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The Greatest Passenger Steam Locomotive in the World


Желѣзнодорожное Дѣло
ЖУРНАЛЪ
Годъ XXIX.

News from the archives
The publication in Rail Business [Zheleznodorozhnoe delo] Journal of 1910 introduced the most powerful steam locomotive of the time to the readers. It was intended for passenger traffic in the United States.

Keywords: railway, steam locomotive, passenger traffic, history.

In No. 24 of Rail Business [«Zheleznodorozhnoe Delo»], 1909, I described the greatest commercial steam locomotives built by Baldwin's plant in Philadelphia for Southern Pacific R. R.; now I will add that in practice they turned out to be extremely efficient and expedient, that at the present time there are already up to a dozen of them working, and that it was decided to supply them exclusively to the entire mountain division of this road.

It goes without saying that mountain passes affect both freight and passenger traffic in the same way, and this is especially noticeable in cases where different lines compete with each other during long journeys by shortening time they need. Over the past year, it is precisely this kind of competition that has resumed with great energy between a whole half-dozen transcontinental lines of the North America, operating between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans; time between New York and Chicago has been shortened from 18 to 15 hours, time between Chicago and Los Angeles or San Francisco from 72 to 60 hours, and all roads are striving to reduce travel times to three days,

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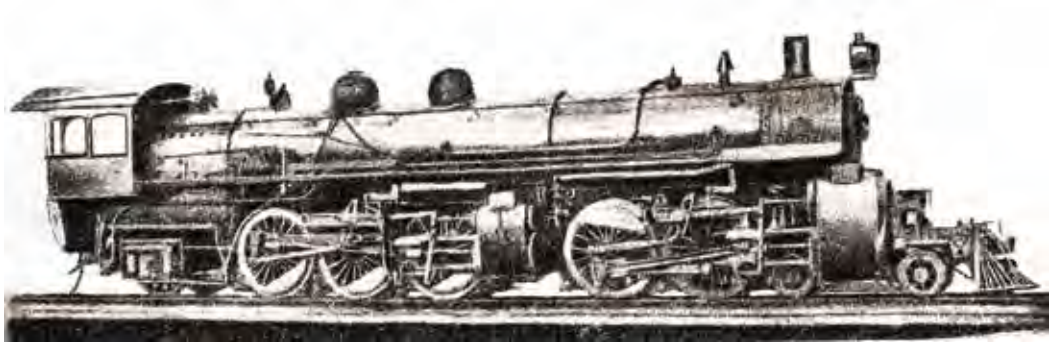
The text of the reprinted archived article originally written in Russian is published in the first part of the issue.
Текст архивной публикации на русском языке публикуется в первой части данного выпуска.



i.e., 3250 miles or 4875 versts to be travelled in 72 hours, including all stops and connections in Chicago. Atchison, Toreca & Santa Fe RR Co., which has over 10000 miles of track and its own continuous line from Chicago to Los Angeles and San Francisco, is closest as compared to all its other competitors to achieve this. Although it has built 400 miles of new track, bypassing the highest of its mountain passes in the main ridge of the Rocky Mountains in Colorado, it was still hampered by three other passes – in New Mexico, Arizona, and California, especially in this last one, through the Sierra Madre ridge. To overcome it and win 2–3 hours, this company built at the same Baldwin plant a new passenger steam locomotive-monster that has just arrived here, weighing with a tender the same three hundred tons as the aforementioned commercial steam locomotives of Southern Pacific R. R. C°. The locomotive itself weighs 376450 English pounds; the rest comes from a tender raising 12000 gallons of water and 4000 gallons of oil, so a steam locomotive can do with a heavy train 100 English miles without stopping. Locomotive and tender length is of 105 feet; traction force is of 53000 tons. It is of a composite Mallet type, with five pairs of propelling wheels 73 inches in diameter, connected in 3 and 2 pair seats, with the rear three pair seat powered by high pressure cylinders and the front two pair by low pressure cylinders. This locomotive is designed for high speed and at relatively steep climbs, with a traction force 50 % higher than the strongest passenger locomotives currently in use anywhere. Otherwise, the essence of its design is the same as that of the commercial steam locomotives I described in No. 24.

In the case of the modern American design of rolling stock, both steam locomotives and passenger and freight cars, a decisive transition to larger and heavier types should be stated. All the main lines have completely left the wood and went over to steel. The prejudice against steel passenger cars because of the noise they supposedly produce in motion was completely dispelled by improvements in their design, and their comparative safety, even in the most severe crashes, was never in doubt. The intensification of commodity traffic, which again began with rapid leaps after a hitch in industry and trade caused by the stock exchange panic in the autumn of 1907, promises again, and very soon, to reach the limit of modern railway performance, and an increase in the load capacity of freight cars is one of the main means to raising it. Steel freight cars lift 100000 English pounds, almost double the largest wooden ones, and although they cost twice as much, they are much more durable and safer in crashes and fires.

The remarkably rapid spread of gasoline and electric motors on steam railways should also be noted. The rapid development of electric trams in all densely populated areas and between major cities – such as between Boston and New York and between Chicago and St. Louis – affected passenger traffic on steam trains so badly that they found themselves forced to establish motor traffic on all of their suburban lines. There is still a fierce struggle between numerous types of motors for these roads, but even now two or three of them have established their superiority over others and are entering general use. I hope in the near future to give the readers of «Zheleznodorozhnoe Delo» a detailed description of them, if I am able to cope with the Russian nomenclature of the issue.

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(Zheleznodorozhnoe delo [Rail Business], 1910, No. 17–18, pp. 104–105) ●