

1965

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Published in *Physical Review Letters* **15**, 580 - 581 (1965)

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URL: <http://link.aps.org/doi/10.1103/PhysRevLett.15.580>

DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevLett.15.580

NEW AUTOIONIZING LEVELS IN HELIUM*

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Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota
(Received 19 August 1965)

We recently reported the excitation of autoionizing states in helium by positive-ion bombardment and their subsequent observation as fine structure in the energy spectrum of the emitted electrons.¹ With somewhat increased resolution we have now observed additional levels in helium including parts of two series not previously reported.

The same apparatus was used as in the previous work except for the addition of an X-Y recorder to plot the data. Again, electrons ejected at a 160° angle with respect to the ion beam were observed. The helium pressure in the collision chamber was five to six microns. The bombarding ions were 75-keV H_2^+ or H_2^+ .

In Fig. 1 are shown three runs at different recorder sensitivities. The peak at 62.15 eV can be identified as the $(2p^2)^1S$ level calculated theoretically by O'Malley and Geltman² but not previously observed. The peak at 63.65 eV is the $sp, 23^+$ level observed by Madden and Codling.³ The 64.46-eV $sp, 24^+$ level is just detectable.

The energy scale could be determined by add-

ing the ionization potential (24.58 eV) to the electron ejection energy measured by the analyzer. However, because of space charge and other effects the energies thus determined are uncertain by a few tenths of an eV. Therefore, the 63.65-eV value for the $sp, 23^+$ level measured by Madden and Codling was used to calibrate the rest of the energy scale. The energies determined in this way are believed to be accurate to within about 0.05 eV.

The new series are the $(2sns)^1S$ and the $(2snp)^3P$, the first terms of which have been previously reported by Simpson, Mielczarek, and Cooper⁴ and by us.¹ Both series converge to the same limit as the $sp, 2n$ series. This limit is given by Madden and Codling³ as 65.397 eV. The $n = 3$ terms in both series are combined in the single peak at 63.0 eV in Fig. 1. In Fig. 2 these two levels have just been resolved at 62.95 and 63.08 eV. An additional peak appearing as 62.78 eV is probably the $sp, 23^-$ level reported by Madden and Codling.³ The $(2s4s)^1S$ and $(2s4p)^3P$ states appear as a single unresolved peak in Fig. 1 at 64.22 eV, while the peak at 64.71 eV is probably the combination

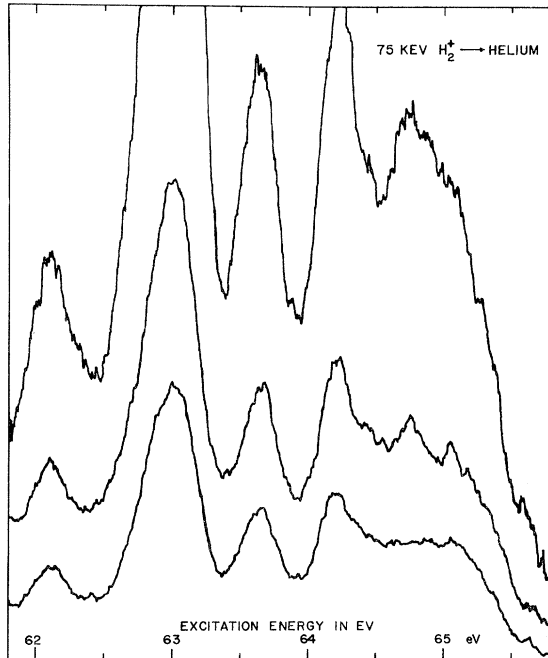


FIG. 1. Energy spectrum of electrons emitted from helium gas excited by 75-keV H_2^+ impact.

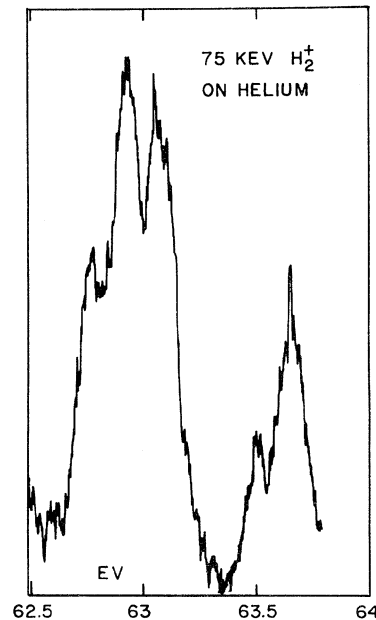


FIG. 2. Higher resolution energy spectrum of electrons emitted from helium gas excited by 75-keV H_2^+ impact.

Table I. Energies of terms of $(2sns)^1S$ series in helium.

n	$E_{\text{expt.}}$ (eV)	$E_{\text{calc}}^{\text{a}}$ (eV)	$E_{\text{calc}}^{\text{b}}$ (eV)
2	57.82	57.87	57.824
3	62.95	62.99	62.952
4	64.22	64.22	
5	64.71	64.70	

^aSee P. G. Burke, D. D. McVicar, and K. Smith, Phys. Rev. Letters **11**, 559 (1963); P. G. Burke and D. D. McVicar, to be published.

^bSee reference 2.

Table II. Energies of terms of the $(2snp)^3P$ series in helium.

n	$E_{\text{expt.}}$ (eV)	$E_{\text{calc}}^{\text{a}}$ (eV)	$E_{\text{calc}}^{\text{b}}$ (eV)
2	58.34	58.36	58.296
3	63.08	63.14	63.141
4	64.22	64.26	64.320
5	64.71	64.71	

^aSee P. G. Burke, D. D. McVicar, and K. Smith, Phys. Rev. Letters **11**, 559 (1963); P. G. Burke and D. D. McVicar, to be published.

^bSee reference 2.

of the $n = 5$ terms of both series. A summary of the measured and calculated values of the energies of the two series appears in Tables I and II.

Identification of the two series was aided by the fact that triplet levels are not excited by proton bombardment but show up strongly under H_2^+ bombardment. This is due to the fact that in order to conserve spin the triplet levels must be excited by a projectile bearing an electron to exchange with one in the target atom. With the proton beam the terms of the $(2snp)^3P$ series did not appear.

We wish to express our gratitude to U. Fano and C. Kuyatt for their helpful correspondence, and to D. Lang and D. Gregoire for assistance in taking the data.

*Work supported by the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission and the National Science Foundation.

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²T. F. O'Malley and S. Geltman, Phys. Rev. **137**, 1344 (1965).

³R. P. Madden and K. Codling, Astrophys. J. **141**, 364 (1965).

⁴J. A. Simpson, S. R. Mielczarek, and J. Cooper, J. Opt. Soc. Am. **54**, 269 (1964).