

Northern Lights Seen In Atlanta Monday Evening

Appearance Most Unusual, This Being the First Time for Twelve Years Aurora Borealis Has Been Seen Here.

By Paul Warwick.

You can't stop Atlanta: now she's seen the aurora borealis. Or better, some of her citizens have seen it. Which is quite a distinguishing feat for a city so near the equatorial waistline of the corpulent old world. Just a small portion commoner, is this view of the northern lights, in the north land, nearer to the home of polar bears and whale-blubber appetites.

But the northern lights did appear off Atlanta's northern horizon on Monday evening. Quite a crew of staid Atlantans were astounded by the phenomenon, for they didn't know whence, what, or why. Darktown darkened perceptibly, and its popular prediction that prayer meetings will rival mullet suppers for popularity with the dusky tribe for a few days.

The hardened old skeptics that scoff like regular humans breathe—regularly until they die—snatched at the contention that somebody was advertising a new brand of chewing-gum or hair net. The quite universal and bibulous class believed it had found another adverse test for the lumber yard attributes of alcohol.

Nice Appearing Aurora.

But it was a fairly nice appearing old aurora. It had all the indications of a success, with its white, waving steamers, and a hazier sort of glow that seemed to desire a central location in the display of ethereal incandescence.

The peculiar electrical event was particularly noticeable in the low-

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NORTHERN LIGHTS SEEN IN ATLANTA

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ered efficiency of telegraph instruments. Service was slowed up to a great extent on all the lines for a while on Tuesday evening, on account of the fact that the balance was destroyed between the aerial and ground wires which provide the stimulus to the ticking of the operators' keys.

C. F. von Herrmann, who knows more about weather and the things that happen out of the ordinary in the skies and under the earth than most anybody available, says that this is the first time he had seen the display in Atlanta, and Mr. von Herrmann has been in the city for 12 years.

There has been almost as many attempted explanations of this electrical phenomena as there have been of the four dimension, and all of them are just as easy to understand as each other. Which is not at all. The most popular, and latest theory, said Mr. von Herrmann, is the "electron" theory. It would take too long to explain it here, and besides its rather hard to learn science over the telephone, after Mr. von Herrmann's office hours.

Magnetic Storms.

Magnetic storms usually follow distinct displays of the northern lights, it is said, and then it is that the telegraph companies have all manner of trouble in transmitting their messages, owing to the peculiar obstinacy electricity assumes on such occasions.

And magnetic storms are traceable, it has been rumored, to disturbance among the spots on the sun. It may be presidential candidates, heavyweight champions or almost anything that causes the sun to change its spots in such an un-leopard-like manner. Which is getting away from the main issue:

That the aurora borealis was distinctly visible in Atlanta on Tuesday night, and that the fact is an event in Atlanta's astronomical history.

Telegraph Service Demoralized.

New York, March 22.—Aurora Borealis was attacked tonight with spring fever. He kicked up his heels, danced all over the sky and put telegraph wires out of commission from the Atlantic seaboard to the far west.

The wire chief of the Western Union headquarters tried to take the patient's "pulse," but reported the company had no instruments strong enough to measure the voltage in the electrical currents which swept across the heavens. Nature's skylarking in the northland made telegraphy an impossibility for fifteen minutes—a record in this vicinity—and caused a flurry in newspaper offices all over the country when news westward bound was held up.

There were interruptions in telegraph service early in the evening, but the complete tie-up came at 9:45. By 10 o'clock Western Union reported it was beginning to recover some of its circuits, but a realignment or balancing was necessary.

The A. T. & T. company, which also reported its telegraph service was completely demoralized, said the northern lights had not interrupted its local or long-distance telephone service. Cable terminals were hard hit, while wireless apparatus waged an unequal fight against nature for command of the air.