Keelys Red Letter Day

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HE STARTS HIS MOTOR FOR A FEW MORE TURNS.

SOME CURIOUS TRICKERY WHICH HIS STOCKHOLDERS APPLAUDED AND HIS LEARNED EXPLANATION OF IT.

NYT - 6/7/1885 - John Ernst Worrell Keely, who has for a dozen years or so been asserting that he has a motor, was induced yesterday to give what he calls an exhibition of it. The experiments were had at No. 1422 North Twentieth-street, Philadelphia, where Keely's workshop is. In expectation of a great success, which would finally silence all scoffers, a number of newspaper men were invited, care being taken in the invitations to suggest that only such gentlemen should come as were possessed of knowledge of mechanism. Five scientific reporters from New-York City appeared at the workshop. With them were Mr. J. B. Waring, a mechanical engineer of this city, and a number of the officers and stockholders of the company who have been aiding and abetting Keely in his assaults on the credulity of the public. In all about 20 persons witnessed the manifestations of Keely's apparatus and listened to his meaningless jargon.

Two o'clock in the afternoon was the hour set for the trials. THE TIMES's reporter went down to Philadelphia a few hours head of time in order to witness for himself the setting up of the apparatus. Shortly before noon he rapped at the door of the house, but no one responded. An hour or so later he made another effort and succeeded. Keely poked his head out of a window on the second floor and beamed pleasantly out into the street. A moment later he came down and opened the door so as to admit the reporter. Almost at the same instant one of Keely's assistants came in from the street and joined them. Keely led the way up stairs, after remarking that certain curious bits of apparatus on the ground floor were intended for the junk man and not for use. He excepted, however, a large iron globular object, swinging on axes like a school geographical globe. That, he said was to be a new engine, which he was engaged in building. Once up stairs, and before the arrival of the other invited guests, Keely gave utterance to oracular remarks concerning vibration and ether and kindred topics presumed to be related to his alleged invention.

While passing through the first floor on his way up the reporter noticed some changes which had been made since the date of the last exhibition for the press. That exhibition was had on Oct. 18, 1881. At that time Keely had most of the lower apartment tightly boarded up, and the reporter, who thought an able mule of other source of mechanical power was concealed in the enclosure, tried in vain to induce Keely to open it. Keely said the enclosure contained a secret device he had invented for a California gentleman to lift heavy weights. Although this invention was said to be perfected at the time, there is reason to doubt the accuracy of Keely's statement, as no record exists unto this day of the application of the machine. There is, however, a suspicious hole in the ceiling at one corner of where the enclosed apartment was which looks as though it might have been used on that October day in 1881 for transmitting power through a shafting which is now in place there. Directly over the aperture also is the place whereon Keely's apparatus rested at that time. In one corner of the lower apartment also are the remains or the old apparatus, which Keely yesterday said he was going to sell for junk.

Keely has risen to new things in the past year and a half. He has not only discarded his old apparatus, but in making a new one he has wholly avoided any resemblance in appearance to the one be formerly used. Even those parts of the old machine which he said were absolutely essential for developing his new force fail to materialize in the present one. The machines resemble one another in this particular, viz., that both are impossible to be described by reference to anything set down in mechanical treatises. Even Keely confessed yesterday his inability to describe the parts of his machine, and although he has given names to these parts he insisted on using different names when speaking of the same parts at different times.

Such trifling discrepancies were noted, however, only by the scientific reporters. The officers and stockholders stood around smilingly and drinking in Keely's words of wisdom. Occasionally, however, they showed the effects of his teaching in amplifying and explaining some of his laconic and disjointed remarks. For more than three hours the party remained in the shop watching Keely and his assistants bunglingly trying to put together bits of machinery in a way that would have harrowed the soul of an apprentice boy. Everything was of the crudest. Joints kept leaking, nuts could not be screwed on, and the shifting of a belt had to be thwarted from time to time

by the vigorous application of a long house broom.

"Mr. Keely," said one of the company's officers, when all the newspaper men were on hand," will now proceed to built up his entire apparatus, so that you can all judge of what it consists."

Encouraged by this Keely came forward and began to work. He brought to one side of the room a big piece of iron casting, and on this put a sheet of thick glass, making a stand. On top of the stand was placed a metallic bed plate about one inch thick, with holes around its edge. Tubes were placed upright on top and around the plate, and in the tubes were rods. At one side was a cylinder about 18 inches high and about 2 inches in diameter. Then followed more building up. On top of the plate and surrounded by the uprights were put boxes, cylindrical in shape containing rims from whose inner circumference steel wire prongs jutted, converging towards the centre. Then a round cap was put on and bolted to the bed plate by means of the upright rods. On top of the whole was screwed a globe with several apertures, to which tubes were affixed. The tubes led to very strong cylinder like soca(?), water reservoirs, only not quite as broad. Some hammering and jolting and screwing on of bolts followed, and then Keely thrummed over the steel wire prongs in the apparatus. They gave forth a sound like piano strings. After listening intently for a while the great inventor seemed satisfied. Then he brought out two tuning forks of ordinary make and screwed them into the holes on the edge of the bed plate. A third tuning fork, about twice the size of these and mounted in a wooden frame, was placed loosely on the stand beside the machine. Tapping of the tuning forks and thrumming of the steel wires followed, and then Keely announced himself ready.

THE TIMES's reporter noticed that the globe placed on top of the apparatus, to which the tubes were attached, had been put on without being opened. He called Keely's attention to it and asked that it be taken apart. Keely, in response, took out one of the tubes and blew sidewise through the globe. The reporter asked to have the top taken off, so that it might be examined and the contents of the globe made known.

"Oh, I can't do that," responded Keely, "it would take all day to do it." Just before this he had said the top of the globe was simply a boss, and has no significance, being merely screwed on. Some of the stockholders took up Mr. Keely's statement, and said they knew it would take all day to open up the apparatus.

"I can't do any more dissecting," added Mr. Keely, and I don't know that you would be any wise if I did. I am going to show you results, not the mechanism." And here again the stockholders remarked, looking at THE TIMES's reporter as though they were much incensed at his forwardness, that Keely "wasn't going to give away his patent's."

Taking a greasy violin bow, which must have seen better days because it could not have seen worse, Keely rubbed it across the large tuning fork. The result was not satisfactory. Then he opened a stopcock on one side of the apparatus and applied his lips to the place. He explained afterward that he was sucking out the air so as to create a slight vacuum. He resumed his labor with the bow, and, on opening a cock in the tube leading into one of the cylinders, the bystanders heard a hiss as of escaping air.

"That's etheric vapor," Keely went on to explain. "It ain't compressed air or any vapor having substance." One of his aides kindly explained that what was meant was that the noise was made by pure force, independent of matter.

"If this force were to get out," he remarked, "and you hit at it with a hatchet you would break the hatchet, although the implement would his nothing visible." Keely gravely nodded assent.

The force was then turned on by means of a tube into a little chamber or valve into which Keely had spit a mouthful of water. The chamber was part of an apparatus designed to show the pressure exerted. There was a steelyard arrangement with heavy iron weights at one end and a connection at the other with the water chamber. The force was exerted on a plunger. Keely said the plunger was of half an inch area. From what appeared however, it might just as well have been two inches. Keely would not open the thing. He drew his violin bow across his big tuning fork, gave a scrape, tapped the smaller tuning forks, and opened some cocks in the machine. There was another hissing noise and up went the weights. Loud applause followed from the stockholders. This experiment was repeated, care being taken to shut off the escaping vapor as soon as

possible. Then Keely threw his weight at the end of the steelyard and showed that the pressure was an elastic one.

"I have here," he remarked, "about 22,000 pounds of pressure." His own figures when given showed about half of this on the most liberal calculation, and taking his statements as to the plunger to be true.

"Have you seen enough of this?" queried one of the stockholders of the reporters. An affirmative answer having been given. Mr. Keely proceeded to show what he called an instance of pulsatory vibration. He previously explained that his cylinder were called a molecular resonator, an etheric resonator, and an atomic resonator, respectively. The instance of pulsatory vibration consisted in the rotation of a hollow brass globe about 6 inches in diameter. At first sight the globe seemed to be revolving without cause. Keely himself was at the other side of the room, leaning on what looked like a little cheese box, on top of which was a plate on which a stockholders struck some blows. The rotation, however, turned out to be merely a mechanical trick, and Keely was particularly careful to allow no reporter to touch the globe so as to expose the thing.

The crowning glory of the trial, however, was the rotation of a hollow iron globe suspended on an axle. This was rotated after it had been attached by sundry small tubes to the pressure cylinders. A belt was put on and a little wood was sawed. The globe, however, was not opened so as to show its contents. Keely said it was perfectly hollow and empty. His assistants said it contained some bits of mechanism. A similar device may easily be made by the use of compressed air. Believing this to be the power stored. THE TIMES reporter asked how long the engine could work.

"It will work all the time." answered Keely, "I have had one work for 40 days."

"Suppose," resumed the reporter, "you keep this going for half an hour, simply having the globe rotate."

Keely set the thing in motion and it ran for less than 15 minutes, constantly decreasing in power. Then he stopped it. His stockholders thought was of no use to keep on.

Then Keely asked: "Don't you want to see the gun shoot?"

The stockholders with one accord said "Yes," and Keely proceeded to charge his gun from a new cylinder. The gun is the same one that was used at Sandy Hook. It went off, evidently by compressed air. Very little power was shown.

Then Mr. Green, the Treasurer of the company, read a request to Keely asking him to exhibit his motor for the benefit of the Bartholdi pedestal fund.

"All right!" responded that worthy, "I will give an exhibition when my new engine is ready."

"How soon will that be?" asked a reporter.

"Can't tell - not inside of two months."

It is a singular thing that Keely is always on the point of getting ready a new motor. He no sooner finished one than he seen it is of no use. He apologized for the working of his machine yesterday on the ground that it was only crude. "But wait for my new one," said he.

A resolution was read by one of the stockholders setting forth the wonderful results shown, and expressing the hope that full success would crown Keely's work. No one deemed it advisable to object to this.

Before the party dispersed there came in a reporter, who, having fallen sick while the trials were in progress, had not been able to follow the drift of them. He applied to Keely to have the thing explained to him. And Keely answered:

"It is an elaboration of interatomic ether by vibration. The atomic ether vibrates all around the molecules of matter. There is a magnetic force attached to it at the same time, and it assimilates with the molecular atomic aggregations - that is, assimilates with a certain attractive vibratory negative. It don't act like a magnet drawing metals toward it. There is a certain magnetic effect about it that causes it to adhere by vibratory rotation to different forms of matter - that is the molecular, atomic, etheric, and ether-etheric. The impulse is given by

metallic impulses, the rotary power that is formed by etheric vibration - that is the force that holds it in position."

And the reporter went his way wondering. (The New York Times)
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See Also

Keely Chronology