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AIR NEWS

Rome greets the 36-ton Hermes IV airliner, prototype of twenty-five ordered for Britain's new Africa air-routes. Her pressurised cabin holds forty passengers, who will fly in comfort at altitudes above ten-thousand feet. Routes to Nairobi start next month, and you'll be able to sleep overland to Jo'burg by Christmas.

Bound for the new Livingstone Airport, the Hermes sets out on a four-thousand miles flight across lands which were unknown before David Livingstone. It is only ninety-five years since he discovered the Victoria Falls, Rhodesia's rival to Niagara.

On the Zambesi river lands a flying-boat of a type the Hermes landplanes will replace. It brings Lord Pakenham - here greeted by Sir Miles Thomas - to open the million-pound airport which the new air-route will use.

For the Beretse people, the coming of the Minister of Civil Aviation is a great event. Until the railways reached this land forty-five years ago, strangers were few. Now the whole world is within easy reach of the secret heart of Africa.

A mile long, the new runway is an important link in the chain of Empire communications. It lies amid strange scenes.

Two-and-a-half years of toil faced Livingstone before he reached this territory. Now the white spray of the Victoria Falls is within thirty hours of London.