

Land Management.

Ruinous Toll of Erosion.

(By CAPTAIN E. V. SANDERSON.)

The Land, the Land, the Land! All are vitally concerned with the management of the land. The results of our methods in this direction must and do affect the well-being of every individual for better or worse. The efficient use and conservation of our national resources in forests, agriculture and pastoral pursuits, streams, rivers, minerals, etc., affect the destiny of all our people.

The Precious Top Layer.

The most important part of the land to us as a nation is merely the first few inches, otherwise the top soil. But where are we at the present moment? Fifty per cent. of the people operating as primary producers cannot make ends meet owing to the reduced prices of land products, while a considerable portion of consumers cannot purchase the products owing to the dear prices at which they reach them.

A large number of those handling the land are now being bolstered up by those who have handled their undertakings in a more profitable manner, with the final result that the whole nation is now being ground down by intolerable taxation and governmental interference. In the meanwhile most seek their food and clothing day by day buoyed up by that hope which springs eternal in the human breast that matters will readjust themselves and prosperity come like a brilliant light from nowhere, without any effort on our part to put our house in order.

Widespread Denudation.

Let us cast a glance around New Zealand and note what we see. Denudation of our essential protection forests everywhere, be it on land impossible for other uses than forest production, or on that which is merely of a temporary use for grazing purposes. Think, too, that the work of many stalwart pioneers—men of stout heart and brawny muscle—has been in vain and their hard misdirected efforts have been so entirely misplaced that their work has been lost to the nation. The land upon which they spent their energy is now, in many cases, in a far more unproductive condition than prior to that time when the first blow of an axe smote a tree. Thousands upon thousands of acres of land have gone to waste which—it should have been evident to the most inexperienced—could not remain in produc-