

FIG. 1. Counter cylinder composed of separately insulated segments whose potentials may be independently assigned. Filled with a mixture of argon-ether.

interferes with this step-by-step process of propagation at the boundaries of the section.

In one such procedure, and one rich in possible applications, the electric field is reduced at points where it is desired to interrupt the discharge. This has been demonstrated by utilizing the segmented counter employed for other studies.^{3,4} Reducing the potential of certain segments (Fig. 1A) below the starting potential (say for example 2, 4, 6, 8) we arbitrarily divide the counter into a series of lengths (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) which may be used in coincidence in precisely the manner described by Stever. The pulse sizes observed at 0 are proportional to the number of segments (of the group 1, 3, 5, 7, 9) traversed by the rays passing down the axis of the counter tube. The assignment of active and inactive segments is of course quite arbitrary, and one may divide the same counter into many different coincident groups.

The greatest flexibility is achieved, however, as a result of the fact that voltage pulses (Fig. 1B), or charges (Fig. 1C) may be taken from the separate segment units. Space does not permit an elucidation of these applications but Figs. 1B, 1C are suggestive. In 1B voltage pulses are taken from the cylinder segments (say D, E, F, G, H) and applied in any desired manner to the recording circuits. In 1C only currents (or total charges) are measured. Here, in segment 1, working in the Geiger counter region, the current to the segment is proportional to the number of ionizing particles which pass through it, while the current to segment 3, working in the proportional region, varies linearly with the product of the number of particles and the specific ionization of the particles involved. Therefore I_3/I_1 is a measure of the specific ionization of the particles of the beam. This procedure, or some obvious modification of it, can provide us with a rugged method for measuring changes of specific ionization of the particles in a beam under conditions where the number of particles does not remain constant. We may thus count particles and simul-

taneously measure their ionizing capacity *within the same counter.*

- ¹ H. G. Stever, Phys. Rev. **59**, 765 (1941).
² W. E. Ramsey, Phys. Rev. **58**, 476 (1940).
³ W. E. Ramsey, Emmett L. Hudspeth, and Wayne L. Lees, Phys. Rev. **59**, 685 (1941).
⁴ W. E. Ramsey, and Wayne L. Lees, Phys. Rev. **60**, 411 (1941).
 * It is essential to adjust the gas mixture until each discharge, as observed on an oscillograph, consists of one single pulse. Failure to break into a continuous discharge with low resistance is not sufficient.

A Suggestion on the Detection of the Neutrino

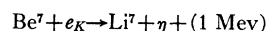
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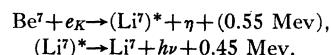
October 13, 1941

IT is known that the presence of the neutrino cannot be detected by its own ionization effect. It appears that the only hope of getting evidence of its existence is by measuring the recoil energy or momentum of the radioactive atom. Crane and Halpern¹ have, by measuring the momentum and energy of the emitted β -ray and the recoil atom with a cloud chamber, obtained evidence pointing toward the existence of the neutrino. However, owing to the smallness of the ionization effect of the recoil atom, it seems worth while to consider a different method of detecting it.

When a β^+ -radioactive atom captures a K electron instead of emitting a positron, the recoil energy and momentum of the resulting atom will depend *solely* upon the emitted neutrino, the effect of the extra-nuclear electron being negligible. It would then be relatively simple to find the mass and energy of the emitted neutrino, by measuring the recoil energy and momentum of the resulting atom *alone*. Moreover, this recoil is now of the same amount for all atoms, since no continuous β -rays are emitted. We take for example the element Be^7 which decays in 43 days with K capture in two different processes:²



and



The first process is relatively large, about 10 to 1 in comparison with the second process. The recoil energy of the first process is, by assuming the mass of neutrino to be zero, about 77 ev while that of the second process is about one-third of that amount. This recoil energy would have to be detected and measured in some way, and a correction would have to be made for the disturbances due to the γ -rays and the soft x-rays (originating from the replacement of the K electrons by outer electrons). The recoil energy of certain K -capture atoms, particularly those having isomeric properties so that the K capture is followed by an α -decay, may also be possibly detected by chemical means. In this case, if the radioactive substance is prepared to form some suitable compound of non-polar type, the recoil energy of the resulting atom will break the bond and thus be detected.

¹ H. R. Crane and J. Halpern, Phys. Rev. **53**, 789 (1938); Phys. Rev. **56**, 232 (1939).

² R. B. Roberts, N. P. Heydenburg, and G. L. Locher, Phys. Rev. **53**, 1016 (1938); L. H. Rumbaugh, R. B. Roberts, and L. R. Hafstad, Phys. Rev. **54**, 657 (1938).