

# TOPICS OF THE TIMES.

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## A Choice Selection of Interesting Items.

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In a book on "the flight of the bird as the basis of the art of flying," a German author, Herr Otto Lilienthal, describes the result of twenty-three years of experimenting by himself and brother on the form of wings best adapted for carrying heavy bodies. He concludes—as have others—that the real secret of a bird's flight lies in the arching of its wings, which accounts for the small expenditure of strength, and he believes that close imitation of the birds is the only method of solving the problem of human flight. The artificial wings of the investigators have been so effective as to raise half the weight of the operator, the apparatus, worked by foot-levers, being made to rise with a person weighing 160 pounds when a counter-weight of eighty pounds is helping to lift by means of suitable pulleys.

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