

have a very living sense of the past, and the tales are repeated without a word misplaced.

It might be supposed, now the gold that pollinated the town has for the most part gone that Arrowtown is dying as its pioneers die, for in a sense the pioneers are Arrowtown. And that is partly true.

The district high school and the convent school have long been closed; there is nowhere for the young men to learn a trade (the war has taken ninety-three of them from the small district, eight have been killed); the flour-mill is shut down; the irrigation scheme, the general store, the carrier, and the rabbit board employ among them only twenty-six persons, and they are the largest employers. Electricity waits one mile away from the borough for Australian hardwood power-poles.

But on Saturday night the narrow main street springs to life. The shop lamps are lit, motor-cars arrive, musterers come in to town on horseback, the weekly picture show begins at 8.30. Groups of well-to-do looking people (they seem all to be related) exchange gossip and greetings in the long southern twilight. This weekly animation shows that the district is substantially progressing even if the town stands still.

And the reason partly is that in 1931 the river was used for irrigating the dry lands round the town. Since then pipes and water-courses have been extended until about 7,000 acres are fed from the golden Arrow. Fat lamb pasture, lucerne, red clover, grass-seed, are grown where before the land held only sparse tussock grass. A farmer who at one time kept only one house cow now runs forty cows. It has always been the best barley land in New Zealand, and the crop brings 3d. a bushel more than the top price elsewhere. Clover-seed growing, oats, garden peas, turnips, have been remarkably profitable since the war.

The recent revival of Arrowtown and its district, compared with its early spectacular boom, is unexciting and matter-of-fact. And perhaps we shouldn't make too much of it, as the district is circumscribed and the farms are small. All the same it is hard to find elsewhere such landscape enclosing such a compact and genial sort of life.

One of our poets has written an epitaph for Arrowtown, and this is what he says—

Gold in the hills, gold in the rocks,  
Gold in the river gravel,  
Gold as yellow as Chinamen  
In the bottom of the shovel.

*(Continued at foot of page 7.)*



Buckingham Street from The Avenue. The hills behind enclose the secret valley where the first gold discovery was made.