the attempt to settle legal rights in this Convention would in practice, be an absurdity. Possibly some of the principal difficulties arise from the evident attempt to make the laws and usages in regard to ships which can come only to the shore, apply to air-craft which can pass over a country or land therein. No possible punishment can follow the passengers of an unknown or unrecognized air-craft for anything that they may do contrary to the local laws or against the nationals of the territory over which they pass. This Convention also has the same fault as some others, in that the Federal Government or Congress of the United States has no criminal jurisdiction in the various states of which it is composed.

The parties interested in this Convention have made the error of endeavoring to first make rules for an International Convention which the people of Great Britain would practically have to accept for their domestic air traffic or

¹ Lord Balfour of Burleigh (Alexander Hugh), président de la Politique commerciale et industrielle d'après guerre, de 1916 à 1917.