

$$\begin{aligned}\tau &= \phi(v)\beta(t - vx/c^2), \\ \xi &= \phi(v)\beta(x - vt), \\ \eta &= \phi(v)y, \\ \zeta &= \phi(v)z,\end{aligned}$$

where

$$\beta = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1 - v^2/c^2}},$$

and ϕ is an as yet unknown function of v . If no assumption whatever be made as to the initial position of the moving system and as to the zero point of τ , an additive constant is to be placed on the right side of each of these equations.

We now have to prove that any ray of light, measured in the moving system, is propagated with the velocity c , if, as we have assumed, this is the case in the stationary system; for we have not as yet furnished the proof that the principle of the constancy of the velocity of light is compatible with the principle of relativity.

At the time $t = \tau = 0$, when the origin of the co-ordinates is common to the two systems, let a spherical wave be emitted therefrom, and be propagated with the velocity c in system K. If (x, y, z) be a point just attained by this wave, then

$$x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = c^2t^2.$$

Transforming this equation with the aid of our equations of transformation we obtain after a simple calculation

$$\xi^2 + \eta^2 + \zeta^2 = c^2\tau^2.$$

The wave under consideration is therefore no less a spherical wave with velocity of propagation c when viewed in the moving system. This shows that our two fundamental principles are compatible.*

In the equations of transformation which have been developed there enters an unknown function ϕ of v , which we will now determine.

For this purpose we introduce a third system of co-ordin-

* The equations of the Lorentz transformation may be more simply deduced directly from the condition that in virtue of those equations the relation $x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = c^2t^2$ shall have as its consequence the second relation $\xi^2 + \eta^2 + \zeta^2 = c^2\tau^2$.