

Le Mans, Sept 22 1908.

Dear Father,

I received the news of Orville's accident the next morning after it happened just as I was finishing preparation for a trial for the Michelin & Com. de Aviation prizes. ~~for~~ We had posted a prospect for both Friday and Saturday, but in view of the death of poor Selfridge, I did not think it would be right to proceed. It was a great relief to learn that Orville had escaped with no more than injuries. It is a great pity, a great pity. I know that you will be more cut up over the affair than even we are. Young people are shocked for a moment but soon recover themselves. You need not fear that such a thing will happen again. It is the only time that anything has broken on any of our machines while in flight, in 9 years experience. I feel sure we can keep such a thing from happening again. I think the trouble was caused by the Jewish conditions under which Orville had to work. His time was consumed by people who wished to congratulate and encourage

him when the thing he really needed was time to rest and time to work. He is too courteous to refuse to see people, and he had no one to ~~act~~ act as a buffer, such as Berg does for me. I will never leave him alone in such a position again. ~~It~~ To do proper work under such conditions is beyond the power of any man. I fear a few people have been offended because I have refused to see them. But I have improved my condition immensely by refusing to permit my nervous strength to be exhausted and my time consumed by visitors. I am now feeling quite well and I take all necessary time for inspecting & improving my machines. Yesterday I took a trip of more than an hour and a half on it, and finally landed only because it was so dark I could not safely continue. I am being extraordinarily careful to have the machine in proper condition and to go out only when the wind conditions are very favorable. I hope you will continue in good health and spirits. I am surrounded by fast friends here, who look forward to your speedy recovery with almost as much interest as I do. Affectionately. Willbur.