

THE ELECTRIC THEORY OF ASTRONOMY

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The Electric Theory of Astronomy by B. T. Kavanaugh

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B. T. KAVANAUGH

**THE ELECTRIC
THEORY OF
ASTRONOMY**

THE ELECTRIC THEORY
OF
ASTRONOMY.

BY

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"NOTES OF A WESTERN RAMBLER, OR SIXTY YEARS' PIONEER
LIFE IN THE WEST;" "THE GREAT CENTRAL VALLEY OF
NORTH AMERICA, CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE
TO ITS TOPOGRAPHY, HYDROLOGY, MINER-
ALOGY, ANTIQUITIES," ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

REV. R. H. RIVERS, A. M., D. D.

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PREFACE.

THIS work has been in the course of preparation for over fifty years.

The elementary principles on which it is based were first brought to the notice of the author in the Summer of 1834 by Judge John Richardson, a native of New York, then living in Crawford County, Illinois.

He satisfactorily accounted for the revolution of the earth on its axis by the attractive and the repulsive forces of electricity proceeding from the sun, but he had made no farther progress in the development of the whole theory upon which the electric system of astronomy is based.

Beginning from this initial point, the author has occupied his leisure hours in applying the principles of electric attraction and repul-

sion as a motor power, and has found that from these causes all the motions of the heavenly bodies could be accounted for in a manner far more rational and philosophic than by the existing system of astronomy.

In 1867, while residing in Chapel Hill, Texas, by request of the faculty of Soule College, the theory was for the first time presented to the public, in a course of lectures before the faculty and students of that institution.

In 1878 the same lectures were repeated by request before the Lyceum of Houston, Texas, when, at the suggestion of leading members of that body, they were prepared for the press in four lectures and brought out in pamphlet form.

Having a strong desire more fully to test the validity and correctness of the principles involved, the author determined to make a tour through Texas and other Western States, and deliver a course of lectures before the faculty and students of different colleges,

thereby to elicit the objections and to call forth the criticisms of the most learned on the correctness of the doctrines presented.

Some of the institutions visited were the State College at Bryan, the Baptist University at Waco, and the Female Colleges at Sherman and Paris, in Texas. At Louisville, Ky., the faculty and students of the male and female high schools assembled for the purpose of hearing my lectures in the Male Institute, where a large number of scientific men, by invitation, were present. I subsequently lectured at the Kentucky Wesleyan College, at Millersburg, Ky.

On all these occasions eminent educators responded in most favorable terms, expressing their gratification at being favored with the presentation of a new system of astronomy based upon electric principles. Though they could not be asked, at so early a day, to indorse the doctrines presented, they regarded the system as worthy the closest investigation.

The results of this test experiment were entirely satisfactory to the author. The criticisms and remarks elicited were valuable in impressing upon his mind the necessity of a wider range, to take in all the facts and principles connected with the system.

For example, the structure and functions of the sun, as the great center whence dynamic electricity is derived, were more perfectly studied.

It was manifest that the expenditures of the sun must be sustained by an ample and compensating supply of dormant or static electricity, and if this were true, then the sun must be capacitated not only to emit, but also to receive supplies. This naturally suggested that there must be apertures or open mouths through which the supplying currents could pass into the solar body. When we looked to the sun with this inquiry in mind, we found it fully answered, as shown in our chapters on the sun. This and other discoveries were made during this lecture tour.

On arriving at Cincinnati, finding the first edition of a thousand copies of my pamphlet about exhausted, three additional lectures were prepared, and a new edition, incorporating all the improvements then made, was published January, 1879.

In August, 1882, having made two additional discoveries, I negotiated with A. Wilford Hall, Ph. D., editor of the *Literary Microcosm*, New York, for publishing in his magazine a series of articles entitled "Electricity, the Motor Power of the Solar System."

Up to this period the forces by which the earth is propelled in its orbit around the sun had not been satisfactorily discovered, nor the elliptic form of the earth's orbit, and the inclination of its axis to the plane of its orbit, been demonstrated to be an electric necessity.

To incorporate these and other new features not only gave further perfection to the system, but its publication in a magazine of the high order and wide circulation of the *Microcosm* was a more convenient mode of

bringing the theory before the public than its direct presentation in personal lectures.

During the process of the publication, through a whole volume of the *Microcosem*, my theory was brought in contact with the minds of a very large number of acute and able scientists in all parts of the United States and Europe. This drew upon me a correspondence of a very extensive and interesting character, which enabled me to form some estimate of the manner in which my patient and long-continued labors were received by the scientific public.

In the various forms in which my views have been presented they have now been before the public eighteen years. Through the latter medium, the circulation, as stated, has been very extensive, and up to this date the author has been gratified to find that no formal and decided stand has as yet been taken against the fundamental principles on which the theory is based; but, on the contrary, a more hearty indorsement and more encourag-