

NEW TRENDS IN MODELS

Engines, Boats, Machines
Reproduced in Miniature
—Locomotive Exhibit

By JOHN MARKLAND.

SPECIALIZATION is the keynote of present-day activities among model engineers, just as it is in the industrial world which provides the prototypes for the realistic miniature locomotives, airplanes, power boats and other products of the model-maker's workshop. This trend is reflected in the accomplishments of the New York Society of Model Engineers, which will hold its eighth annual exhibit from Feb. 7 to 22 at 152 West Forty-second Street, Manhattan. About 17,000 persons attended the show last year.

A few years ago, when model-making first began to attract large numbers of lobbyists, the model engineer was something of a rugged individualist, pursuing his hobby independently at his own workbench, making the most of whatever tools, materials and talents he might possess. Today clubs, schools, contests, exhibits, periodicals and commercial organizations foster interest in the making of small-scale reproductions of almost every known type of engine or machine and the model engineer finds himself a part of a compact, well-organized community, with greatly increased opportunities for developing his own special engineering or mechanical interest.

The "Model Engineer."

The term "model engineer" is an elastic one as it is used today. It may be applied to the hobbyist whose skill and knowledge enable him to construct a miniature locomotive in its entirety from cow-catcher to caboose, or it may designate a builder of model speedboats or a designer of miniature stationary engines. It may be extended to include hobbyists whose specialty is electric wiring, bridge building, or the design of signal devices.

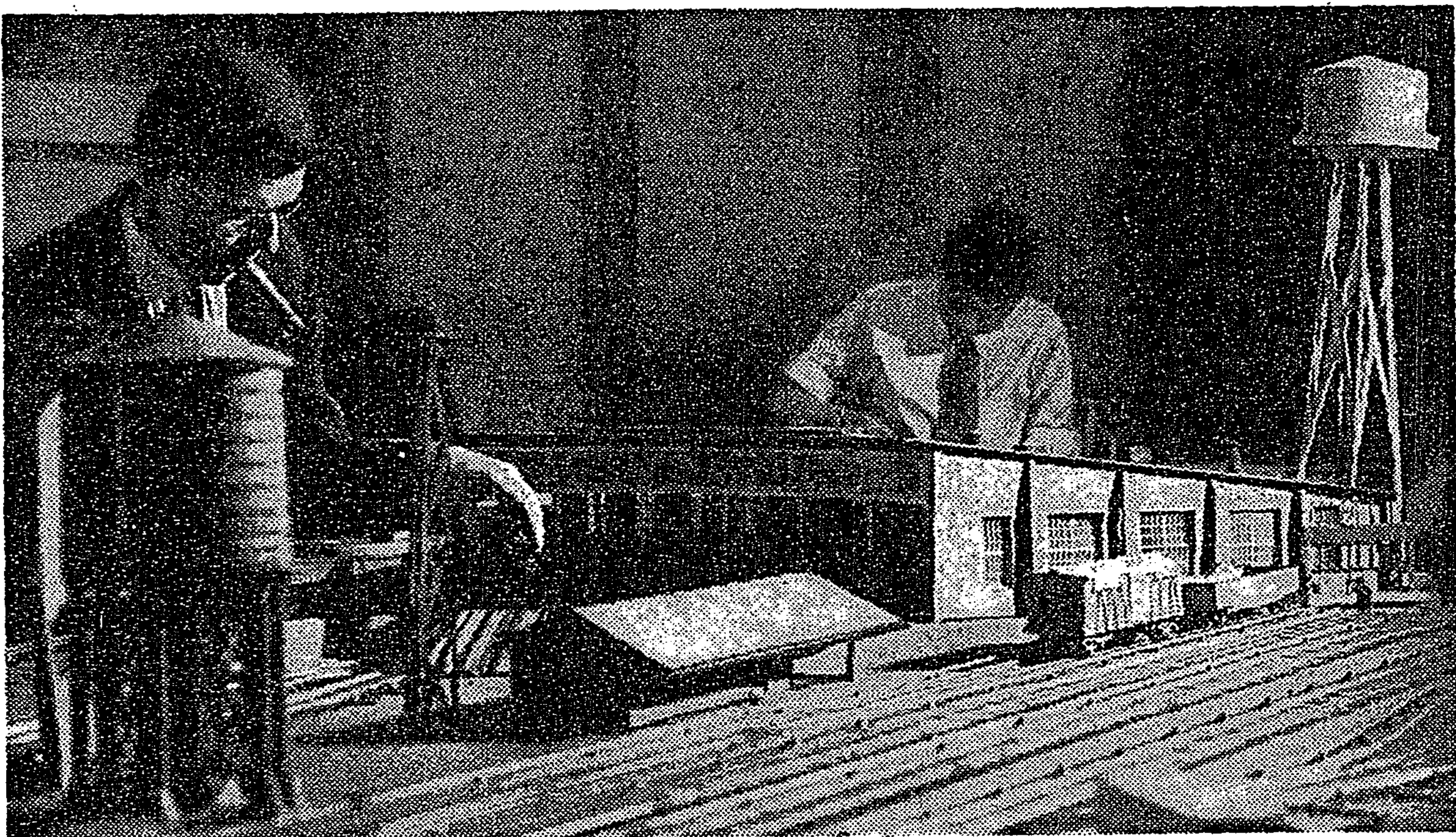
The membership of the model engineers' group, drawn from the ranks of professional men and business executives as well as clerks, salesmen and industrial workers, divides its interest among model railways, airplanes, boats and a long list of machines, pumps and engines.

Railway operation is in itself a highly specialized field of amateur engineering activity. The New York Society, like many other local groups which have been organized throughout the country in the last few years, designates certain club meetings as "operation" nights, on which members are put through all the paces of railway operation. Some act as dispatchers and signal operators, others as crew men and repair men. Train locations and movements are indicated on an electrically lighted board, and orders are transmitted over a miniature telephone system.

Model Speedboats Built.

Model speedboat building, another highly specialized amateur engineering activity, has made very rapid strides in the last few years. Hobbyists in this field follow accurate small-scale designs of famous power boats just as the model railroaders adhere to the plans of actual trains. Diminutive gas-powered boats have achieved a speed as high as thirty miles an hour in races such as those now held annually in Central Park, Manhattan, in Washington, Detroit and other metropolitan centers.

In addition to small trains and boats, today's model engineers fashion miniature tractors, oil pumps, trolley cars and a long list of mechanical devices. Some are especially adept at the making of the small tools required in making tiny models. Others, interested in the historical phases of their hobby, make reproductions of early steamboats, horse-drawn coaches, sailing ships and trains. Frequently these models find their way into museums. One organization of hobbyists, the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, has attracted national attention through its activities in reproducing and preserving early types of American trains.



Alfred P. Lane, Larchmont, N. Y.
Model Engineers Directing Operations in a Miniature Engine Yard.