

# AURORA BOREALIS STOPS TELEGRAPH

## Violent Electrical Earth Currents Felt.

### Service Over Country Disturbed by Phenomenon Which Is Believed to Be Produced by Electrical Emanations From the Sun.

New York, September 25.—Gripped by the mysterious "aurora," telegraph wires practically all over the world were paralyzed today. From early morning until night, communication was erratic and at times cut off entirely between certain points.

Old telegraph operators called it the "aurora," for brilliant northern lights usually follow such an electrical phenomenon, but instead of watching for the display, they bent their mind and energies to untangling the snarl and adjusting their instruments.

#### The First Break.

The first break came shortly before 7 a. m. eastern standard time, or noon at Greenwich, and for the next five hours, telegraph wire chiefs from Boston to Chicago wrestled with the strange force.

That the disturbance was world-wide was shown by European dispatches which told of similar trouble of lines on the continent, as well as on the submarine cables.

The crest of the wave in the eastern part of the country seems to have been reached shortly before noon, and after that the wires began to act more rationally.

Still, there were frequent throbs during the late afternoon and evening.

Because similar disturbances have been noticed during the maximum spot period, which was reached about a year ago, some astronomers have conjectured that these so-called storms originated in the center of life of the solar system, the electro-magnetic waves being simply pulsations from some mightier disturbances on the sun.

#### Violent Earth Currents.

Chicago, September 25.—Violent electrical earth currents believed to emanate from the aurora borealis today disturbed the telegraph service over the entire country and for a time stilled the ticking of the Morse instruments in the offices of the great telegraph companies.

The drift of the currents noticeable in cities from San Francisco to New York was apparently to the east.

The south was affected as well as the north.

The currents were first felt in the northern portion of the United States about 5 o'clock this morning and increased in intensity for two hours, reaching the heaviest wave at 7:10 a. m., when all the telegraph activities were at a standstill. The force of the disturbing currents was so great that fuses were blown out and resistance lamps lighted up brilliantly. Then the currents began to subside and intermittent service was resumed. The "northern lights," as the aurora borealis is usually called, are invisible through the day, but should be visible tonight in this vicinity.

#### New York Disturbed by Phenomenon.

New York, September 25.—For nearly three hours today the telegraph, telephone and cable service of the eastern portion of the United States was interrupted by a severe electrical storm which generally accompanied a display of the aurora borealis. The phenomenon is believed to be produced by electrical emanations from the sun passing through the earth's atmosphere.

During the height of the disturbance the measuring instruments in the telegraph offices in this city registered the presence on the wires of upwards of 500 volts, a greater voltage than is supplied for the operation of any of the land wires.

The disturbance continued intermittently throughout the day. The principal trouble was with the cable lines and financial dispatches from Europe, usually received in New York at 7:30 a. m., had not reached here at 1:30 p. m.

#### Trouble at Louisville.

Louisville, Ky., September 25.—The electrical disturbance was felt in Louisville, both telegraph companies experiencing the greatest trouble between 1 and 2 o'clock this afternoon. The trouble extended from St. Paul to Texas, delaying business in the majority of cities within those towns, as well as in nearly every city.

A noticeable feature of today's disturbance is the fact that this phenomenon rarely occurs after sunrise. Although its occurrence is not infrequent, it generally happens at night.

#### Used Earth's Electricity.

Cincinnati, Ohio, September 25.—In Cincinnati the earth currents reached a maximum of 105 volts.

At the Western Union office the batteries were shut off and a single wire between here and St. Louis was worked by the power of the earth electricity. The wire worked as long as the earth current lasted steadily, but the experiment proved not to be feasible for general work.

#### Texas Wires Cut Off.

Fort Worth, Texas, September 25.—Both the Western Union and Postal telegraph companies today report all their wires over the state out of commission for long periods of time, due, it is believed, to the effect of the aurora borealis rendering the wires useless.

Messages are piled up in the Dallas relay office.