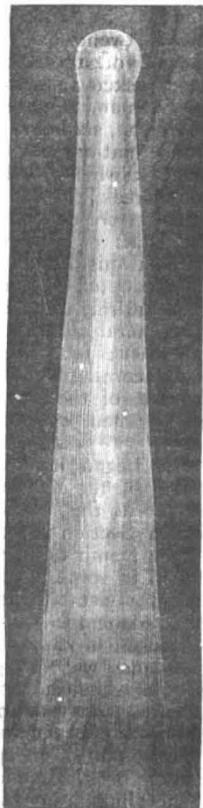


nucleus and circular coma. The tail was to be seen, but was quite faint, and as before was less at the base than the width of



Sketch of Schaeberle's Comet, August 24, 8h. 40m. in 6" Cooke equatorial.

the coma. Dr. de Konkoly has examined the spectrum of this comet, and found it a faint continuous one, with three tolerably bright lines, at following positions:—

	Estimated brightness.
I. 5601 ± 2.5	0.4
II. 5161 ± 0.9	1.0
III. 4753 ± 0.6	0.8



Schaeberle's Comet, August 28, 8h. 32m.

The appearance of this comet throughout has been peculiarly distinguished from that class in which jets of light streaming

from the nucleus in front fall back to form the tail or a bright margin to it. These, as far as I have seen, have been absent.
Guildown, August 31
J. RAND CAPRON

Comet δ 1881

M. CH. FIEVEZ, the Astronomer adjoint at the Royal Observatory, Brussels, has been good enough to send me a copy of his note on the analysis of the light of this comet, made with the 15-inch Merz-Cooke equatorial, provisionally installed at the Avenue Cortenberg. The polariscopic observations demonstrate that the polarisation of the nucleus was strong (*très nette et bien accentuée*), while that of the tail was very weak. These observations were made at several days interval, from 11h. till midnight. Sky polarisation was scarcely sensible. The spectroscopic observations proved the spectrum of the comet to consist of four bands of intensity in the following order: green, blue, violet, and yellow, with wave-lengths 5160, 4780, 4200 (about), and 5620. The original appearance of these bands was modified as the comet receded from the sun, their edges towards the red then becoming more and more defined. The nucleus presented a brilliant continuous spectrum, in which however the Fraunhofer lines were not recognised. The conclusions arrived at by M. Fievez were as follows:—That a great part of the light of the comet was inherent to it, while the other part was reflected solar light. That the strong polarisation of the nucleus indicated a marked state of condensation of the matter composing it. That the spectrum differed little from that of other comets. Lastly, that the marked modifications in the brilliancy of the continuous spectrum, and in the appearance of the spectrum bands indicated a progressive diminution in the comet's temperature. The chief interest in the above observations attaches to the feeble polarisation detected in the tail as compared with that found by Prof. A. W. Wright and Mr. Cowper Ranyard, and in the absence of the Fraunhofer lines, which were measured by Dr. N. de Konkoly, and also photographed by Dr. Huggins. Whence, we may ask, arises the divergence of conclusions arrived at by M. Fievez and Prof. Wright respectively, the one considering that the principal part of the comet's light is from itself, the other that it is reflected sunlight, and why were the Fraunhofer lines seen in the one case, and not in the other? The answer lies, I think, not with the instruments employed, but rather in the interesting probability of change in the comet's structure or condition during the time of its examination. A comparison of the many observations recorded during its stay with us may possibly lead to important discoveries in this direction. I am much interested to see that Prof. C. A. Young informs us that the green band was seen by observers at Princeton split up into fine sharp lines coinciding with those seen in the flame spectrum, a result to be expected, but hitherto not attained.
J. RAND CAPRON

Guildown, September 3

THE comet at present visible was examined by me with the spectroscope on the 8½-inch refractor on Saturday evening, August 27. The three principal hydrocarbon bands were plainly visible, the central one being the brightest, and on comparing them with the spectrum of a spirit-lamp flame the coincidence of the least refrangible sides of the bands in the two spectra was sensibly complete. The nucleus gave a narrow continuous spectrum, and I could see no trace of such a spectrum except from that point. I could see no other band in the spectrum except the three above mentioned, but the proximity of the comet to the horizon may have something to do with this.

GEORGE M. SEABROKE

Temple Observatory, Rugby, August 29

A Pink Rainbow

I SPENT Sunday, August 21, at Mr. Tennyson's house, Aldworth, near Haslemere. The house stands on an elevated ledge of the Blackdown range, looking over the Weald towards the Brighton Downs, between east and south-east. About sunset the deep red of the south-eastern sky attracted our attention, and while we were looking at it we saw stretching across it a well-marked rainbow, but of a uniform red or pink colour, which Mrs. Tennyson compares, in a note I have just had from her, to a "pink postage-stamp"—not the one now in use, but the last discarded one. This was seen distinctly by Mrs. Tennyson, Mr. Hallam Tennyson, and myself for, I think, more than a minute. Mr. Hallam went to call his father, who was in another room,