## **Unprecedented Weather Conditions in the West.**

The prairie provinces and British Columbia in Canada, and the United States territory southerly thereof as far as San Francisco, experienced during the last week in January and the first week of February the heaviest snowfalls and the most severe cold weather that has occurred for many years. The first snowfall covering practically all of this territory occurred between Jan. 21 and 24, and terminated in some parts of the area with rain. The fall of snow was particu-larly heavy, and with the low temperature, which accompanied the rain, in the coast regions, the snow was turned into an icy mass, making its removal difficult. The second storm, which was particularly severe in British Columbia, and the State of Washington, occurred Jan. 31, and Feb. 1, Vancouver reporting a continuous fall for 38 hours, while in Seattle, Wash., 18 inches of snow fell.

Electric railway traffic in all the Canadian western cities was interrupted, and steam railway trains were stalled all over the territory. So far as electric railway traffic was concerned the Brandon Municipal Ry. was worst hit. The council ordered the stoppage of traffic on Jan. 27, and the laying off of the conductors and motormen until the streets were cleared. In Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton and Lethbridge and the British Columbia Electric Ry. the services were kept up, without very much delay, the railways having the necessary appliances to keep the tracks clear. General Superintendent Murrin of the last company reported, Feb. 12, that the snow clearing in Vancouver cost \$13,546. Between Jan. 6 and Feb. 9, the company's snow clearing equipment was being operated to its full extent on 24 days, running 4,149 miles in Vancouver, and 3,000 miles on the interurban lines. During the worst period 300 men were at work in the snow clearing gangs. The only real delay on the company's mainland lines was one of a couple of hours on the Burnaby Lake Branch, where owing to the weight of icy snow a section of trolley wire came down.

On the steam railways, while there was a general stallage of trains at various points on the lines during the first storm, there were not any very great delays on the Canadian Pacific and the Grand Trunk Pacific's prairie lines. The first named of these companies reported traffic normal Jan. 27, and to have been very little interrupted by the second storm. This applies to the British Columbia Di-vision equally with the prairie divisions. West of the prairie provinces the G. T. Pacific traffic appears to have been held up for about a week. The Canadian up for about a week. The Canadian Northern Ry. appears to have been hit the worst, the heaviest obstruction being in British Columbia, the lines in the prairie provinces being cleared with com-paratively short delays. One report stated that for 200 miles the C.N. Pacific was a mass of snow and ice over a foot thick, which would have to be removed with pick and shovel. A number of trains in the prairie provinces were cancelled, and the traffic on the line in British Columbia was practically closed temporarily. The train with passengers from Winnipeg, Jan. 28, was held up on the Boston Bar section, B.C., and the passengers reached Vancouver Feb. 12, having been transferred across the Fraser River by an aerial cable and carried over the C.P.R. One of the passengers was M. H. MacLeod, General Manager and Chief Engineer, who reported 200 men with a

rotary and two other snowploughs between Pyramid and Lucerne, and gangs at work near Boston Bar and at other points. The drifts he said ran up to 30 ft. in depth, and with the changing character of the weather had packed in such a way that much of it had to be moved with pick and shovel, but the line was cleared within a few days, sufficient to allow trains to go through, and although the conditions in Canada were bad, those in the States appear to have been worse, as following the snow and the frost came a sudden thaw, which brought on mud slides on the Great Northern Ry., and other obstructions to traffic on other lines. The first train into Vancouver over the Great Northern got in Feb. 11, but prior to that passengers had been taken round the mud slides, to a second train, and then on to Vancouver.

So far as branch line traffic was concerned conditions were worse, as the chief attention of the officers of the companies was necessarily given to the opening up of the transcontinental lines. One Canadian Northern branch line is reported to have been blocked since Jan. 5, and other lines of this and the other companies, from 5 to 15 days. The result of this, following the congestion of freight traffic at the divisional points, passenger traffic being given the preference, caused almost a coal famine throughout the west.

The Pacific Great Eastern, between Squamish and Clinton, was blocked by the first storm, and as the company has no snowplough or other similar equipment, traffic was abandoned.

On Vancouver Island the conditions were not much different. The British Columbia Electric Ry. was able to maintain a service in Victoria, although some of the streets remained blocked from Feb. 1 to 3, and the Saanich Peninsula line was not opened up until Feb. 11. Traffic on the Esquimalt & Naniamo and the Victoria & Sidney Railways was abandoned Feb. 1, but the lines were opened up again within a week.

## Track Elevation or Depression in Hamilton.

The question of the elevation or depression of the Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo Ry. tracks in Hamilton, Ont., which has been under consideration for a couple of years, has been advanced a stage by the report of G. A. Mountain, Chief Engineer of the Board of Railway Commissioners, a copy of which has been sent to the City Engineer.

Mr. Mountain discusses the elevation and depression plans, pointing out the merits and defects in each, and making suggestions in regard to them, and concludes: "In summing up, and taking everything into consideration that I can think of, I am of the opinion that if grade separation is to be made at this point, then in the greater interests of all parties track elevation is the proper method for economy of operation, business interests adjoining the railway, and for relief from the smoke nuisance, but I do not think that the T.H. & B. business at present through the city of Hamilton with gates protecting practically all its level crossings and with half interlockers protecting the electric car systems at crossings with the T.H. & B. warrants any change being made in the location of the tracks. I would add that there is an objectionable feature in the way that the smoke comes out of the tunnel after trains have passed through, particularly at the portal next to James St. It can be noticed curling for some time after the train has passed through and is objectionable. I would suggest that the company consider the advisability of putting a shaft near the upper end of the tunnel, which is the easterly portal, and fanning the smoke up into the air where it disperses instead of it coming out of the roof of the tunnel and flowing over Park St. This is merely a suggestion which might be looked into."

## Railway Profiles to be Based on Mean Sea Level.

The Board of Railway Commissioners general order 157, published in Canadian Railway and Marine World of Feb., has been rescinded and general order 157, dated Jan. 31 substituted of it, as fol-lows:—Re matter of proposal that profiles of railway companies, whose lines commence at, terminate at, or intersect with, any of the lines listed in the work entitled Altitudes in Canada, edited by James White, Assistant Chairman, Com-mission of Conservation, including the lines of the said companies which touch tidewater, be based upon mean sea level as provided in Altitudes. Upon reading what is filed on behalf of the Canadian Pacific, Canadian Northern. Grand Trunk Pacific, and Grand Trunk Railway Companies, the said companies consenting to the proposal, and the report and recom-mendation of the Chief Engineer of the That, on and after Feb. 1916, Board. all profiles submitted by railway com-panies, which commence at, terminate at, or intersect with any of the lines listed in Altitudes, as well as those which touch tidewater and are not listed, be based upon mean sea level, as provided in Altitudes.

Port Mann Shops, Canadian Northern Ry.—Following is a list of machinery which has been procured by these shops to meet immediate requirements, and which will be added to as necessity arises: 80 in. driving wheel lathe; 26 in. x 36 in. x 14 ft. gap engine lathe; 24 in. upright shaper; 30 in. upright drill; stationary engine; 20 in. x 12 ft. engine lathe with quick change gears; 16 in. x 8 ft. engine lathe, with quick change gears; 48 in. car wheel boring machine; 84 in., 300 ton hydraulic wheel press, inclined type; single axle 1 the for journal turning; 4 ft. plain radial drilling machine; 1,150 lb. single frame, steam hammer; pneumatic drop pit jack; straight line, compound steam driven air compressor with one A-39 and A-36 air and steam regulating valve for automatic and steam regulating varies for automate control of steam supply; variety saw M-275 with tilting table; 2 in. triple head bolt cutter; No. 9 steel pressure blower with countershaft; 2 only, No. O O S, 38 x 42 stationary blacksmith forges with tank; 36 in. band saw; 24 in. pony planer-

British Columbia Halibut Fisheries.— During 1915 there were landed at five British Columbia ports 25,866,000 lbs. of halibut, valued at \$1,557,960, or about 42% of the total catch on the North Pacific Coast. Over 15,000,000 lbs. of this catch was landed at Prince Rupert, representing the major portion of the catch of 100 vessels which now make that port their outfitting station, and was shipped via Grand Trunk Pacific Ry. This portion of the trade, prior to the opening up of Prince Rupert and the G.T.P. Ry-, went to Seattle, Wash.