

When brought to view the silk parts hung loose and limp but he soon inflated them with hydrogen which he had stored in a large rubber bag and then the perfect likeness of the bird to the eagle was seen in all its parts. After filling it with the hydrogen and before liberating it he filled it with ballast so that when he let it go it floated in the room just about the height of a man's head or probably a little higher. We could hardly restrain our admiration at this wonderful sight ; but we were still more surprised when he opened a small door in the breast of the bird and showed within an electric motor that, when set in operation moved a pair of screw-like fixtures under the wings which propelled the bird forward. I would like to explain it all to you thoroughly if I could, but you would require to see one to understand how it worked and all I could tell you would not enlighten you much. Enough for you to know that the bird moved forward and in a straight line. The motion was slow, but Saunders said it could be increased by quickening the motion of the motor. Wonderful as all this was it was still more wonderful when by sloping the wings, as seen in a living bird when circling, he was able to cause this machine to go round and round in a circle smaller or larger according to the slope of the wings.

"This, gentlemen, explained Saunders" is my model. That I was working upon when you came in, is the machine I shall sail through the air with. It is built exactly after the pattern of this small one but will be large enough to carry many persons in it. Instead of filling it with hydrogen before starting there will be appliances within for the production of that gas, so that the duration of flight is only limited by the will of the persons within. I had hoped to get it done before any one saw it, but you know the reason why I haven't. As it is, only two more weeks and my bird will be ready ; only one more trip to the station for material and the work will be done ; then you will see the wonder of this century.'

"The trip was made, the two

weeks passed by and, as promised, his bird was ready. I told you it was big enough to contain a thousand such eagles as Jack says he saw and I am not exaggerating one bit.

"When I got to Bill's, Saunders had the bird all inflated and properly ballasted, ready to ascend. It was a fearful experiment to risk his life in such a thing, but he was confident of success and though somewhat nervous he was calmer than either Bill or I. A light breeze was blowing from the east and it was his intention to go against it and then turn and come back with it.

"Just before he entered the opening in the breast which served as a door he displayed his only agitation. Turning to us he said, "'I am confident of success, but if I should never return for whatever cause, promise me never to tell anyone of this affair for years.'

His lips trembled with suppressed emotion as he spoke and we both promised. He came over to shake hands with us before ascending, but stopped. 'I trusted you on your honor once,' he said, 'and you disappointed me. Swear this time that should I never come back you will keep the secret for twenty-five years.'

"He spoke with a desperation and decision that both awed and cowed us, and with uplifted hand before God we both swore to keep the secret in case he never returned. He then entered and closed the door, and, as directed, Bill cut the rope that fastened the bird down and it shot straight upward for hundreds of feet ; then slowly it began to move against the wind, quickening in speed and getting farther away until it was invisible to the naked eye, and we could only follow it by looking through the telescope Saunders had left us. Grandly it sailed with out-spread wings as natural as a living bird, then slowly one wing drooped slightly while the other raised and it began to turn for its homeward journey. The turn was accomplished in a large sweep and we were now as sure of the success of the venture as Saunders had been. It had now become visible again to the