

**THOUGHTS ON NATURAL  
PHILOSOPHY: WITH A NEW  
READING OF NEWTON'S FIRST  
LAW AND THE ORIGIN OF LIFE**

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Thoughts on natural philosophy: with a new reading of Newton's first law and the origin of life  
by A. Biddlecombe

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**A. BIDDLECOMBE**

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ON  
NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

(WITH A NEW READING OF NEWTON'S FIRST LAW);

AND

THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

BY

A. BIDDLECOMBE.

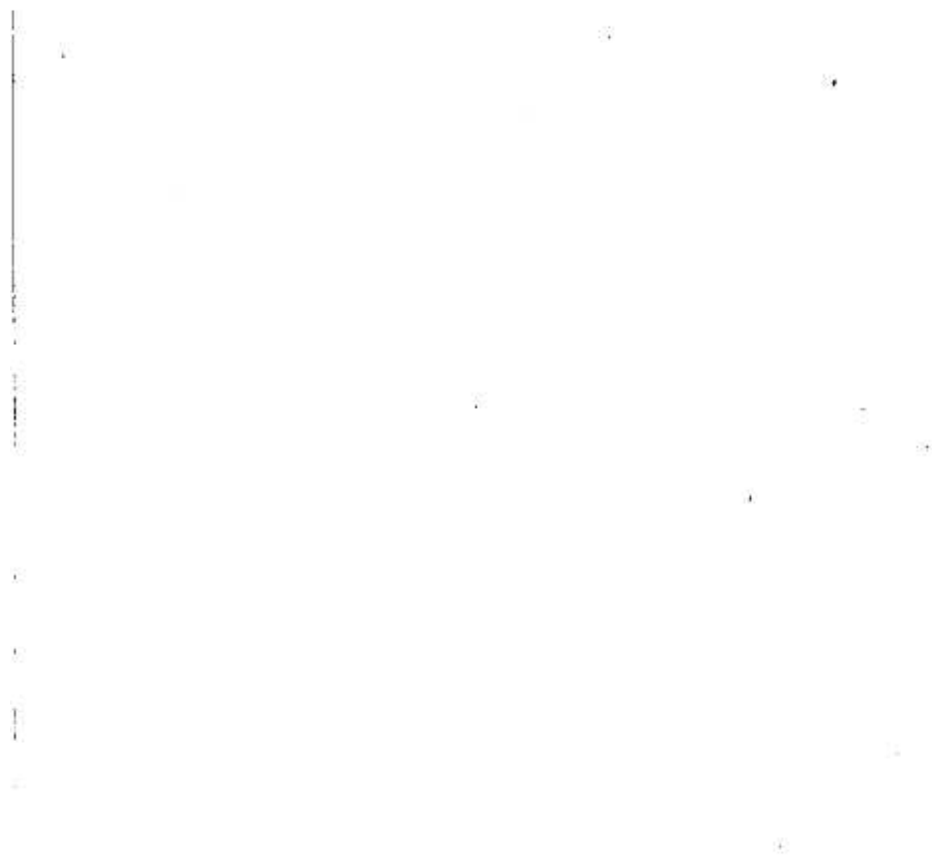
"Plato is my friend, but truth is a greater friend."

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## FOREWORD.

THE author desires to explain that the method in which he has attacked the great problem with which this treatise deals was settled for him by the fact that it was the discovery of Radium by Madam Curie, and the philosophic explanations of Professors Rutherford and Soddy with regard to radium phenomena, that enabled him to jump to the apprehension of the speed theory of material combination, which has formed the germ from which this sketch of a true natural philosophy has developed.

His acknowledgments and thanks are due to the many eminent men, at home or abroad, living or dead, who have helped him by their books, their delicate and difficult experiments, their wonderful calculations and clever practical work. They are too truly great to be offended by the efforts of another, however humble, to solve, with their assistance, the great unsolvable. Write with diffidence for the great he must; but their greatness only gives him confidence, because he knows that he is taking his pearls to a right market, where they can be tested and appreciated, where their beauty will please and their purity entrance.

In referring to Sir Isaac Newton the author has no desire to belittle his genius. Sir Isaac was a giant; but like other great men he made mistakes. It would be unwise to accept and perpetuate what is untrue.





## INTRODUCTION.

THROUGHOUT the ages there have been many philosophers great and small. The word "Plato" may for convenience be taken to express and include the sum of them. Then, as scientific inquirers, we may well have for our device the well-known quotation: "Plato is my friend, but truth is a greater friend." We are searchers after truth, we revere our teachers; but not all our affectionate reverence or awe of great men, living or dead, can stay us in our quest. Truth alone is sovereign.

The subject of religion is not dealt with in this theory. We all agree that the ordinary operations of nature are carried on under the rule of what we term "natural law." It is my endeavour to elucidate that law.

The nomenclature adopted is that of the radium experimenters, because I wished to state the case as stated by them. There is not any magic in names; and it does not much matter what you call a thing so long as the term is clearly defined at the start, and you abide by that term and definition throughout the argument. Scientific terms are but words applied to temporary arrangements of matter caused by the speed, weight, and movements of material portions. This is to be remembered in order that we do not get lost in a forest of names, or allow scientific terms to obscure our vision of the reality and cause of things.

Natural philosophy does not belong entirely to scientific experimentalists and mathematicians. When the first have made their delicate and difficult experiments, and the others have worked out their intricate problems, then, if either or both of them commence to construct a system of philosophy,

the logicians come in, and it is their high duty to test the reasoning of the philosophers. If that reasoning cannot stand the necessary tests, the philosophy must be cast aside, no matter who may be its author. The work of the logician is necessary, because some of the suggestions of learned men are fit only for *Alice in Wonderland*, where a thing can be a pussy-cat and not a pussycat at the same time.

Sir Isaac Newton himself appears to have had his doubts. He at one time thought of endeavouring to account for orbital phenomena by differences of pressure in the ether, but did not publish a theory on the subject.

In Newton's *Principia* the first law is that "Every body continues in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line, except in so far as it may be compelled by impressed forces to change that state."

Let us transpose the wording as follows:—Every body continues in its state of uniform motion in a straight line, or in its state of rest, except in so far as it may be compelled by impressed forces to change that state.

The reason that the law as transposed is more correctly stated is as follows: It is acknowledged by scientific inquirers that in scientific matters we must reason from the known to the unknown. The only state of rest known to us is a relative and occasional state. Take a book between the two hands, apply an upward and a downward pressure; when the pressure is equal in opposite directions a state of equilibrium will result, and the book will be at rest. The force that causes this state of rest is energy exercised in opposite directions. What is true of the book is true of other matter. Energy (or material motion) causes the state of rest, therefore energy (or material motion) must be the original thing, and rest a secondary matter or effect. To take the effect as the basis of an argument or system of

philosophy, and then invent some imaginary force (which, after all, can only be a name, a word, a no-force) to account for phenomena caused by a force already in existence is fallacious and absurd.

The first law should therefore be that:--Every body continues in its state of uniform motion in a straight line or in its state of rest, except in so far as it may be compelled by motion or force to change those states.

The advantage of this amended law is that you are dealing with known things, and in their right order, and do not have to imagine fanciful ideas.

This amended law agrees with my axiom that "Two portions of matter, moving adjacent at equal rates of speed along a straight line, must continue to move together as long as their rates of speed remain equal, and they do not receive any interference."

This is the fundamental law of material combination. When they meet other portions of matter and clash, they combine to execute the work of moving the other portions, or are moved, as the case may be; but either way they combine to exercise force and do work.

The birds in the air, the fishes in the water, animals on land, and all moving things illustrate the truth of the axiom. As long as they move adjacent to one another, at equal rates of speed, along a straight line, without interference, they keep together.

Matter, having motion, must have speed and direction, and therefore eventually adjacency.

Material motion gives the sensation of heat, and is called "energy." The word "energy" is only a name given to material motion.

Electricity and magnetism are material motion in special forms or modes, and only in operation when material motion