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Development of Air Transport as an Imperial Link.

After the cessation of hostilities between the British Empire and the Axis Powers, the modern aerial transport plane will come into its own after about forty years of development, from the Wright brothers' plane which flew a few yards to the mighty Royal Air Force bombers, flying three thousand miles and carrying a very heavy load of bombs.

The R.A.F. bombers could be altered to suit transport needs in the early days of Peace but there are many other types of aircraft which could also be used for transporting passengers and goods in conjunction with the shipping companies, from dominion to dominion. One visualises big six-engined landplanes with a passenger capacity for one hundred and fifty persons, and a big hold for luggage, storage space for goods and perhaps a refrigerating plant for meat and fruit.

Other planes would be small surveying aircraft, covering, in a few days, as much ground as was worked in several months. Fast, specially equipped machines will be employed for spraying crops with disinfectant against ~~harmles~~ harmful insects/ pests such as locusts, which do so much damage in South Africa.

The use of hospital planes-already, already a feature in lonely parts of Australia, will surely be increased, and the autogiro should not be forgotten as they are easier to land in lonely districts where there are no proper aerodromes.

Planes are already being used in Canada to combat forest fires and they could be developed for ordinary fire fighting where fire engines and equipment are not easily available.

Before the outbreak of the present war, aircraft were already employed for transporting men and heavy machinery over unexplored jungle and mountains to the New Guinea goldfields and with the entry of Japan against us and the loss of the Burma road to China, the experience thus gained was used when the aerial route over the dangerously high Himalayan peaks became

the only means of getting much needed war stores to China. The lessons and knowledge gained on this most difficult route will no doubt be fully used for further opening up of routes in difficult country throughout the Empire.

The speed of modern aircraft far exceeds any other means of transport. In pre-war days the flight from England to Australia took about fourteen days to cover the 13000 miles to Sydney; the voyage by ship took between forty and forty five days. From Southampton to Cape Town a ~~voyage~~^{voyage} lasted between two and three weeks, but a plane covered the 5000 miles in five days. The flight to America occupied only a few hours while the travel even by the fastest ship took a week! These figures show the amount of time saved by flying from country to country instead of travelling by steamer, & time is of paramount importance to the business man who has big branches in many parts of the Empire.

Seaplanes could be used for delivering any mail that might be sent by steamers doing coastal runs and thus speed up delivery in up-country stations. Autogiros should come into their own after this war, as they only need a short runway, a great consideration in mountainous or forested country. If enlarged they could be used to carry heavy loads of goods, machinery, personnel or any urgent equipment which would take weeks by land or sea routes.

In post-war days aeroplanes will probably become as cheap as cars were formerly, and everybody with a reasonable salary will buy these "EveryMan" planes, fit them with extra tanks and use them for intercontinental flying and touring purposes. There would be constant meetings and discussions between members of the ^{to} Dominions to discuss urgent problems on, for instance, tick in sheep, blight on fruit, insect pests, fluctuation in markets and so forth. That is looking at flying from the business point of view, but, just as after the last war, large liners catered for the tourist trade, so in the near future will the large plane. Aircraft flying between the various Dominions will drop their passengers at various landing grounds from where they will be transported to places of interest by trans-continental planes run by the Dominion concerned. These trips ^{could} should be run on the lines already laid down by Thomas Cook Tours and would be reasonably priced so that people would be able to visit all parts of the Empire at moderate fares. This in itself would

lead to a greater understanding of each others' problems, customs and thoughts

If the wireless controlled plane were improved and the range in which the wireless influence could be effective were enlarged, planes of heavier carrying capacity could be flown economically, and in the event of a crash no valuable lives would be lost.

The problem of launching heavily loaded aircraft into the air has been solved by Major Mayo, an Englishman who designed the "Mayo Composite" which is a large plane carrying a smaller plane on its "back" which, when a sufficient altitude had been obtained, the little one is released and flies with its cargo of mail to its destination. This idea will be developed to carry much heavier loads probably to ^{an} specially equipped "landing ground" moored in the middle of the Atlantic, from this rendez-vous the smaller plane would take off for Canada with its mail and goods and the larger one would fly to South America with its share of the mail, cargo and passengers.

Since aircraft can now fly to great heights they could be used for weather observations, ^{their} ~~their~~ reports could be wirelessed to every part of the Empire thus giving early warning of expected storms and hurricanes which would probably be the means of saving many precious cargoes. In the same way they could be used for taking supplies rapidly to scientists studying weather conditions in the Arctic and Antarctic thus sparing them the trials and anxieties such as people like Courtauld and the Russians had to contend with on previous expeditions. Planes could also be used for spotting the position of icebergs, thus relieving the ^{American} ~~American~~ navy of a task which up to date they have done very well.

Aeroplanes could also be used as travelling laboratories for ^{the} ~~the~~ study and research "on the spot" of diseases which attack fish, animals and plants, and also perhaps, special machines could be built for the transport from one dominion to the other, of stud animals, special sittings of eggs, and rare plants none of which easily bear long journeys through abrupt changes of temperature and climate.

The speed, safety and comfort of the aircraft of the future should be utilised for the better understanding, improvement and happiness of the world and not, as in the past, and present, for the destruction of life and all the beautiful beauties that are around us.

John Moody.