

AURORA BOREALIS PARALYZES WIRES.

[BY DIRECT WIRE TO THE TIMES.]

CHICAGO, Oct. 31.—[Exclusive Dispatch.] With an electrical storm centering over Chicago, a rare display of the aurora borealis was seen in the heavens early this morning.

The play of the electric forces interrupted telegraphic communication in all parts of the country and affected the Chicago telephone service for minutes at a time. The atmospheric disturbance began at 1:30 o'clock in the morning, and reached its climax at 8:30 o'clock, when it was said that Chicago wires had become surcharged with 675 volts of electricity, or enough to kill a man.

It was possible to send telegraphic messages when the wires ran parallel to the trend of the waves of the electrical currents, but no messages could be forced over wires that ran across them.

"My attention was first called to the phenomena half an hour after midnight," said J. E. Pettit, chief operator of the Postal Telegraph Company in Chicago. "when I learned that the wires of the telegraph lines of the Canadian Pacific from Montreal to Vancouver and Oregon were severely affected. It was the most severe electrical storm in the city for five years. The storm extends half around the

globe. It is due, I believe, to sun spots, which are always accompanied by a display of the aurora borealis."

A dispatch from New York says a brilliant display of the aurora interfered with telegraphic service in that vicinity. Both telegraph companies report trouble with their wires, and all cablegrams were accepted subject to delay.

From Duluth a dispatch was received saying that brilliant northern lights illuminated the heavens for half an hour after midnight. The display was pronounced the most beautiful ever seen along the southern shores of Lake Superior.

It was the first time the aurora had been distinctly visible in Chicago for a long period. By noon the storm apparently had spent its force, and the wires were falling back to their normal condition.