velocipede this flying-machine is the attraction of the exhibition. Readers of the NURSING RECORD may care to know what this machine looks like and how it works.

In shape the flying-machine exactly resembles a big canvas bat, with a queer flexible tail and bamboo ribs. In fact, it has been modelled on the principles of a bird; Mr. Lilienthal is of opinion that only by following out the system Nature teaches, people can hope to get at the truth.

The great difficulty at present lies in our ignorance of the currents of air through which the aeronaut would have to pass, if ever the flying-machine be sufficiently perfected to carry its owner a considerable distance. Though it may not be impossible to imitate the organism of a bird mechanically, no human intelligence can inoculate an inanimate machine with the instinct that enables the bird to utilise the very currents of air in its navigation, that are disastrous to the aeronaut.

Every Sunday afternoon in fine weather, Mr. Lilienthal leaps off a little hill, a hundred feet high, near to Berlin. He is supported by his flying-machine. Instead of falling after his leap, he rises slightly, then flies horizontally for a short way, and gradually sinks to the ground. By a clever contrivance he *decreases* his speed as he approaches the earth— a feat that saves him from shock or fracture, the great danger of such aerial gymnastics. He alights quite gently on his feet (which hang loosely during his passage through the air) after a flight of about 700 metres.

The leap, the action of the arms justify Mr. Lilienthal's classification of his invention as a "branch of gymnastics."

In its present stage the flying-machine is, of course, a toy, but a future of hovering, fluttering, soaring gymnasts may yet look down with smiling pity on our present clumsy cycles. People will invent hygienic flying costumes, doctors will send their patients flying upward—for change of air! And the flying-machine itself will be so perfected by clear-minded engineers, reared on the hygienic principles now struggling for national recognition, that an ungrateful future will casually wonder at the curious original of to-day, as we wonder at the first odd steam-engine that surprised our grandfathers.

For the future, too, will have its "*modern improvements*," and ours will be things of the past.

LINA MOLLETT.

THE MORGUE.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN PARIS.

I THOUGHT a visit to the Morgue in Paris would be an interesting study in horrors and I had hopes that I might be able to send a truly Parisian realistic sketch of the scene to the RECORD afterwards. But my illusions somewhat vanished when I arrived at the horrible place. I had thought of a tragic atmosphere and dramatic effects. I had conjured up romantic stories of how I should view the beautiful bodies of distressed lovers who had tried to solve the difficulties and trials of unrequited passion or true love that did not run smooth, by cutting the Gordian knot and seeking in other spheres a happiness they could not find in this. After a visit to Notre Dame I braced my nerves to go on to the Morgue which is close by. I descended some sloppy steps down which I conjured up a whole train of fearful relatives and friends who had gone down before, dreading to find there the forms of loved ones missing. The first feeling as one descends towards the Morgue is one of chilly disquiet. It is all so sloppy and comfortless, and irreverent and, as a companion remarked, "very much like a badly home-made or provincial aquarium."

There is accommodation for about six bodies, which rest on slanting stone shelves, and these are kept wet like the slabs in fishmongers' shops. The bodies are viewed through rough coarse glass, which is blurred and damp, so that recognition is made more difficult. Children play around and about the steps, every now and then peeping in with morbid curiosity—displaying none of the awe-struck air which English children would display under such circumstances. We saw the body of a woman with wild, dark hair, streaming about her shoulders, and hollows sunk around her cheeks. But, somehow, she seemed not to be a human thing, she almost looked like the effigy of a woman, so degenerate was her type and condition before she sought refuge in the Seine.

The walls are hung with terrible and gruesome photographs of generations of suicides, and murdered people who have never been recognised nor claimed. And there they hang for the official purpose of a clue some day being found to their identity, and perhaps some tangle of evidence may be unwoven which may lead to the detection of the murderer, in those cases where the violent end has not been self-sought.

It is a curious fact that the Morgue can calculate almost to a fraction on the number of cases that will be brought in each year; the average for many years has shown very little variation from the regulation annual 900. There are always so many more men than women, and with regard to suicide it is found that while more men kill themselves than women, men do it at a more advanced age than women and generally in a different way. We were told that a proverb has been made—"The rule is that the woman drowns herself, the man hangs himself."

Out of 660 cases of adults death was caused in 340 instances by drowning, 72 are cases of sudden death, 52 natural death, 37 were crushed in accidents, 28 are cases of homicide, 28 of hanging and strangulation, and 28 falls from a high place. The curious fact is that these proportions are more or less regularly maintained.

The books of the Morgue are kept with great

previous page next page