

have solved the problem of aerial navigation. They have just made application for patents on the device which they think will overcome the obstacles that have heretofore resisted the efforts of inventors and are at work now on the construction of an airship or flying machine embodying the principles they have studied out.

The machine now in process of construction consists essentially of four rods each twenty feet long parallel to each other working on ball and rings in a well braced framework supporting the motive power and steering apparatus below. On each of these rods are a series of double wings constructed of a steel wire framework over which silk is stretched. These are so arranged in relation to each other that one wing is rising open and the other is descending closed. Thus half the wings are at every instant pressing downward while the other half are rising but not pressing upward. Should the motive power fail for any reason the entire wing surface instantly forms a parachute. A machine twenty feet long and with a bearing surface six feet wide, it is believed can be made to raise a weight of 600 pounds, one occupant alone supplying the motive power.

The machine now being built will be in its mechanical construction strictly up to date. The inventors believe that in quantities such machines could be built for \$100 a piece.

RICHMOND, Feb. 9.—Cohes Island, a famous resort and life saving station six miles off the Virginia coast in the Atlantic ocean, seems to be doomed to annihilation by the action of the sea. A terrific storm swept the island last October wrecking the main hotel and flooding the island, making a trench across the center. Since then the disintegration has been steady until recently, when the high tide submerged the island and washed nearly all the buildings into the surf. The hotel, church and a number of cottages have been destroyed and the life saving station and a few cottages are all that is left. The captain of the life saving station, from whom this information is gotten, says there is no longer any doubt that the island is doomed and only a phenomenal action of the winds and waves could possibly restore it.

The life saving station, which was recently moved back from the encroaching sea, is now less than 200 feet from the waves.

OTTAWA, Ont., Feb. 12.—At 2:30 this morning the upper stories of the group of handsome parliament buildings in this city are practically in ruins, a fierce fire having been raging in them since the middle of the afternoon. The loss is already over \$300,000, and as the flames are not yet under control, this amount will be greatly increased. Thousands of dollars' worth of valuable reports have been burned and more are in danger. The local fire department has been unable to stop the progress of the fire and aid has been asked for from Montreal. The fire is believed to have been of incendiary origin and in consequence the greatest excitement prevails. Efforts are now being directed toward saving the almost priceless documents in some of the departments which the flames have not yet

touched, but the undertaking is so fraught with peril that the firemen hesitate to undertake the work.

The spectacle of the blazing buildings was a grand one and the vicinity was crowded with thousands of people. The fire was fierce when discovered in the afternoon on the top floor of the west block of the parliament buildings, south of the McKenzie tower, and quickly the departmental fire brigade was brought into requisition.

Several pieces of hose were laid and a rush was made for the hydrants when it was discovered they were all frozen. An alarm from the city was then sounded and the city fire brigade turned out.

In the meantime the fire was spreading, eating its way along the roof toward the south. Then streams were put on from thirty hydrants, when the departmental hose burst and the city department hoses had to be depended upon altogether. By this time the fire had so increased that it was bursting out through the windows, through the roof and along the edge of the roofs and through the walls. It ate along with terrific rapidity and soon the roof of the MacKenzie wing was one mass of flames and smoke. The general alarm was struck and the whole fire brigade turned out and was soon at active work. Streams were poured upon the flames from all directions. The fire continued to spread, however, and soon the tower of the southwest corner fell. The center tower was next destroyed and the flames continued to eat their way reaching the next large tower, commencing to lick that and finally had it completely engulfed in ruins. The firemen are now trying to confine the fire to the fourth story, but unless help from Montreal arrives soon, the building is doomed. How the fire originated is not known. The civil servant had not been away from the building five minutes when the flames were seen to rise and burst out through one of the windows on the west side close to the McKenzie tower. Rumors are in circulation that the fire was of incendiary origin. The whole of the fourth story of the block is filled with reports from the public works, railways and canals, marine and fisheries departments. The estimated loss at the present time is over \$300,000 and the sum will be largely increased before the fire is extinguished.

The old western department building was damaged to the amount of \$100,000 by the fire which started about five o'clock last evening, and burned until midnight. The upper floors with mansard roof was completely burned out, but the main offices on the second and third floors were all safe, the fire not having gotten through the concrete floor. Much damage has been done by water. No important departmental documents have been destroyed. The offices destroyed are those of the public works department, marine and fisheries and mounted police. The lack of pressure, and hose, frozen hydrants and a variety of causes contributed to poor work of the fire brigade. At three o'clock this morning the Slesby engine and men arrived from Montreal, but by that time there was nothing more to burn. The construction of a modern building in the place of the one wrecked will cost not less than \$250,000.

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 12.—Probably the most celebrated case ever tried in the law courts of Missouri was decided in the supreme court Thursday afternoon. It is the suit brought against the Iron Mountain railroad for \$5,000 damages for the death of James Ganey, killed six years ago by a train on that road. The decision of the circuit court is reversed and remanded for trial. The case has been commonly known as the "suction case" because James Ganey was alleged to have been drawn under the cars by the force of wind created by the passing of a train. The plaintiffs placed Prof. Nifere of Washington to testify as an expert and through him a scientific point entirely new in the trial of damage cases against railroad companies, was brought out. The popular supposition that the boy, James Ganey, was drawn under the train by "suction" was disproved. It was shown instead there being any suction the air had a contrary effect. It was shown that a train of cars running at a high rate of speed creates a movement of air near it in the same direction. The train in question carried the air along with it with such velocity as to tend to move or overthrow anyone standing near it. As a scientific proposition it was demonstrated that the tendency of an air current thus produced would be to turn an object standing near the tracks around, because the current of air on the side of the object close to the train moves faster than the side further from it.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 12.—The blockade runners at Charleston have scored the first blood in spite of all preparations made by Admiral Bunce to detect any attempt to pass the long line of ships he has strung out across the entrance to the harbor. The Dolphin, not by any means a fast boat, nor as invulnerable as a regular blockade runner, slipped quietly around one end line on the 8th instant and when the department next heard of her she was at the bar off St. John's river, Fla. The officials of the department were puzzled when notified by Commander Clover by telegraph of his whereabouts, but private letters received here from persons on the squadron explained her movements as a successful running of the blockade. Now the fleet is on watch, not only against the return of the Dolphin but the appearance of the little Vesuvius, swifter than anything in the fleet and, like a regular blockade runner, lower in the water than the Dolphin. Moreover, the Vesuvius is painted a dingy invisible shade gray and is so much more likely to make a successful run than the Dolphin.

Secretary Herbert expects to leave here on the 17th for Charleston to see for himself how the blockade progresses. It is probable he will have some distinguished company.

CONSTANTINOPLE, Feb. 12.—Crete news is growing more serious every day. It is understood that several embassies have received dispatches that Heraklion is on fire. In official circles here the only solution of the Cretan difficulty is believed to be European occupation of that island. It is understood instructions have been sent the commanders of foreign warships to prevent by force, if necessary, any intervention by Greek warships.