

THE TRANS-IRANIAN RAILWAY

Further details of extremely heavy works on the two Belgian contract lengths

IN previous articles, we have described the Trans-Iranian Railway in a general way, and only parts of it in any detail. It is, however, an undertaking of great magnitude, and its future importance can hardly be over-estimated, especially as it forms the backbone of what will probably be a system connected westward and eastward with existing foreign railways, thus bridging the gap that occurs between the lines of Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean on the one hand, and those of India and the East on the other.

Just north of Richard Costain's contract, already referred to in some detail in these pages, the Cie. Belge de Chemins de fer et d'Entreprises has constructed two ten-mile sections ranking among the most difficult that have been built, and noteworthy for the large number of heavy works entailed. They are situated in the Luristan mountains where the line follows the Ab-I-Cesar gorge.

The amount of tunnelling is exceptional and comprises on the first of these sections, 18 tunnels aggregating 6,853 m. (7,495 yd.) and on the second, 20 tunnels totalling 8,331 m. (9,111 yd.), or no less than 41 and 50·5

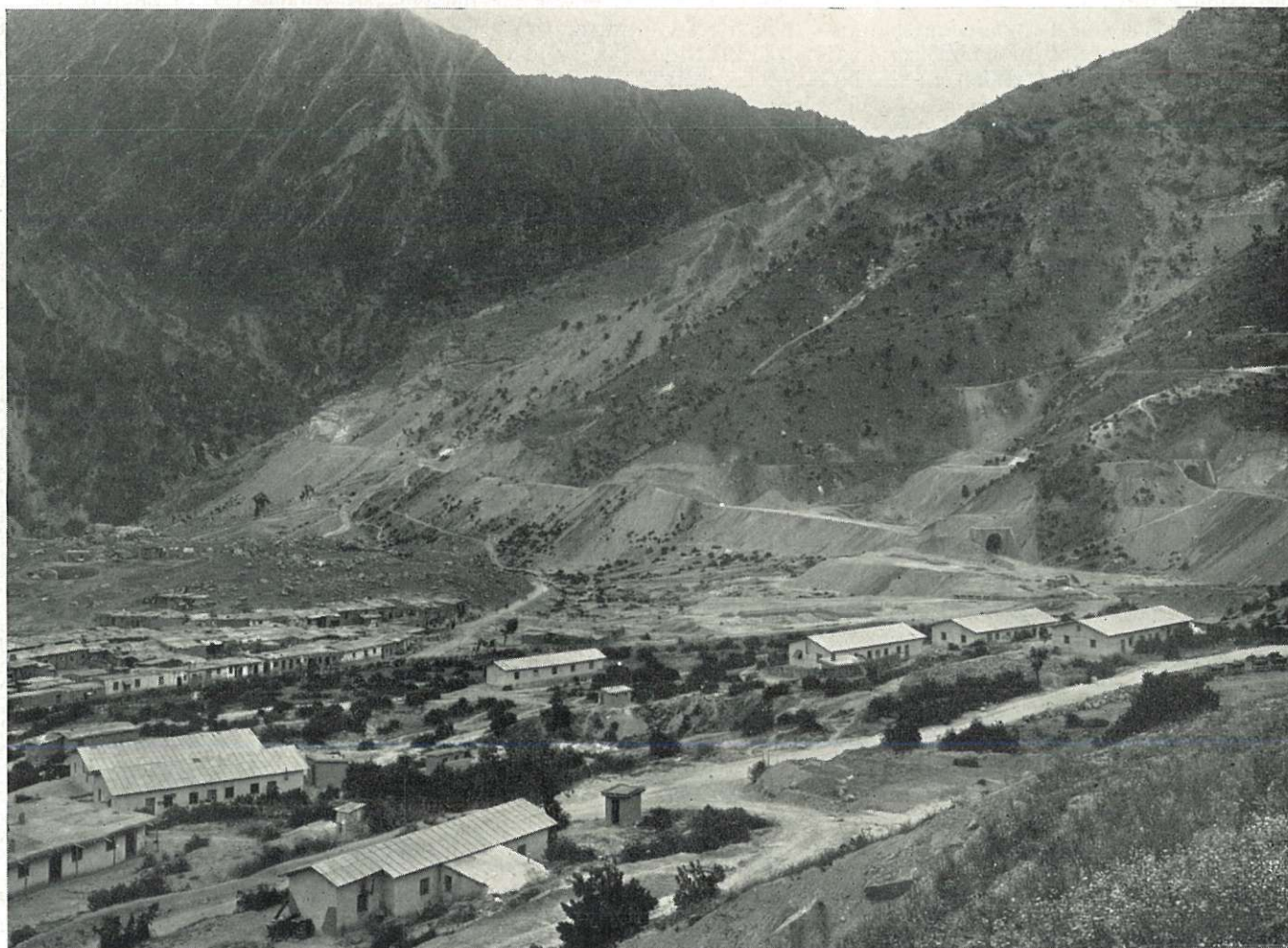
per cent. of the entire lengths of the respective sections. The most interesting of them are those on the double spiral loop on Contract 10, illustrated, one mile of which had to be tunnelled. The distance between extremities of No. 2 sub-section is 300 m. (328 yd.) as the crow flies, and exactly ten times as much measured along the railway. This double loop is approximately 4 km. (2½ miles) long and enables the line to rise 51 m. (167 ft.).

There are also many remarkable bridges and viaducts, chief among them being:—

Name of bridge	Length		Maximum height	
	m.	ft.	m.	ft.
Ab-i-Serum	124	407	32	105
Ab-i-Cesar	130	427	25	82
Kechwar	110	361	35	115
Luristan	100	328	33	108

It is notable that these are all in a length 10 miles long which also contributes 5 miles of tunnelling.

Work was begun in 1935 and completed to the satisfaction of the Government in four months under the three years' contract time.



Panoramic view of construction camp on Contract 10, showing the railway and tunnels on two levels in the background



Bridge under construction at approach to tunnel No. 67



Viaduct under construction in a setting typical of the country traversed

HEAVY ENGINEERING WORK ON THE TRANS-IRANIAN RAILWAY

(See article opposite)