

"STATICS" CRIPPLE WIRES.

Surplus of Atmospheric Electricity Upsets Telegraphic Service.

Telegraphic companies reported yesterday that the service was interfered with by the worst invasion of the wires by electric currents from the air which has occurred in many years.

So-called "statics" kept finding their way into the wires, causing the receiving instruments to clatter so erratically that operators often had to break off and wait for many minutes for the instruments to sober down so that messages became intelligible. Usually this sort of interference is short-lived, but yesterday's trouble lasted from dawn until after 5 P. M. The greatest interference was with the lines running north and northwest along the Atlantic seaboard as far south as Georgia. The worst paralysis of service was between points due north and due south, the longest delay being one of three hours.

The popular explanation that the aurora borealis caused the trouble was put forward again, but this is denied by scientists, who hold that that phenomenon has nothing to do with it, and that an abnormal amount of atmospheric electricity or "statics" not connected with the aurora borealis produces the effect experienced yesterday.