





discoveries were made under the greatest difficulties, involving trial and error, investigation and tabulation of thousands of details and the rejection, time after time, of previously accepted theories.

These "Wright boys of Dayton," as they were called, without any great education and without any special training in scientific investigation, found errors in the works of great authorities of even the Royal Aeronautical Society, and dared to challenge them. And moreover, relying solely on their own slender resources, they established data regarding the fundamental science of air flow which stand correct to the present day. They received no encouragement from the people nor from the government. The people even went so far as to class them with the adherents of the theory of perpetual motion.

Confident of ultimate success, however, the young Wrights bore with patience the slurs of common opinion. Their first taste of success came in the fall of 1902, when at Kitty Hawk Beach, North Carolina, almost one thousand gliding flights were made, several of which covered distances of over six hundred feet. Their first flights with a powered machine were made in December of the following year. Finally on October 5th, 1905, at Huffman Field, Dayton, they made a circular flight of twenty-five miles. From that time on people began to take a new interest in the idea of flying and when Orville Wright made his famous flights at Fort Meyer, he was given a semi-official reception at the National Capitol, and the crowd took for its slogan, "I'd rather be Wright than President."

Since then the airplane has been gradually improved. During the latter part of the war it played a most important part as a fighting machine. To-day it is rendering service in the survey and fire protection of vast areas of forest; in the south it is being used in the spreading of deadly calcium arsenate to fight the boll-weevil. And it is daily coming into greater use as a carrier of mail and passengers. The most noted flight of modern times, namely, that of Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh across the Atlantic Ocean, connecting in a few hours the old world and the new, is but the final realization of the efforts of those Wright boys, whose patience and whose indomitable courage in the face of difficulties and disappointments in the end gained for them fame and fortune.

—W.A.R., '31