

TODAY and TOMORROW

by FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE

STEAM speed

The other day I saw men working on the first of ten new streamlined locomotives being built to haul passengers between New York and Boston at 100 miles an hour. These new giants of the rails are neither electric nor Diesels—they are steam engines.

Checking over some figures of railroad speeds, I found that none of the modern high-speed trains makes as fast time as used to be made from 1897 on for several years between Camden and Atlantic City. The regular daily schedule called for 69 miles an hour.

Railway speeds slowed down when steel cars replaced the old wooden ones which weighed only half as much. But now the steam locomotive builders have put more power and speed into the "iron horse," and I look to see new long-distance speed records made for heavy trains.

CHIMNEYS exit?

Two newspaper items about chimneys caught my eye the other day. The Duke of Windsor, who was King of England for a while, entertained the chimney sweeps of Enzensfeld, Austria, the boys who climb up (or down) chimneys to clean them. And chemical engineers meeting in New York discussed a new way of "scrubbing" chimney smoke, to recover sulphur and remove poisonous gasses.

All of which reminded me that chimneys are quite a new invention in the long history of the human race. It was not until about the time that Gutenberg invented printing, not long before Columbus discovered America, that people began to build flues to carry off the smoke from their fires. Before then, a hole in the roof answered the purpose, as it does still with the Eskimos and the Siberian peasants.

Maybe chimneys will become ob-

solete again, when we do all our cooking and heating by electricity. **WINDOWS taxed**

Thinking of chimneys made me think of windows. People put windows in their houses long before they had chimneys, but it is only very recently that ordinary folks have had glass in their windows. Glass was for the rich. Poor folk used skins scraped down thin enough to let some light through, or oiled paper, after paper began to be made.

Windows, with or without glass, were long regarded as luxuries and taxed as such. They still are in France. A large part of the revenue of the French government comes from the tax on doors and windows. That is one reason why the cottages of French peasants are so badly ventilated.

England abolished the window tax in 1851, but some American states still levied it up to a very few years ago, as the windowless barns I have often seen in Connecticut testify.

DISTRIBUTION

If you want to make a fortune, devise some sure-fire way of distributing merchandise to consumers more economically than anyone is doing it now. I am not joking when I say there are millions to be made by anyone who can do that, for millions upon millions have been made by those who devised the most efficient distribution systems now in use.

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FLYING 1937 service

It won't be long now before regular airplane passenger service will

be available across the Atlantic. The largest planes ever built are under construction in England. American aviation interests are co-operating with them. By next Summer we may see regular scheduled flights between Ireland and Newfoundland, perhaps between London and Montreal.

Flying has made great advances in the past two or three years. Flying over water is now regarded by airmen as safer than flying over lands. Planes are being constantly improved, new navigation instruments make night flying as safe and certain as daylong flights.

I expect to be able to fly around the world in three weeks, before the end of 1937. I probably won't do it. I'd rather go slower and see more of the world.

The man at the theatre was annoyed by the conversation in the row behind.

"Excuse me," he said, "but we can't hear a word."

"Oh," replied the talkative one; "and is it any business of yours what I'm telling my wife?"

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