



Prospektseiten



Vignette



THE first railroads built in America were tramways running from quarries and mines. Since there were no locomotives, horses pulled the trains. A treadmill operated by a horse on top of a flat car was tried out in 1835 by the Baltimore & Ohio—the first railroad chartered in this country to carry passengers and freight. When the treadmill proved unsuccessful, a sailboat on wheels was used to pull the cars. This, too, was a failure. Then Peter Cooper designed the "Tom Thumb"—the first movable steam engine made in America.

This locomotive was built in a carriage maker's

shop. A boiler was used no bigger than an ordinary clothes boiler with old musket barrels for flues. On its trial trip in 1830 the "Thomb Thumb's" average speed was almost 11 miles an hour. Nevertheless it turned the tide of American opinion definitely in favor of steam transportation.

Only a year later the "De Witt Clinton" was built in New York—the first locomotive constructed strictly for passenger service. The train was composed of stagecoach bodies, mounted on trucks which were coupled together with three-link chains. When the engine started, the cars knocked against one another