



Looking South across the Fairlie Basin.

stream of tourists through the main street. Transport, indeed, has always been Fairlie's main industry. The greater number of its male adults are employed on the railway or in garages, in keeping roads open and in repair, and in shoeing horses.

The Jubilee History of South Canterbury says boldly that Fairlie "lies in an amphitheatre of hills, snow-clad during the winter, and has a pleasant Old World appearance imparted by the number of trees." Whatever part of the Old World Fairlie resembles it is not any part of the British Isles, with their soft lighting and restricted perspectives. On a fine day the first thing that impresses you as you top the rise shutting in the Fairlie basin to the east is the brilliant clarity of the air, which makes it possible to pick out every clump of trees on a hillside ten miles away. Apart from that, the Jubilee History's description is faithful enough. To the west lie the high hills through which Burke's Pass leads into the Mackenzie country; to the south is the Two Thumb Range; and to the north is a lower line of hills beyond which lies the valley of the Rangitata. The floor of the Fairlie basin is flat, so flat that you are liable to forget that the road has been rising ever since you left the coast. Fairlie itself is 1,000 ft. above sea-level.

Like most country towns, Fairlie has grown like a tapeworm. Its main buildings are not a group round a centre,

but an untidy straggle along the main road. At the east end are the railway-station, the post-office, the Gladstone Grand Hotel, the Mackenzie County Council's Offices, the courthouse, a garage, and one or two shops. The railway-station and the shunting yards take up the north side of the street and are partly screened from the building on the south side by a line of elms. Farther west, about opposite the Presbyterian Church, the road suddenly doubles in width and is divided along the centre by another line of trees. Fairlie's west end includes the Fairlie Hotel, the offices and stores of the stock and station agents, a billiard-saloon, two pastrycooks, more garages, a branch office of the Public Trust, and, at the extreme west end, the war memorial and the fire station. The oddity of Fairlie's layout is that a single railway line escapes from the shunting yards and goes unfenced the whole length of the west end. To visiting motorists the sudden encounter with a railway-engine puffing its way unconcernedly down the main street is unnerving.

So much for the Fairlie as it looks from the bus. If you turn off the main street you enter the Fairlie known only to the eight hundred people who live there. The side roads are metalled and flanked by waist-high cocksfoot which perilously masks open ditches. Interspersed with empty sections—Fairlie is a town-planner's nightmare—are pleasantly dilapidated houses surrounded by