



the handling of steam-rollers, air compressors and pneumatic drills, as they came to hand.

During the work fighting was going on North and South of the road, but on and around the road was peace. Occasional murders took place. That was inevitable in a big mixed camp, containing many gamblers and many men to whom the blow habitually came before the word. These he dealt with a small police force. Once two warring tribes shot it out across the road, to the great delight of the labourers, who had a grand-stand view of the show. More than once Hamilton received warnings about tribal difficulties that might have held up his work. None of these eventuated. In his book he says little of how he won the loyalty and help of these, the wildest hillmen in the world. He suggests that as they were in many ways not unlike his own Scottish ancestors of a few generations back, perhaps there was a natural sympathy. But reading between the lines of his book it is clear that he must have impressed them by his courage and won them by his fairness and tact. Since he left, troubles have broken out. The Iraqi official, lacked the personal quality of this New Zealand engineer who kept the peace during the years of road-building. But the road is there, blasted through living rock, a lasting monument to the personal qualities of a New Zealander, who in four years of loneliness and labour never lost his head, never failed in tact or judgment, and without help in the varied roles of engineer, politician, doctor and father confessor, kept the work going to a triumphant end.

drive his road over the Spilak Pass, immemorial haunt of the Kurdish robber bands. Hamilton, however, pitched his tent within a stone's throw of the nearest brigands' village and by sheer personality made friends with the brigand chief. In all the four years that he travelled over that pass, often with large sums of money to pay the labourers, he was never molested. In his book *Road through Kurdistan* he puts this down to the friendly character of the Kurds, but others have ascribed it to the tremendous moral impression he made on the tribesmen. His was a remarkable performance. The only European, he controlled a curious labour force of Kurds, Assyrians, Persians and Arabs with the aid of overseers of mixed nationalities and comparatively little technical knowledge. Starting with one steam-roller and hardly any machinery, he taught these completely unskilled men the technique of rock drilling and blasting, of road-making and asphaltting and

