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Stars, Men and Atoms

# Explosion on Sun's Face Reported by Scientists

## Stream of Radiation Waves Analyzed In Bureau of Standards Report

By Thomas R. Henry

An unparalleled explosion on the face of the sun has just been reported by United States Bureau of Standards scientists.

From an area which consisted of less than one two-thousandths of the solar disc came a stream of radiation waves from 300 to 1,000 times greater than normally would be received from the entire sun.

The activity in this small region must have been about two million-fold the average activity of such an area on the sun's flaming surface.

The great eruption occurred on May 10 and since has been analyzed, according to the report of Drs. A. M. Shapley and R. M. Davis of the bureau staff.

### Observed in Virginia.

The observations were made at the bureau's field station at Sterling, Va. At the same time the flare was observed visually at the McMath-Hulbert Observatory in Michigan, where it was reported as of extraordinary intensity.

The eruption was observed by means of two radio wave lengths which crossed the 93,000,000 miles of empty space between sun and earth. These were picked up by the bureau's receiving instruments in the form of what is known as solar noise.

Presumably, it is pointed out, the increased radiation from this limited area covered the entire spectrum from the long radio waves through the region of visible light to the short ultraviolet and X-ray wave lengths. There was a great variation, however, in the intensity of various wave lengths, the solar noise recorded by a receiver set for one range being about fourfold that set for a shorter wave length.

Such flares also are believed to be accompanied by great streams of actual material particles—electrons, protons and nuclei of atoms—which are hurled against the outer atmosphere of the earth and are in part responsible for magnetic storms and disruption of long-range radio communication by strengthening the atmospheric electrical roof.

The extremely intense solar noise was received for about three minutes.

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