

has been developed as a vital policy of national planning. Germany and Japan are exemplary in forest and land conservation. Italy is rushing her programme of conservation and reclamation as a basis for a greater empire.

Fortunately, though belated, a national movement for soil and water conservation was initiated by President Roosevelt, which aroused the American people to the menace of soil erosion. This enemy of civilizations had already destroyed 51,000,000 acres of farm lands and impaired the productivity of 200,000,000 acres more. As a result, the United States has begun the largest and most comprehensive movement for soil and water conservation in the history of the world.

If a nation would project itself into the future it must protect its lands from the ravages of soil erosion. Soil erosion expresses itself as a deficiency disease of the land which begets deficiency of food, vitality, and higher values for peoples and nations.

Soil erosion, the destroyer of land, has been diagnosed; its processes are known and its control is possible. The hope for the future lies in a realization that man has an obligation born of a higher economics, a moral obligation to bountiful mother earth which must nourish all present and future human beings as long as it lasts. It is nothing short of criminal for individuals of one generation to sacrifice the right of future man to survive because of traditions of special privileges to exploit the earth. The present and future well-being of a people calls for long-range policies for the maintenance of productive lands and resources. These policies must be founded on what is right for the greatest number of people in the long run. It becomes a matter of social economics and national ethics. Practices of land use which work against the good of the whole must be regulated, whether by law or

public opinion, to achieve a dual purpose: to maintain individual initiative and to safeguard the integrity of resources.

Exploitation is self limiting and suicidal. It uses up the principal and makes no provision for future balancing of the national resources budget. Finally, when a nation is reduced to desperation to supply food for its people, it will go to an expense far beyond any tax burden yet known to cultivate diminishing soils.

Land thus becomes, not a commodity, but an integral part of the corporate existence of a nation, even as its people. This principle justifies the safeguarding of soils and the restoration of denuded areas on a basis of national ethics and national economy. Economic considerations of to-day must be shot through with economics of a higher order to meet problems of sustained land use constructively for generations to follow.

Thus for the very endurance of civilization, an ethical approach to land use as a trusteeship, to be used and handed down in a productive condition to succeeding generations, becomes imperative.

Each nation to-day needs to have many a Moses of land conservation, to instill in the national consciousness the principle of an Eleventh Commandment to regulate man's relation to the holy earth as a faithful steward, to conserve its productivity from generation to generation. Then fields will be protected from soil erosion, water brooks from drying up, and hills from overgrazing by herds, and future generations may be assured of abundance forever.

Only by conservation in the fullest sense of the basic resources of land, water, and the spirit of peoples, can we maintain the human values of wholesome standards of living, opportunity, freedom, justice, and faith in the destiny of our modern civilization.

EROSION IN NEW ZEALAND. (A common scene).

