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ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH
ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
SCIENCE,

At its Forty-First Meeting, at Edinburgh, August, 1871.

The Presidency of the Association was resigned by Prof. Huxley, and assumed by Sir William Thompson, who delivered the usual Presidential Address.

After dwelling on the origin of the Association, and the eminent scientific career of several of its early founders, the President gave a review of the present work of the Association, and suggested, in connection with it, the importance of establishing a British Year Book of Science. He also urged upon the Government the necessity for the foundation of National Colleges of Research, on a scale commensurate with the importance of Scientific Education, and in some degree corresponding with similar institutions on the continent of Europe. He then proceeded to give a general sketch of the recent progress of Physical Science, from which we give the following extracts:—

I. SPECTRUM ANALYSIS.

The prismatic analysis of light discovered by Newton was estimated by himself as being “the oddest, if not the most considerable detection, which hath hitherto been made in the operations of nature.”

Had he not been deflected from the subject, he could not have failed to obtain a pure spectrum; but this, with the inevitably