

only traced it much further than ever it was traced before, but has found in it absorption lines very much stronger than any that occur in the visible spectrum.

Capt. Abney, who has worked at the same subject, and has accomplished the difficult feat of photographing the ultra-red spectrum, took part in the discussion, as did also Prof. Schuster, and some interesting facts were brought out; one being the existence of vapour of alcohol either in the loftiest regions of the air or in interplanetary space, as shown by the absorption bands of alcohol in the spectrum of the sun; the other, the existence of strong evidence that the group of lines in the solar spectrum, known as the B group, is due neither to the sun's atmosphere nor to the earth's, but to absorption in interplanetary space.

Prof. G. Forbes gave a very clear account of a series of experiments which he carried out with Mr. Young, of Kelly, and the method of which appeared to be unexceptionable, proving (unless they can be impugned) that red light travels faster in the air than blue light. If this be so, the difference *in vacuo* will be still greater, whereas the received theory is that *in vacuo* all colors travel with equal velocities.

The Committee on Meteoric Dust reported, through Prof. Schuster, that large quantities of iron had been found in dust collected in the Sahara Desert and in other places far from towns, and that much of this iron is alloyed with cobalt and nickel. These facts seem to indicate derivation from extra-mundane regions.

The Underground Temperature Committee have furnished a general summary and discussion of all their results, extending over the past fifteen years, drawn up by Prof. Everett. The rates of increase at the several stations differ widely among themselves, and the general average deduced is a degree in 64 feet. Considerable prominence is given to the fact that increase downwards exists not only at depths at which the temperature remains constant throughout the year, but also in the upper strata as far as the surface itself, when we compare the mean annual temperature at each depth.

Dr. Siemens brought forward in this Section the proposals contained in his presidential address for some additions to the list of "practical units" employed by electricians. Two of his units were unanimously approved—namely, (1) the *watt*, which is the