

Transcribed Excerpts from "Thomas Edison Prophecies," July 10, 1907

Thomas Edison Prophecies

He Says the day is Coming When the air Will Fertilize the Depleted Earth.

Thomas A. Edison gave the American yesterday the first interview since his announcement on his 60th birthday last February that he had quit the career of a money-making inventor for that of a scientist.

For the rest of his life, he says he intends to devote all his attention to scientific problems without a thought of whether or not their solution would bring financial gain.

Though the Wizard guarded as a secret this particular task on which he is at present expending his thought and energy, he otherwise spoke freely of his work. He discussed many of the mysteries into which he was delving, and prophesied that even though he might fail of solution, he firmly believed others would triumph where he had failed...

"Another scientific discovery which I expect to see before I die," continued the man whose own inventions have done so much to revolutionize modern life, "is the direct generation of electricity from coal. This has already been achieved in an experimental way. I have heard of several men who have done it. I myself have generated an electrical current by burning carbon and Chilean saltpetre together in an electrolyte [sic], although at an expense which made the process a commercial impossibility.

"Imagine what will be the consequences. Then locomotives will be thrown into the scrap heap. All trains will be run by electricity. No longer will coal be laboriously transported to the cities, but there will be great power plants established at the mouths of the mines, from which the electricity will be sent out over the country by wire.

"There will be no horses in the streets, not stables, no flies. Wagons will be propelled by electricity. Houses will be lighted entirely by electricity, for it will be so cheap it can be used by the humblest tenement dweller.

"Ships will no longer be driven by steam. Electricity will be their motive power. And then it will be possible to cross the Atlantic in three days."

"At present time nine-tenths of the power obtained from coal is lost by the use of boilers, wheels, and dynamos. With the direct generation of the electrical current, therefore, the world will have ten times more energy than now."--New York American