

A METHOD OF MEASURING THE ABSOLUTE DILATATION OF MERCURY.

[Abstract.]

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The forms of apparatus used by Dulong and Petit, and Regnault, in determining the absolute dilatation of mercury are open to one or both of the following objections: (1) Some parts of the mercury columns are exposed and so the temperature can not be exactly the same throughout; (2) the heights of the columns must be measured from some assumed point of equilibrium in a horizontal connecting tube. The method proposed in this investigation is entirely free from both these objections.

The two arms of a vertical U tube are jacketed in the usual way, except that the jacketing tubes are of glass to permit the heights of the mercury columns to be taken with a cathetometer, at any level. Into the tube is poured a quantity of mercury sufficient to stand several centimeters high in each arm. When the required temperature has been attained the two heights are carefully measured. More mercury is added and under the same temperature conditions the heights are again measured. The differences in the heights before and after adding the mercury, together with the temperature difference of the two arms, are all the data required. Many independent determinations may be made by adding or removing mercury. As the readings are in every case difference readings any effects that might come from capillary and convection currents in the horizontal tube are eliminated. Two of my students, J. G. Gentry and O. A. Rawlins, have obtained remarkably consistent results by this method, though the coefficient of dilatation obtained by them is slightly less than that obtained by Regnault.

THE GEODESIC LINE OF THE SPACE $ds^2 = dx^2 + \sin^2 x dy^2 + dz^2$.

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