

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the AERONAUTICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—On my return from abroad, a paragraph on page 90 of the AERONAUTICAL JOURNAL for March, 1920, which has reference to my lecture on metal construction, has been brought to my notice.

The Steel Wing Company is perfectly correct in pointing out that no statement was made in my lecture to the effect that the omission of mention of the Company's work was due to my inability to secure their permission for such mention.

Before preparing my lecture, I addressed a letter to the Steel Wing Co. identical with those addressed to some twenty other firms in the country, requesting permission to mention their work and asking them to send me such particulars as could be incorporated in my lecture, *i.e.*, without infringing regulations then in force.

With two exceptions, every firm to which I had applied gave me the necessary permission and information. One firm courteously replied that they did not think that their work was sufficiently advanced for publication. The Steel Wing Co., the second exception, replied requesting an interview with their director to "discuss several matters in connection with metal construction."

For the purposes of my lecture I was glad to receive such information as various firms might wish to publish in this connection. Owing to my official position during the war I was naturally in possession of considerable information, and only wished to include in my lecture such matter as the firms concerned might select. Any discussion on general matters of metal construction seemed irrelevant, and, as more than ample material had been already placed at my disposal, I took no steps at the time to seek an interview with the Steel Wing Co.

In spite of this, being anxious to meet every reasonable request from interested firms, I attended at a place and time selected by a representative of the director of the Steel Wing Co., ostensibly for the purpose of an interview with the same director. I waited on two successive days for some considerable time, but the director of the Steel Wing Co. did not put in an appearance. Having thus done my best to meet him, and having nevertheless no information for publication placed at my disposal by this firm, obviously I did not feel justified in including mention of this firm's work in my lecture.

I may perhaps mention that on the second occasion on which I attended and waited for the director of the Steel Wing Co., his representative read me a letter expressing regret at his inability to attend. This letter contained references to matters concerned in my official confidential reports on technical points made while I was holding an appointment at the Air Ministry during the war, which obviously are irrelevant and outside the region of discussion.

With regard to the last sentence of the paragraph, it is well known that the services of the Technical Staff at the Air Ministry during the war were at the disposal of all firms working to improve and develop aircraft for the purpose of winning the war, and all such firms were at liberty to profit by information pooled at the Air Ministry.—Yours truly,

A. P. THURSTON.