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Aerial Navigation

A Dallas Genius About to Solve the Problem.

Edwin Steele, Unable to Get a Job, Puts in His Leisure Constructing a Flying Machine.

Mr. Edwin Steele, a Dallas young man, like many another young man, has found work very slack this summer and fall; but, instead of turning political agitator, he has devoted his leisure to science, on the line of the flying machine, and has about perfected and completed a device, which he believes, will solve the long vexed problem of aerial navigation. He has used for his shop in the construction of his machine, the rear of Sutton & Steele's machine shop, on Camp street, the latter member of the firm being his brother.

In reading about the experiments in this direction, Mr. Steele ascertained that Lilienthal's machine was the nearest approach to a success, and he has constructed his machine on Lilienthal's model. The machine consists of an aeroplane, under which, is the frame for the aeronaut, and two wings attached to the frame, with a rudder behind.

The aeroplane looks for all the world like a bicycle wheel, except that it is eight feet in diameter. The rim is a thin piece of wood; the spokes are wires in two rows which attach to a hub like the spokes in a bicycle wheel. A piece of light oiled canvas will be stretched over the wheels, and the weight of the aeronaut, in the frame suspended below, will balance it like the string balances a kite.

The wings are ovals, about nine feet by seven, and constructed as to rim, spokes and canvas precisely like the aeroplane. They are attached to the frame by means of hinges. The aeronaut, standing on a bar beneath the frame, stretches his arms out over the tops of the wings and guides the machine by raising or lowering either wing, which he does by throwing his weight on the wing he wishes to lower, and removing it from the one he wishes to raise. There is behind the machine, a rudder give feet in length to be operated after the fashion of the rudder of a water craft.

The measurement of the machine is 22 feet from tip to tip of the wings, and the length, counting the aeroplane and rudder is about 15 feet. The machine will weigh 60 pounds. Mr. Steele weighs 130 pounds, making the combined weight 190.

The performance of the turkey buzzard will be imitated in rising from the ground; that is to say, the aeronaut will take a running start and leap from an elevated place.

Lilienthal, whose longest flight was 3000 feet, and whose greatest height was 150 feet and who by the way lost his life in one of his flights, said that the machine was perfect, except that he could not turn it.

Mr. Steele says he works on his machine at his leisure. If he gets a job in the near future, it may be some time before he puts the finishing touches on his machine, but, if he does not get a job, he may complete it before the fair closes.