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KEEPING UP WITH AVIATION

By ROBERT M. EWING, M.E. 2

Back in 1915 a group of men, with confidence in the future popular use of automobiles, built up a system whereby anyone who could drive could rent a car and drive it himself. This was something new, but it proved to be very successful. Now, in 1929, this same group of men has established the first "Fly It Yourself System" for renting aeroplanes and paying on a mileage basis. These men, all members of the Saunders family, are establishing this service in approximately fifty cities all over the country and are using 100 Arrow Sport biplanes for their equipment.

During the first six months of 1929, 3,500 aeroplanes were constructed in the United States. Of this number 2,854 were designed for commercial use and 527 for military use. The estimated retail value of this production, not counting the motors used in these planes, is \$25,000,000. Approximately 3,275 aeroplane motors were produced representing a value of \$10,823,374.30. The open cockpit biplane still leads the field in quantity with a total of 1,623—cabin monoplanes were second with 884. The largest increase over last year's production was shown by the multi-motored transports. The total retail value of aeronautical products for one half of 1929 is \$50,000,000 as compared with \$62,000,000 for all of 1928.

About fourteen miles west of Cape May on the Delaware side of Delaware Bay is being constructed the first of a number of "seadromes" to be used for transoceanic aeroplane service. It is a huge platform or floating island weighing 28,000 tons and will cost about \$1,750,000. This first seadrome will be placed in service about June or July of next year halfway between New York and Bermuda. If it proves successful there, eight others will be built and placed in a line from New York to Brest. The seadromes will be placed about 400 miles apart.
