

delightful whimsicality. Thomas Wentworth Higginson says of it:

His humor was singularly spontaneous, and took oftenest the form of a droll picture culminating in a little dramatic scene in which he enacted all the parts. A grave discussion, for instance, as to the fact, often noticed, that men are apt to shorten in size as they grow older, suggested to him the probable working of this process in some vast period of time like the longevity of the Old Testament patriarchs. His busy fancy at once conjured up a picture of Methuselah in his literally declining years, when he had shrunk to be less than knee-high compared with an ordinary man. The patriarch is running about the room, his eyes streaming with tears. "What's the matter, Thuse?" says a benevolent stranger. "Why are you crying?" "I ain't crying," responds the aged patriarch, brushing away the drops. "It's these plaguey shoestrings that keep getting into my eyes." Again, in answer to an inquiry about a child, I made some commonplace remark on the tormenting rapidity with which one's friends' children grow up, and he said eagerly: "That's it! That's it! It is always the way! You meet an old friend and say to her in a friendly manner, 'By the way, how is that little girl of yours?' and she answers, 'Very well, I thank you. She is out in Kansas visiting her granddaughter.'"

And yet they say the New England Puritan has no sense of humor!

But to return to Carlyle, whose latest biography really started me on these discursive notes. Few people now read

the works of Carlyle, just as few people now read the works of Dr. Johnson. If Johnson's style, as Goldsmith said it was, is whale-ish, Carlyle's is taurine. But, like Johnson, Carlyle is still a great and interesting figure in the history of English culture. He has to his credit this, that he introduced into England, and so into the United States, a knowledge of German letters and philosophy. So far as I am concerned, I feel no special sense of gratitude to him on this account, since I have never derived any great solace from German poetry or metaphysics. The German language affects me much as it did Voltaire. When that erratic but gifted Frenchman was living at the Court of Frederick the Great, he "avoided the state dinners," says Dr. Will Durant in his brilliant "Story of Philosophy;" "he could not bear to be surrounded with bristling generals; he reserved himself for the private suppers to which Frederick, later in the evening, would invite a small inner circle of literary friends; for this greatest prince of his age yearned to be a poet and a philosopher. The conversation at these suppers was always in French; Voltaire tried to learn German, but gave it up after nearly choking; and wished that the Germans had more wit and fewer consonants."

As Carlyle was always choking with impatience or downright anger, a few extra consonants were no obstacle to his pleasure. He was less interested in literature as an art than as a vehicle for the conveyance of moral ideas and reforms. This assertion is justified even in the light thrown upon him by his latest and most sympathetic biographer, David

A. Wilson, whose "Carlyle at His Zenith" has just come from the press of Messrs. E. P. Dutton & Co., being the fourth volume of a work which is to be completed in six. Six volumes seems rather a disproportionate amount to devote to an author whose really readable work could be easily compressed into the same compass. Carlyle had little or none of the clubability of Johnson. Darwin in his autobiographical notes gives a telling snap-shot of him: "I remember a funny dinner at my brother's where, amongst a few others, were Babbage [the mathematician] and Lyell [the geologist], both of whom liked to talk. Carlyle, however, silenced every one by haranguing during the whole dinner on the advantages of silence. After dinner Babbage, in his grimmest manner, thanked Carlyle for his very interesting lecture on silence."

We shall perhaps be less shocked at Carlyle's contemptuous estimate of Keats as "a dead dog" and his boast that he never went to galleries or exhibitions of pictures when we recall that John Adams—graduate of Harvard, second President of the United States, trained in the law, familiar with the culture of his time, himself no mean author—boasted to a French correspondent towards the end of his long life, "I would not give sixpence for a picture of Raphael or a statue of Phidias."

But if Carlyle was not a great artist he was a great thinker, and to associate with him on any terms is stimulating. His life is a demonstration of the soundness of his defense of biography: "Great men, taken up in any way, are profitable company."

The Dole Air Race to Hawaii

Staff Correspondence from California by HUGH A. STUDDERT KENNEDY

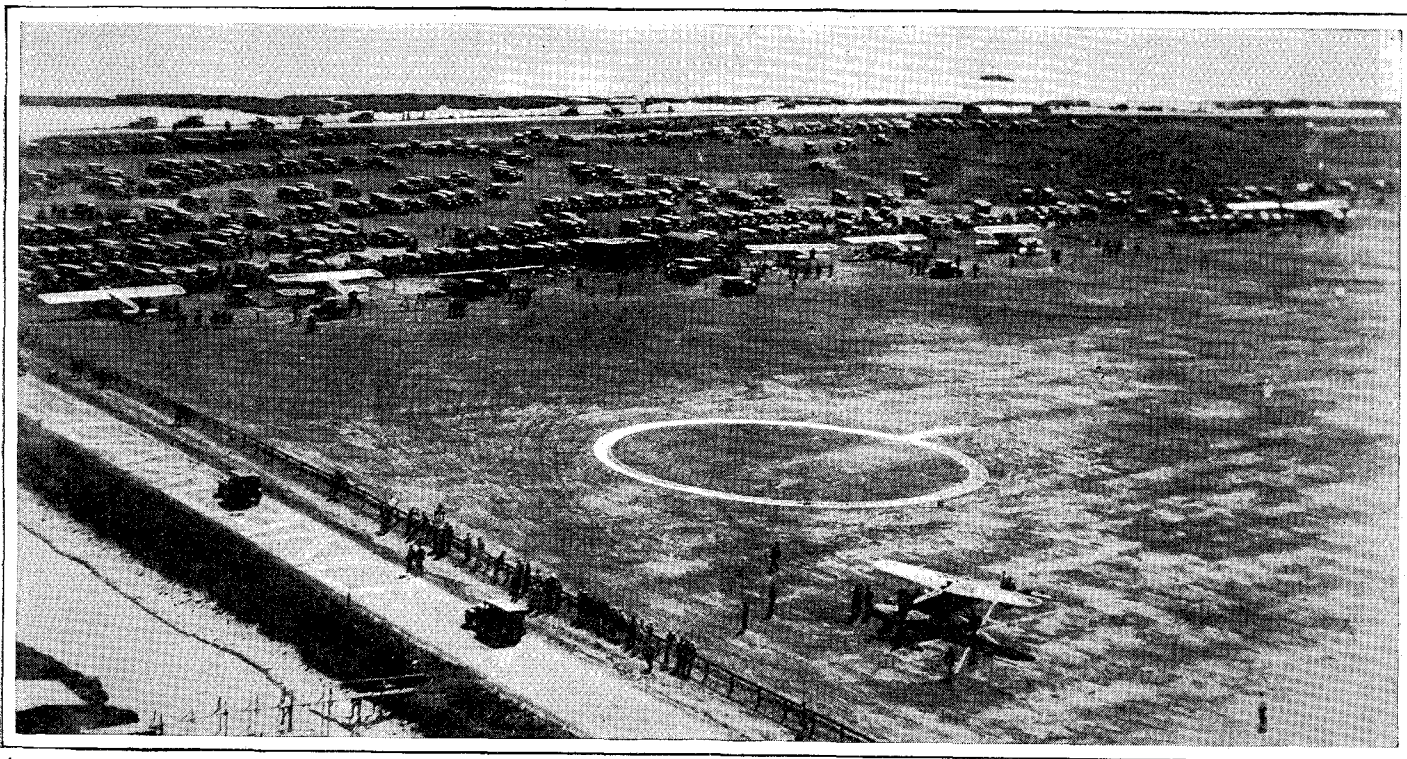
BEFORE this correspondence can appear in print the air race to Hawaii, which has developed from a prize of \$35,000 offered by James D. Dole, "the pineapple king," to the first two aviators who should fly from the North American mainland to Honolulu, any time within one year after noon August 12, 1927, Pacific coast time, will have been either abandoned or decided. While the newspapers, here, are filled with little else, and confidence is ostensibly everywhere, there are a very considerable number of people, and they are among those best qualified to speak, who view the whole enterprise with undisguised misgiving.

I cannot lay claim to any special knowledge of aviation and its stupendous difficulties beyond that which any moderately interested and observant layman may acquire. But it is impossible to live in San Francisco, so rapidly becoming one of the great aerial termini of the world, without realizing something of the great problems which still confront the aviator, and the urgent demand which at all times exists for tried experience, meticulous care, and unhurried preparation if success is to be achieved and disaster avoided.

These prerequisites to success seem to be strangely absent in the case of the Dole air race. After two aviators had been killed in attempting to fly from

Los Angeles to the starting-place of the race at the Oakland Air Port and a third had plunged his plane into the waters of the bay, the statement by Captain C. W. Saunders, Governor of the California National Aeronautical Association, to the effect that the take-off scheduled for the 12th would be "nothing short of suicide" was widely held as fully justified. "With the little navigating ability displayed by the navigators in this race," Captain Saunders declared, "it would be suicide to allow them to fly to Honolulu. A three-degree error in the flight would mean disaster."

The supreme art of aerial navigation is not something that can be acquired overnight. If the standard of efficiency



Acme

The aviation field at Oakland, California, the scene of the start of the Dole flight for Honolulu

of these navigators on August 11 was such as to render their participation in the air race to Hawaii virtually a suicidal act, it is hard to see how it can be much better than that on August 16, when the race, in spite of all protests, is scheduled to start.

An air race overseas is quite unlike any other contest of the kind in that the

only dropping out possible is that which must result, all too often, in disaster. It is to be feared that the remarkable degree of success which has attended recent efforts has tended to blind many to the difficulties of the task. There is all the difference in the world between the foolhardiness of some of these Dole aviators and the cool, calculating cour-

age of a Lindbergh or a Byrd. The young "eagle" who plans to take his "girl friend" for a flying trip to Hawaii may provide a good newspaper story, but most people will be of opinion that the progress of aviation has not yet reached the point where joy riding across the Pacific can be indulged in with safety.

What Happened at Geneva

I—The Game of Maritime Supremacy

By K. K. KAWAKAMI

Special Correspondence from a Japanese Point of View

TO-DAY, after forty-five hectic days since its opening on June 20, the Three-Power Naval Conference has ended in failure. Obviously, its greatest significance lies in the bitterness with which the American and British delegations fought for their respective proposals. The Conference, as soon as it sat, virtually resolved itself into a duel between America and Great Britain, with Japan an anxious but helpless third party. To us who have always taken it for granted that "blood is thicker than water" the recriminating, almost vindictive, spirit which has developed between the representatives of the two great Anglo-Saxon nations has been a revelation—a sad and distressing spectacle.

When two giants measure swords, the innocent third party is often made the victim of their fury. This is, in a sense, what has happened at this Conference. Japan came here with a sincere desire to see a real naval limitation. But the dispute between the two bigger Powers has waxed so hot and so vitriolic that the Conference has ended in rupture, the ugliness of which has been but thinly veiled by the diplomatic language used at the final session by the American and British delegations. If, as the result of this rupture, England and America should embark upon a competition of naval building, Japan, the innocent third party, comparatively poor, and therefore most anxious to restrict naval building, would be dragged into the contest. The

only consoling thought is that in or before January, 1931, the four signatories to the Washington Treaty are to hold another conference, and that in the meantime England and America might desist from embarking upon building competition of a ruinous nature.

THE issue between America and England at this Conference is not the tonnage of individual cruisers nor the caliber of guns nor the replacement age, though sharp verbal battles have been fought about them. These are but visible symbols of an intangible idea which is really at issue. That idea is maritime supremacy. Great Britain is determined to perpetuate her traditional "rule of the waves," while the United States, con-