

A German engineer, Lilienthal by name, has just met with a serious accident while using his flying machine. The machinery of one of the wings broke and he fell 200 feet. You think he was a lunatic? Not so. His experiments have been attracting much attention among scientific men, for he has been able more nearly to imitate the flight of birds than any other who has tried. He made his wings on the model of the albatross or sea gull, and thinks he has proved that the secret of flying consists not so much in lightness or in the proportion of wings to the body, but in the shape of the wing and in the manner in which it strikes the air. For a long time men believed that wings must be proportioned to the size and weight of the body until some one pointed out that insects were much heavier in proportion than birds, though their wings were much smaller, yet they could fly. Herr Lilienthal has not been able to fly more than 300 yards, but he has done what is almost as remarkable, that is, keeping himself suspended in the air by means of his wings and descend gradually as we see the gulls so often do.