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Young
CATHOLIC MESSENGER

**Boy-size railroads
mean man-size fun!**



Boy-Size Railroads — Man-Size Fun!

MORE than 100 years ago—in 1852—a Buffalo physician, A. L. Henderson, built the first complete model railroad in his home. Thus he started what has since become one of the largest and fastest-growing hobbies in the entire United States.

Today hundreds of thousands of boys all over the world, but especially in America, spend their spare time building and operating miniature railway systems. These range from a single engine on a circle of track to elaborate landscaped models like the one shown on this week's cover.

Nor is it a hobby limited to boys and girls. At the start of World War II, A. C. Gilbert, manufacturer of American Flyer trains, estimated that 35 per cent of their sales were to adults for their own use. Since the war the percentage has risen sharply and today, when a grown man walks into a store and orders a toy train, it's an even bet that he's buying it for himself and not, as he may imply to the clerk, for his boy!

Within the past few years, a new Railroad Club movement has swept the country. It began when a group of boys pooled their scale-model equipment, their know-how, and their allowances to build a co-operative electric train layout in the basement of one boy's home. Today there are model railroad clubs in virtually every town in the U. S. They even have their own magazines.

But model railroads have changed considerably since the days of Dr. Henderson. Today there are not only engines that puff smoke and make realistic choo-choo sounds, but also stockyards where miniature steers automatically board the cattle cars. Or, if you like, you can get suburban stations where hurrying commuters get on and off the coaches and impatiently stride the platforms between trains.



A special meeting of the board of directors is called to discuss buying more railroad equipment.

Major investments of this kind should be approved unanimously by all the club members.

Yul Brynner, star of "The King and I" and an ardent scale-model railroad enthusiast, is an honorary member of this Boys' Railroad Club. Here he compares an early electric locomotive with the latest streamlined diesel, held by another club member.

