

MAN CAN FLY.

If He Doesn't, the Fault Is the Capitalist's, Not the Inventor's, Says Mr. Zuberbuchler.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: In a late letter, Herr Otto Lilienthal, the "original and only" flying man, after mentioning that he is constructing copies of his sailing apparatus for quite a large number of scientists in London, Dublin, and elsewhere, gives vent to the hope that the buoyancy of spirit which springtime begets may this year reawaken among scientists and capitalists "*die Lust zum Fliegen*"—longing to fly—more yearningly, more resolutely, and more generally than ever before.

When flowers and bedbugs easily come forth,
And mocking birds, frogs, and mosquitoes begin to sing;
Then man, more or less dreamily, longs for easy wing
To soar aloft, away—away e'en to the far, far, farthest north

don't you know. Not that Mr. Lilienthal expressed it just that way, however.

Every reader, intelligent or not, must be aware that students of aeronautics have, of late years, demonstrated at least the possibility of rational mechanical flight. I refer, in particular, to Mr. Lilienthal's remarkable experiments, his oft-repeated actual flights extending through hundreds of yards at a height of as much as a hundred feet. Man can fly.

No one may reasonably deny that the accomplishment of man flight will prove of the utmost importance, commercially, socially, generally. It will, of course, be achieved by some thoughtful student and experimenter, backed by some not necessarily thoughtful capitalist or capitalists. The importance—the almost awful importance—of success in this field and the harmful influence of failure warrant due consideration by enthusiastic would-be experimenters and their philanthropic or speculative backers of the following suggestions:

1. That hazy, unripe projects dealing with unknown forces or untried agents are out of date, because in the inclined plane is given a tried, simple, evidently sufficient means to accomplish the desired end.

2. That the pressures developed by inclined planes moved rapidly through the air, and the force required to obtain such pressures have been determined with accuracy sufficient to show the worth or worthlessness of any proposed "aerial" machine utilizing the inclined plane. Ignorance or disregard of this fact accounts, for instance, for the failure of the abortive attempts at flight lately made in this city.

3. That the problem of mechanical flight has substantially been reduced to one of scientific application of the inclined plane.

4. That demonstrably, the antique so-called screw propeller can play no important part in a successful, most scientific application of the inclined plane—neither as sustaining nor as propelling agent. In support of this I quote Herr Lilienthal, as yet the only successful "flying man," who declares that the experiments with screw-propelled aerial vehicles made by Mr. Maxim, Prof. Langley, and others merely show us "how not to do it." This with due regard for the fame of these scientists, and with greater regard for harder facts.

In conclusion, I have been variously reminded of the collapse of my prognostication in THE SUN of March 8, 1894, that man would be able to fly at will, at any time, and in any direction, within twelve months from that date. *Que voulez-vous?* The default is not the inventor's, but the capitalist's—a possibility not deemed worth consideration on March 8, 1894. Respectfully,

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613 EAST TWELFTH STREET, May 5.