

other Christian denominations were falling in and in metaphorical sackcloth and ashes did Parson Smith vainly regret that he had not preached a creed of more severe outward austerity. Alas! his leaning towards the gauds of High Church ritual had but paved the way towards the defection of his flock. Too late he recognised the good use he might have made of denouncements of the Scarlet Woman and other Babylonish inventions. To the Agent came the Holy Father with his subscription list. The Rangoon Cup was about to be contested, and the Agent had his colours represented by one of the best nags in the East, and he was more than hopeful of success. To the Padre he was more than sympathetic, and said to him: "Yes, Padre, I must admit you had the beat of me over that St. Peter deal. By-the-by, your claim was seventy-five rupees in excess; but to show I bear no malice I will give you one hundred rupees towards your Church, and if my horse wins the Rangoon Cup, I will make it up to five hundred. If your new St. Peter is half as good as the old one (which I doubt), between you, you should manage it easily for me." The Padre smiled broadly, and drank his iced peg with evident relish. "We'll try," he said.

Some three weeks later at a most uproarious breakfast, at which the winner of the Cup was toasted in long aleveers of iced hock and champagne, the Agent rose up and said: "It does my heart good to hand over to our esteemed mutual friend, the Padre, this little bit of paper for the good of the Cause." The Padre, replying on behalf of the Cause, expressed himself somewhat to this effect: That as a junior partner in a great and going concern, he had done his level best.

Smith is back in the Methodist fold, and on the subject of the methods of Rome is forcible and illuminating.

Piercing the Southern Alps.

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near its extremity. At intervals we come upon gangs of workmen busy with trucks or barrows. Some of the men are filling the vehicles, which, when full, are wheeled away, to be tipped at low-lying parts of the track. Among such scenes we leave Lake Sarah behind us, cross the Caes, and climb the brief ascent over the saddle, to share once more a highway with the Waimakariri.

We have now left the railway, which will pass round the end of the range not far to the right, and thus avoid the saddle. It will then follow the river upstream for a little distance, before crossing to the other bank by a low bridge, the preliminaries for which can be seen in progress below us. From there the road and rail proceed on opposite banks, almost till the tunnel is reached. We, in the coach, are by this time negotiating a kind of exaggerated switchback, cut out of the side of a hill beside the river. At one minute the road is almost level with the water, at the next it is climbing to a point high above it, only to sink again to the water's edge, this somewhat vexatious grading being adopted apparently with the sole purpose of avoiding blasting. After that a straight run of about four miles brings us to the Bealey, where we pause for dinner at the Glacier Hotel, one of the ancient landmarks of Canterbury. Little time is wasted over the meal, and in half-an-hour we have started again, and are splashing across the mile-wide ford through the Waimakariri, to its tributary, the Bealey.

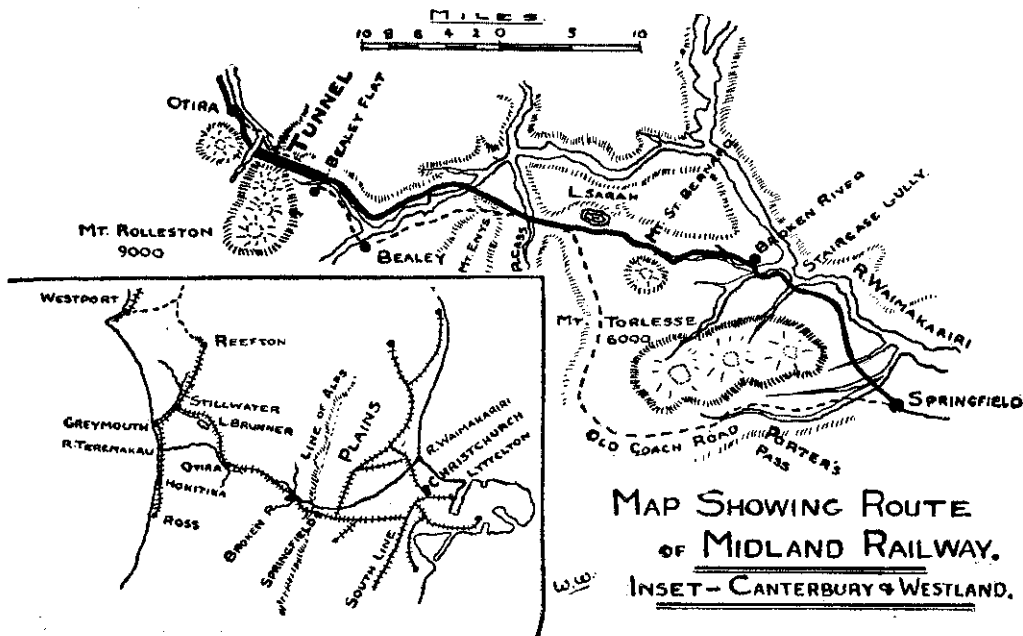
Now the full beauty of the Southern Alps bursts upon us. Everything around us—mountain, valley, and cataract—is on a scale sublime and magnificent. On our right is a beautiful conical mountain, thickly covered with the glorious verdure of the bush, while across the valley are other peaks, also bush-covered. The road lies in a slender clearing cut through the forest on the right bank, so that we seem to be ever travelling in a fairy dell, surrounded by ferns and shaded by all-but-interlacing branches of black birch. At one instant we descend to cross a little stream, the shingly bed of which forms an opening in the bush, and reveals a valley stretching up to the snowy heights above. At the next we are climbing up the hillside again to avoid a bend of the river, which threatens to encroach upon the highway, were it not placed

at a respectful distance from the torrent. Now and then, where an even stretch of shingle presents itself above the level of the watercourse, we venture out on the floor of the valley, and pursue a swift journey beyond the reach of the bush. At length, while we are rounding a rocky point and descending into one such open space, a little village comes suddenly into sight opposite, a scar on the mountain side, which is surrounded by men and horses working, and numerous other signs of industry. This is the

of white wooden huts fronting the coach road, from the capacious chimneys of which sundry streams of blue smoke are issuing, signs of warmth and comfort inside. The store occupies a central position, displaying rows of tinned fruits, milk, and meat, articles which occupy so important a place in the diet of the backwoodsman. At the far end of the township, which, by the way, is called "Bealey Flat," are the stables for the sturdy horses that haul the wagons of stores and contractors' material over the pass, from the railhead at Otira. The

waiting to develop 600 horse-power in the form of electric current, which will pass along the cable line seen reaching to the mouth of the tunnel, and entering a large shed containing the air compressors for the drills.

As we continue our way up the pass these details fall behind us, and we are conscious only of a road leading through thick foliage, rising continually towards the V-shaped gap in the heights in front of us. Once we cross the cataract by a picturesque little bridge, and after a steady pull, and a wide sweep around



MAP SHOWING ROUTE OF MIDLAND RAILWAY. INSET - CANTERBURY & WESTLAND.

point where the railway enters the rock, on its underground journey to the lower country beyond the watershed.

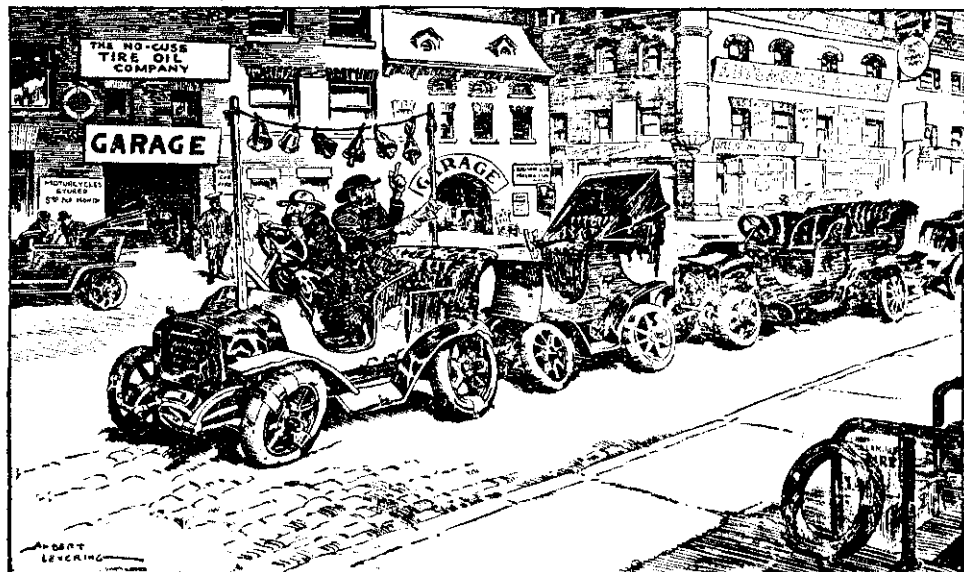
We are making our first inspection of the tunnel at an appropriate place, for at this end, where work has but recently commenced, we are able to study the first stage in the process of boring. We can observe the pick and shovel men removing the layer of stone broken and rotted by age, frost, and weather, before the face of solid rock is reached for the drills to work upon. A wooden bridge helps to indicate the direction of the approach, making a narrow angle to the surface of the hill. Trucks of spoil are continually being drawn by horses over the bridge, to be tipped at the end of the embankment on our own side of the river. During their spare time the workmen are housed in the double rows

pass itself is now directly ahead of us, forming a remarkably low gap through the high and precipitous peaks on either side. About 600ft of ascent are before us, in the course of the two and a-half miles before the summit is reached.

A few minutes after leaving the village, our attention is transfixed by the sight of a great waterfall, plunging through a slit in the rock above the riverbed on a 700ft leap into the valley below. Long before reaching the bottom, its waters are whirled into foam by the mere force of its headlong descent. Magnificent though it is, the Devil's Punchbowl, as a scenic attraction, is doomed, for a black line of pipes leading down the rock to the right of the fall is ready to take away its waters into the roughly built powerhouse at their lower extremity. Inside, the Pelton wheels and dynamos are

the big shingle slip at the summit, we see before us the marvellous gorge of the Otira, a narrow rift with all but vertical walls. At the bottom, far below us, the river can be seen, appearing from our coign of vantage, a mere glistening thread extending in a shaly line down the slope. The road can also be seen disappearing round the cliff at the bottom, a ledge cut out of the rocky side or built by means of concrete or trestle-work on to it. Its course may be traced along the precipice to a point immediately below us, from which it ascends by a series of zigzags. Standing above the whole, and completing the exquisitely striking picture, is the white top of the mountain just beyond the lower extremity of the gorge, surely a worthy headpiece to so noble a scene.

Down into the gorge the coach rushes, swinging around the most awful corners



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