

the rain one can see things unseen in fine weather; wet granite mirroring the sun; the fiord walls hung with a thousand waterfalls; and the subtle colours of the bush, lighting in the softness of the washed air.

We understand that it is only the female sandfly that bites; but chivalry here would be too painful a thing. The traveller is therefore warned to come prepared to repel boarders.

Back once more at Lumsden, we can head now to the lakes of Central Otago. The route to Queenstown takes us through some of New Zealand's greatest barley growing country. The road is still gravel, and as on all gravel roads in hot, dry weather, dust can be a problem. The road above Lake Wakatipu, especially over the Devil's Staircase, provides some very exacting driving.

Much has been written about Queenstown and the Lake, and one could spend many weeks profitably touring around the area. Many fortunes were won here in the gold rush days, but little is left to remind the traveller of the many thousands of miners who worked, drank, and gambled, except the ghost towns and the scarred banks of the Shotover.

The beech forest at Paradise, in from Glenorchy at the northern end of Wakatipu, is among the most beautiful in New Zealand. Though the area was named Paradise after the ducks that are seen in great numbers here, the nether regions are well represented in the near-by mountains—Nox, Chaos, Cerberus, and Pluto (the latter was represented to us when we were there last as the great Greek philosopher!)

From Queenstown we can head off to Wanaka over the Crown Range, or to Cromwell via the Kawarau Gorge. The summit of the Crown Range is the highest point on any road in New Zealand (3676 feet). The road is narrow and nervous drivers should anticipate the daily service-car.

Thirty years ago, writing on travel in New Zealand, James Cowan commented that "some day, the Haast Pass route to Wanaka may make a famous motor-ing track." Some time in 1957—we hope—this prophecy will come true with the opening of the Haast Pass Road. A round trip then will be possible around the buttress of the Alps.

Cromwell, at the confluence of the Kawarau and Clutha Rivers, could be considered one of the most dramatically sited towns in New Zealand. There are many such places in Central, though, where the wide skies and the high rugged hills—what Thomas Bracken called "the big brown noble mountains of Otago"—were a fitting setting to the old days of gold.

Continuing south-eastward from Cromwell we come to Clyde, known originally as "The Dunstan." This quiet town, it is instructive to remember, once had a population of over four thousand. Now it is more like four hundred. Clyde and Cromwell both have well-appointed borough camps, while Alexandra, five miles on from Clyde, has a motor camp that can accommodate about 2000.

Our last stop will be Roxburgh. Six miles from the township is the Roxburgh Hydro, which came into operation last July. So far we have looked at nature; here we see what men can achieve changing nature by damming the strongest river in New Zealand.

N.Z. LISTENER, SEPTEMBER 7, 1956.

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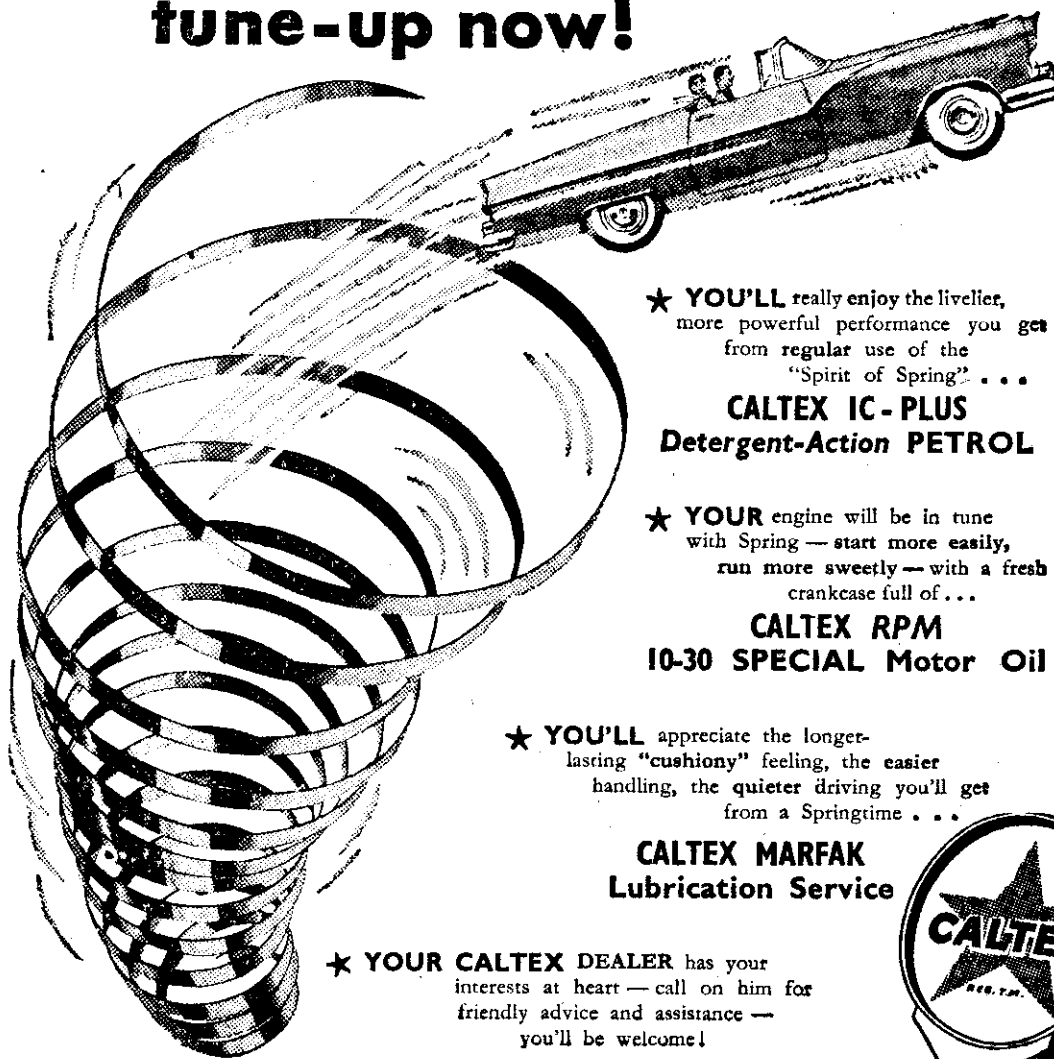
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