

# Soaring

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## *The Take-Off . . .*

AT times like these, with European countries looking at one another with knives in their teeth, we find the Glider ever playing a more important part in their respective policies of PREPAREDNESS. Russia, Germany, Italy, England, Japan and France have come to believe that the next war is going to be fought very largely in the air, and that the outcome of the war will largely depend upon the strength of a nation's air force.

ANY aviator today realizes that in order to learn to fly a modern fighting plane it requires more experience than it did to fly the old "crate" back in 1918, when sixteen year old boys were sent into action with only a few hours of solo flying time. Our air-line pilots will tell you that to be eligible for a job as a co-pilot on an air-liner, he must first have over one thousand hours of flying experience. Then in order to graduate to the position of chief pilot, he must have served at least another thousand hours in this apprenticeship. Finally, to master the art of blind flying, it is necessary to devote at least twenty hours to intensive flight practice on this subject, and that only after having passed rigid examinations on the use of blind flying instruments and radio, as applied to the subject. Today the pilot with five hundred hours of flying time is regarded as a novice by air-line operators, and is only barely considered material as a future pilot. Imagine one of our young pilots of the last war being placed in the cockpit of one of our modern air-liners or bombing planes and being asked to fly it! First of all, he would be so bewildered by the maze of blind flying instruments, engine instruments, and levers and buttons for operating landing gear and flaps, that he wouldn't know how to begin; and even if he learned all of this he would probably crash the plane because of its strange flying characteristics. No—the modern airplane pilot is not made over night. In fact, not even in a year.

BACK in 1928 a course at the Army Training School was a one year affair, in which a student would receive about two-hundred hours flying experience, without blind flying training, and in which little better than war time equipment was used. In 1937 we find an army pilot taking two years active service, after his one year course, in order to further familiarize himself with military flying, and from the Army's experience in flying the air-mails, some still wonder if their flying experience is what it should be.