Unusual Display Is Believed by Many to Be Fire Reflection.

Nature last night gave Chicago a special treat—an unusual exhibition of one of its most wonderful phenomena: the aurora borealis.

Almost directly overhead, shortly be- neath an o’clock, what appeared to be an immense sea flower, with rough edges, nestled relucling from a high ledge or, blossomed forth in cloudlike form. Greenish yellow lights played through the northern sky. Above them glowed pales of pale red that seemed to fade out in a few minutes and were not far distance from where they first were seen.

And then there were the streamers, the streamers that seemed to stretch from the northern horizon to the westward, the waving ribbons or hands of light from great searchlights.

Lights Continuously Changing.

Never was the phenomenon station- ary for an instant. The changing of colors and the movement of the cloudlike formations was constant. Observers who made their mental notes at different times found it impossible to agree later.

"It was a remarkable auroral display," said Prof. W. D. MacMillan of the University of Chicago, "and the most beautiful I ever have seen. The greenish yellow lights were plainly visible, and the brilliant, cloudlike lights that stretched from the northeast to the northwest shifted while you watched them.

"It was unusually brilliant but, more than that, it was a combination of the two general types of this form of phe nomenon. The first is the type that consists of streams of light that radi ate from a rainbow in the north, with streamers that sometimes overran the surface beyond the zenith. In the second type the lights are more like clouds of brilliant colors.

"It is probable that this display could be seen all the way across the country where the air was clear."

Dispatches from points all over the country reported the brilliance of the display. Wire trouble north and east of New York was reported by the tele graph companies.

Calls for Unusual.

Prof. Helen M. Meikle of the University of North Carolina, regarded the display as one of the best and most unusual of recent years.

"It was most unusual in this lati tude," he said, "particularly in the strong reddish tinge. It extended a point to the southern horizon, and it reached the zenith. The streamers gave the effect of a great display. The display began before 8 o’clock and lasted until after 11.

The switchboard at the Times was as busy as during a world’s chase snowplough light. Many of those who called wanted to know about "the fire.""Cyclone on Sun.

The astronomers translate the scie ntific description of a solar flare or aurora, or northern lights, into an explanation that they result from ejection disturbances on the sun which are visible there in the form of "sun spots." These whirling masses of mineral gases throw off streams of gas, which are called "spokes" of electrical force for which radiate out from the earth and are seen in the earth’s aurora and the "spokes" of aurora are seen in the northern lights.

In other words, about eighteen de cades ago there was a comet on the sun. Its whirling masses threw off an electrical current which reached the upper air of the earth last night.