

# The Origin of the World

By R. McMillan.

Now listen to me carefully, and see if you can understand what I mean. I think I understand what I am going to say; but if I am not able to make it clear to you, it is a sign that it is not really clear to me. If there was only the force of gravitation at work, the moon would fall into the earth, for the pull of the earth would soon pull the moon down. If there was only the force of gravitation at work, the sun would pull the earth towards it, and we would tumble into the mighty flaming sun, and all the world would blaze into nothing in a very short time.

When I say "into nothing" I do not mean that, because nothing is ever destroyed. You cannot reduce "something" to "nothing," no matter what you do. If you burn a ton of coal, you think it has been reduced to "nothing"; but that is quite wrong. In burning the coal you set free the heat that was in it, and change the black shining coal to gas, to heat, to motion, to energy, to many possible things; but the oxygen and the hydrogen, and the carbon and sulphur in the coal, have simply changed their form. They are not destroyed. You can never destroy anything. Force and matter are quite indestructible. They cannot be destroyed; nothing can be destroyed. Everything changes, but nothing ever is or ever can be destroyed. Is that clear to you?

If this world fell into the sun, then, it would be destroyed as a world, though it would still exist as gas. But it would not have been destroyed. You will need to think that out; but I do not expect you are going to understand, in one lesson, what I am trying to make plain. I only hope to set you to thinking and inquiring further. You must not believe what I tell you just because I have told you. You must prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good.

I said that if there was only the force of gravitation at work, all things would fly together. The earth and the sun would fly together, and the stars would collide and smash up, and the entire universe would come to destruction—to final and hopeless rest. They do not tend that way at all, and what keeps them from ruin is the existence of ENERGY. I do not know what energy is, any more than I know what gravitation is; but I know that it exists. That is, I know what it does.

Like matter and motion, like gravity and time, it is "imponderable." Energy does the exact opposite of gravitation. Or, if you like to give it the name Edward Clodd gives it, then it does the opposite of FORCE. Energy drives things out; force pulls them back. I have seen a burning mountain—a volcano—throw vast clouds of white-hot boiling lava up into the air, for hundreds of feet. What drove it up into the air like that was energy. But it all came back to the earth very soon, for the law of force was at work pulling it back.

For fear you think I am making this up out of my own head, let me quote Edward Clodd on this subject, for he wrote "The Story of Creation," and he is a very clever man. His book has gone through about eight editions, and many thousand copies have been issued by the R. P. A. in their cheap sixpenny reprints, so it must be a good book!

Mr. Clodd says: "Motion throughout the universe is produced or destroyed, quickened or retarded, increased or lessened, by two indestructible powers of opposite nature—(a) Force, and (b) Energy. For the present purpose Force is defined as that which produces or quickens motion, binding together two or more particles of ponderable matter, and which retards or resists motions tending to separate such particles. When force acts between visible masses of matter, large or small, dis-

tant or near, it is called gravitation; when it acts between the molecules composing masses, it is called molecular attraction or cohesion; when it acts between the atoms, uniting them chemically into molecules, it is called chemical attraction, or affinity."

I do not suppose that it is very clear to you, for when I recall the trouble I had to remember the difference between atoms and molecules, between electrons and ions, I know that you will be all in a state of muddle. But do not be discouraged. I am not going to try and explain all those differences here; that would be quite out of the question. What I do want you to understand is that there are two forces at work in the world; one we will call "Force," and the other "Energy." But you have also got to remember that names are nothing except signposts. They explain nothing. They are only to show you the path. Bear this in mind, that there are two opposing forces in the world which keep things moving. One pulls, the other pushes. One draws together, the other separates. Those two forces are what called the world into existence. Those are the giants of my story, but they are such wonderful giants that I want to bow down to them and worship them, for they express, to me, all the miracles of the universe.

There is nothing more wonderful anywhere than the existence of these two giants. They are the cause of all that is—of rain and rivers, of volcanoes and earthquakes, of tidal waves and floods, and joy and woe, and life and death. They are so wonderful, so vast, so imponderable, yet so simple. We talk as if they were mysteries, and so they are. But the simplest thing in the world is a mystery. Your pet lamb eats grass and drinks water, but it changes the grass and water into lamb and wool. How? You eat the dead lamb, and change it into live girl. How? You eat lamb and green peas and potatoes, and you change them into skin and hair, into bones and muscles, into toe-nails and finger-nails, and into ideas and conduct and emotion—but how? You are a miracle yourself—an expression of the mystery of everything in the world, even the very simplest. You think that my friends, Force and Energy, are mysterious. Yes, they are; but not more mysterious than you are yourself.

Take a glass of water and try to find out what it is, and you will stand face to face with the mystery of the universe. Water is composed of two gases. Do you believe that? It is formed from the gas oxygen, which is a fiery, savage gas, and the light, flighty gas called hydrogen. If you put some acid into fresh water, and put electric wires into it, you can separate the two gases, and turn the water into invisible gas. Is that wonderful? Is it a miracle? All water is composed of gas, and some man had an idea of separating the sea water into its constituent gases, and driving the ship with gas instead of steam, and doing away with coal.

Now listen to this: All living things are largely composed of water. Edward Clodd says: "All living matter is largely made up of water, the average proportion ranging from seventy to ninety per cent.; but in the jelly-fish it is about four hundred to one." That means that we are mostly gas, for if water is composed of gas, and we are mostly water, then we are mostly gas.

Let me go a step further, and tell you that all matter—everything—is composed of gas, and all the world and the things and people in it are all composed of gas. They came from gas, and to gas they must return. But I had better leave you at that for the moment, had I not?

Next Lesson: The Deceptiveness of Motion.

## A Letter From Lestor

Dunford Bridge,

Via Sheffield, England,  
April, 13, 1922.

Editor, "Western Clarion,"

Dear Comrade:

I suppose you will be wondering what has become of me, and no doubt many will have formed the opinion that I have crossed the "great divide."

Sorry to say that two attacks of the flu' followed by complications have prevented me from being active but am now slowly recovering, though not yet able to go in again for propaganda. I noticed in your latest "Clarion" an article on the Theatre and it pleased me more than I can say, because I am a member of the Actors' Association and have had the pleasure of speaking at one or two of their propaganda meetings. It took some courage to explain to a bunch of well known artists that they were "slaves bought and sold at their cost of production," but I did it and with good results. The germ is now working and if you find class consciousness developing among the pros. of this country, remember S. P. of C. propaganda has contributed some little towards this. There are thousands of actors in this country unemployed, all with good deliveries and nearly all of them with nothing to deliver. Harry Quelch's son contributes to the official organ, "The Actor," and he is doing good work in a quiet way. He has recently been to Moscow and writes about the Theatres of Russia. The book "Ten Days That Shook the World" contains material for a thrilling play. The "Commune" and other incidents of working class history could also be staged and do good work in the way of education. I know that many comrades would not agree with this method of propaganda, but I express my opinion.

Was talking to Walter Newbold the other day and he made the statement that Britain was done for. He has been assiduously engaged in research work for some considerable time and he knows much. The economic revolution in this country has proceeded much further than the working class is aware. The master class has a much better idea of the situation than the slaves. The ignorance of the Labor Party keeps it silent upon international questions because it doesn't know anything about them. The machinery of production is not being renewed, and in comparison with that of other countries it will soon be old junk. Helplessness, apathy, and impotent misery are everywhere, but with the exception of the unemployed organisations there is little revolutionary life. The Communist Party is falling to pieces; some of the leaders are no good and the rank and file are as blind and foolish as the followers of the I. W. W.. I understand you have now a "Workers' Party" in Canada. This I suppose is the Communist Party "in disguise."

The S. P. of C. has always fought (Capitalism) by means of education. Other organizations try to fight (the Capitalist Class) by direct action, etc. The system itself enslaves, and the system is not the conscious work of the Capitalist but the result of an unconscious development. Education, therefore, is primarily necessary before we can escape from bondage.

At the same time we must remember that it is effort and not argument that will finally decide. It is the overthrow of Capitalism and the establishment of the co-operative Commonwealth that we work for. This is our goal. The education of the proletariat is a means towards this end.

Keep the goal in view and never forget that we are a political party, and let us always be prepared, both individually and collectively, to display that political initiative that is necessary to orient the heads of our class in the right direction.

Newbold told me among other things that a certain well known daily here is in the pay of the French ruling class \* After Fashoda the French

\* We suspect that the "certain well known daily" referred to is "The Daily Mail."—Editor.

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