

KEELY'S VAPORIC FORCE.

EXPERIMENTS WITH A MYSTERIOUS GUN AT SANDY HOOK.

There was great excitement on the steamer *Laura M. Starin* yesterday. At 12 o'clock a large number of gentlemen had assembled upon its decks, and mysterious "ha-has" and "ho-hos" went from mouth to mouth. For the gentlemen present felt that a crisis in the affairs of the much-discussed Keely Motor Company's vaporic gun was impending. They had at length succeeded in dragging the bashful inventor from his emporium in Philadelphia to flaunt his invention in the eyes of an incredulous and thankless world. This important event had been brought about through the instrumentality of Col. John Hamilton and Capt. Van Reed, who visited Mr. John W. Keely, at Philadelphia, in company with Mr. A. R. Edey, the President of the company, a short time ago, and professed themselves to be so deeply interested that they wrote to Secretary Lincoln, who sanctioned the exhibition of yesterday. Mr. Keely himself arrived by a special car, placed at his disposal by the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, and proceeded directly to the United States Government range at Sandy Hook, where the passengers on the *Laura M. Starin* were to meet him. There were at least 300 persons present. Among them were Col. John Hamilton, Lieut. E. L. Zalinski, Capt. G. V. Weer, Lieut. S. A. Day, Lieut. Frank Thorpe, Lieut. O. E. Wood, Lieut. B. K. Roberts, Lieut. E. R. Hills, E. J. Randall, of the Erie Railroad; John J. Smith, A. R. Edey, Augustus Stein, F. W. Gilley, Joseph Annin, Charles K. Dutton, Charles B. Peet, Francis Webb, Gus R. Throop, Joseph Walker, Robert Cornell, Dwight Lawrence, George H. Peabody, Col. A. C. Weldrick, Col. W. C. Church, Lieut. E. T. Brown, E. P. White, James McDonough, Charles Schullermann, S. S. Wood, Jr.; F. G. Green, F. J. Green, Lieut. Thomas Ridgeway, and Charles B. Collier.

"He's come and he's got it with him," said Mr. Peabody in a subdued voice to a group of gentlemen.

"It? What?" asked a dozen voices.

"I don't know," said Mr. Peabody in perplexed tones. "Nobody knows. It. The force. Etheralized vaporic power."

"Oh, yes! yes! of course," said the gentlemen, as though they understood thoroughly and felt convinced that if they went into a drug store and asked for 10 cents' worth of etheralized vaporic power it would be given to them in a small bottle.

"Now," said Mr. Peabody, "the whole question will be settled to-day. Mr. Keely has brought with him in a receiver five gallons of vaporic force, which, if the experiments are successful, will show that there is no bogus aid used, as he has been able to generate the force in Philadelphia and bring it to New-York. How does Mr. Keely get the first start? Ah ha! As he said to me, 'No one but scientific men can understand it, but I assure you it's beautiful.' In the first chamber of the generator is air, and all that is necessary to get the first start is to stimulate this air by vibrations and thus create a small disturbance. Water dropped into it will do that. When the air gets into a second chamber it comes in contact with the vibratory ether, which acts upon the water and the air in such a way as to separate the particles of water and air. Expansion follows, and the force thus generated is irresistible. This gun business is simply the reverse of everything hitherto known in science. Keely says it is undeniably the reverse.

"But what is this vapor?"

"No one but Keely knows. I can't tell you what it is any more than I can explain electricity. It is a force hitherto undiscovered. Capt. Van Reed says the dynamite gun is not worth a continental beside this vaporic gun." (Mr. Peabody omitted to state that Capt. Van Reed is financially interested in the company.) "What the company want to show is that the gun is not a fraud, as has been so often stated."

Mr. Charles B. Collier, who for four years abandoned his legal calling for the vaporic vocation, then took up the song. "If this is a fraud," said he, "Keely deserves State prison, and you can send me to the penitentiary," he added, looking round presumably for a prison van, but not seeing one he continued. "We have been very unfortunate. We have had heavy losses. One generator, which cost us \$60,000, we were forced to sell for \$200 as old iron. Our expenses have been enormous. But when we first started, in 1874, after a series of experiments made at the Gilsey House, we obtained a capital of \$90,000, and we are now going to show that those who placed the money with us then have good reason to congratulate themselves."

On arrival at Sandy Hook the Fort Hamilton Band struck up "Some Day," though presumably nothing satirical was meant in the selection of that melody, and the passengers of the *Laura M. Starin* marched to the scene of action. There was the great Philadelphian, John W. Keely, who for the first time in his life had been induced to leave his laboratory. He is a tall, iron-gray-haired man, with a determined expression of countenance. He is said to be 58 years of age. His fingers are huge and have large lumps like plums at the end, owing to his manual labors. Beside him were the not very formidable looking instruments to be exhibited. A small gun with a $1\frac{1}{4}$ bore, resting upon wheels; an iron receiver a yard and a half long, containing the mysterious force and connected with the gun by an iron wire tube 3-16 of an inch in diameter; a small intensifier, also connected with the gun; a wooden target 500 yards distant. The spectators saw nothing else. There was so little apparatus that people felt inclined to be disappointed; but Col. John Hamilton looked so busy and Mr. Keely so nervous that they felt quite satisfied.

Mr. Keely took a small leaden ball, $4\frac{7}{8}$ ounces in weight, and with a wooden stick rammed it down the muzzle of the gun. He then took a hammer and in a necromantic fashion tapped the iron receiver containing the mysterious force. The crowd involuntarily stepped back, expecting an explosion. Nothing but a metallic sound was heard. Mr. Keely stated that this action was to stimulate the vibratory force. Then turning a handle, the first experiment was concluded. The ball was projected from the gun with a short, sharp sound. There was no heat, the muzzle of the gun being as cold as it was before the ball had been placed in it. There was no smoke. There was very little recoil. The projectile was sent to a distance of 300 yards, the elevation used having been $2\frac{1}{4}$ degrees.

"Wonderful!" said Col. Hamilton.

"Strange!" ejaculated the crowd.

The next shot, from an elevation of six degrees, struck the target one foot above the centre. The third shot passed to the left above the target. The fourth was attended with a similar result. The fifth struck the target at the bottom. The sixth and seventh went to the left, and other shots were sent in rapid succession to show that the power in the receiver was by no means exhausted. The time of flight of the second shot was found to be $\frac{3}{4}$ seconds. The velocity was then ascertained by means of Boulanger's initial velocimeter. One shot was found to be projected at the rate of 482 feet per second, the next at 492 feet per second, another at 523 feet per second, or at about one-third the velocity obtained by the Springfield rifle. Three 3-inch spruce-wood planks were then placed before the gun in order to test the penetrating force of the instrument. A cylindrical steel shot was fired and went entirely through the first plank and half through the second.

"The pressure I have used," said Mr. Keely, "is 7,000 feet to the square inch. I could use 30,000 feet, and have done so."

Experiments were continued during the afternoon, and the Directors of the company were apparently radiantly happy. What the mysterious force was no one learned. Mr. Keely, not having patented his invention, is naturally suspicious of a money-grubbing world. "Vaporic force" was the only explanation he volunteered.