

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
June 5, 1935

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed May 29, 1935

DUSTY RAILROADING

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman
Authority on Meteorology

The dust storms of recent months in the Middle West have made plenty of work for the railroads. Train dispatching has been a nightmare of difficulties; section gangs have had a hard struggle to keep drifting sand and soil from blocking the tracks and clogging switches; seepage of sand has produced an epidemic of hot boxes, hot bearings and locomotive failures, besides causing endless trouble with signals, pumping plants and coal-chute machinery. In some of the worst "black blizzards" it was impossible to see signals from the cab or even to see the engineer~~man~~ from the fireman's seat. Sand and dust that had drifted over the rails --- in some cases only a few minutes after they had been cleared by the section men --- caused many derailments. Driving or firing an engine or working on the track in a heavy dust storm is a severe ordeal on account of the thick dust that must be breathed.

"Air-conditioned cars," says the Railway Age, "have withstood the storms remarkably well. It is necessary to have a good supply of air before entering the affected area. During a storm the intake of air is reduced to the minimum and the filters are able to eliminate practically all of the dust, so that little or none enters the cars by this means. What enters drifts in through the windows. The tightest window fits are unavailing in keeping the cars entirely dust-free."

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2101 Constitution Ave.
Washington, D. C.