

THE SUN SPOTS WERE IN ACTION

But Exact Connection Between Last
Week's Electric Disturbances and
the Spots Not Known—Prof.
Shirk's Opinion.

Last Saturday business was interrupted by a somewhat unusual phenomenon. All over the world telephones were burned out, telegraphs put out of commission and everything magnetic or electrical was greatly disturbed. A series of electric waves seemed to be passing over the world. Rumors as to its cause were wild and various. Some laid the blame on the aurora borealis, others blamed the sun-spots, while some daring ones ventured to say that Mars was signaling us.

Prof. J. A. G. Shirk makes the following statement: "The whole matter is in some unknown way connected with sun-spots. The sun-spot is to the sun what a cyclone is to the earth. It is caused by the sudden inrush of cold gases to the center of the sun, clearly disturbing the magnetic currents sent out by that body. These sun-spots have been found to be prevalent every eleven years. We are now at the end of one of these periods.

"Sun-spots do appear during the eleven years, but with nothing like their frequency at the end of that time. At these times disturbances such as this one are caused. In 1898 there was a similar one. It is probable that sun-spots and the magnetic disturbances of the earth are caused by some disturbance of the magnetic waves in the upper atmosphere. Of what nature this is none knows, but it is probable that its effect on the earth is induced. The disturbing current seems to run mainly on north and south lines.

“The aurora borealis is not, of course, of the magnetic disturbance but only an effect brought about by the same cause. Many people have an idea that the recent seismic disturbances were brought about by sun-spots. This is only another popular fallacy.”

The latest sun-spot is big enough to be seen through a smoked glass.
