

Obstacles to National Welfare.

Pressures of Selfish Interests.

IMMEASURABLE damage has been done to the natural resources—the national wealth—of New Zealand by various schemes of self interest—some for pleasure, others for profit. The rights of the public, especially that prospective public, termed posterity, have been flouted for many years, but happily, as the result of the systematic educational campaigns of the Forest and Bird Protection Society and its many well-wishers, there is evidence that the unsocial practices of small minorities will not be tolerated indefinitely by the great majority.

The ceaseless battle of this Society is wholly and solely for New Zealand. No member seeks personal distinction or material gains for his or her work. It is public-spirited co-operation for the safe-guarding of natural assets which are emphatically necessary to assure a continuance of the country's prosperity, but what difficulties ever best the path of progress !

The deer-stalker, keen for his own sport, turns a blind eye to the damage done by the imported pests, and a deaf ear to any argument which does not conform to his personal desires. To him the forests are providential forage-places for deer, and he is constantly agitating for a preservation of the alien nuisances.

The fur-dealer and the trapper desire the "farming" of opossums in native forests, whatever may be the harm done to trees and birds.

The gunner is another whose view is ever for his own immediate pleasure. He regards waterfowl as feathered targets specially evolved for his shooting. Many of the so-called sportsmen resort to ruses which threaten the extinction of beautiful and beneficial birds, whose life delights nature-lovers. Various interests, linked with the shootists, fight in various ways against a proper conservation of the birds.

Eager hands are ever reaching out for timber which should be left for its very important scenic, soil-conserving and water-regulating value in steep country. Even in national parks greedy eyes are cast on tall trees.

Streams have been polluted by the nasty effluents from dairy factories and other offensive waste of other industries—and the nuisance continues.

Thus the sway of shortsighted selfishness goes on, and will not stop until the rights of the nation are upheld by a Government strong enough to act for public welfare.