

## **"ROCKET" PROPULSION FOR AIRCRAFT.**

### **PROPOSED GERMAN EXPERIMENT.**

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

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There seems to be no reason to doubt that a serious attempt to "shoot" an aeroplane with a human being on board into the air is to be made in Germany. The "rocket car" produced by the Opel Works on the Valier-Sander principle has carried out very successful tests recently and is shortly to be tried out on the Avus motor road near Berlin for its attempt on the world's speed record. A contract has now been completed between the Opel firm and the Raab-Katzenstein aeroplane company for the application of the "rocket" principle to aircraft.

The occupant of the "rocket aeroplane" is to be Herr Raab himself, a pilot of long experience, who once astonished Berlin by landing in Unter den Linden. A Raab-Katzenstein Grasmücke, the company's lightest type of light aeroplane, is to be used. The aeroplane, which only weighs 552lb., is to have, instead of its normal 30 h.p. engine, two "batteries" of rockets, one on either side of the fuselage between the planes. The cross-bracing and structure of the planes are to be specially strengthened to resist the recoil of the "rockets" and to withstand the high speed expected to be attained.

In the first place, rockets of the same power as those used in the "rocket car" will probably be employed. The pilot's part will be to bring the aeroplane to earth in a gliding flight after the "rockets" have burned themselves out. If the experiments prove successful, the attempt will be made progressively to increase the heights attained by the use of more powerful rockets. The pilots will be provided with oxygen apparatus and parachutes. The Opel Company believe that it would be technically possible to propel an aeroplane by the use of rockets to immense heights, well beyond the radius of the earth's atmosphere. Immediate interest, however, centres upon the first experiment.