

Let Us Have Some Actual Useful Work

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[Public Ledger](#), Philadelphia - 7/28/1886 - "With regard to the occasional revivals of the [Keely motor](#), whether annual, semi-annual, or biennial, as they have come along in the last ten or a dozen years, the Ledger has paid but little attention to them for a long time; and possibly this last display last week might have been allowed to take the same unnoticed course, but that the "whizz" of the big sphere seems to have been so rapid, and the racket so stunning, as to more greatly puzzle those present at the exhibition than on any former occasion. The matter for a long time has presented itself to us in but two aspects mainly. First, there was large public interest in the asserted development of physical force by new and very strange means - very interesting if there really was a probability of a new device or new means of developing power that could be harnessed and made to do useful work; and second, so far as the matter took the form of exploiting a private enterprise or stimulating a boom for a private speculation, there was but very limited interest for the public. In this latter aspect it was almost exclusively an affair between Mr. [Keely](#) and the stockholders of his [company](#), who felt willing to back their faith in the substantiality of his invention or discovery, by investing their money in the company's stock. This was no affair for a public journal to meddle in, unless some imposture was designed that might affect the general public.

"That in the way the Ledger has regarded the matter for several years; and, as during that period it seemed to be almost exclusively a private matter of little public interest, we have had little or no concern with it. Of course the Ledger stood ready all the time, as it stands now ready, to welcome anything that promises to be useful or of advantage in any way as an addition to the mechanical or other working facilities of our day. That Mr. Keely might have a clue to such an addition we did not dispute on the mere ground that it was new or strange, or because experts pronounced it impossible; for many stranger things have happened. Mankind, even those who are illumined by the highest human knowledge and intelligence, do not yet know all that is to be known, as we are reminded almost every day by the strides of scientific and mechanical progress. We would rather have found Mr. Keely less inclined to be mysterious; we could have wished him to have been less disposed to talk in terms that sound very like meaningless jargon to most well-informed persons; but still we did not think it proper, or fair, or wise, to reject his claims on these grounds, but have simply let them rest in abeyance, so far as the Ledger is concerned, because behind all this, and behind many more such essays, in the possibility that the success of some one of them may solve the problem of what is to be done when the world's supply of fuel, whether in from of wood, or coal, or peat, or gas, is either practically exhausted or to be got at only at a cost that would largely preclude its use. Mr. Keely, we say, may have a clue to that, as also may some one of those who are experimenting with the several manifestation of electric or magnetic force.

"What we would have had Mr. Keely do and, until he does it, his operations have but little practical value in the sight of the Ledger, would have been to harness his motor to do some useful work to gear it by cogwheel or by belt and pulley or by some other mechanical device, to a main shaft that has driving lathes, or planers, or other machines - something that was doing actual useful work, day in and day out, as other machines do. Of machines that will manifest great pressure on a gauge, of contrivances that have enormous lifting power, of explosives that demonstrate stupendous force, the appliances of science and the mechanic arts have large numbers, and they are handier and more manageable than any Mr. Keely has shown. These are not to the point - except, perhaps, to persons endowed with large faith. The machine that will do actual, useful, large work, by a manipulation of new energy or by a display of energy by new and manageable means, this or these are the things the public and the Ledger will be glad to hail."

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