

serve our wild life for the use and enjoyment of the people of to-day and of the future.

Before we commence our discussions, I should like to emphasize two points, which are vitally important in their bearing on this subject, namely, the desirability of the greatest degree of co-operation, and the necessity of foresight.

Delay may mean
Extermination

Taking the last point first, why should we not now resolve to use that faculty which distinguishes us from our fellow creatures and exercise our reason, which should make us provident? In the past it has been almost an invariable rule to wait until serious depletion of game animals has taken place before instituting protective measures which, had they been in effect earlier, would have prevented such depletion. Why should we continue to be so lacking in foresight, and of those attributes that make a nation progressive, as to be unwilling to provide against contingencies that we know from experience will occur? Conservation is practical foresight. No natural resource needs the application of greater foresight for its conservation than our wild life, for it cannot be replaced once it is destroyed, and its destruction can only be avoided by wise prevision. Let us, therefore, resolve to look ahead of the present requirements, and plan with our eyes on the future.

But the chief object of this conference is to secure as great a degree of co-operation as possible, in order to further the objects we all have in view. A significant change has taken place in our attitude towards wild life. Formerly, game laws were framed more with an eye to human advantage than for the benefit of the wild life. Our wild life resources were regarded as a convenient and easy source of revenue, and the issuing of game licenses was the principal function of the game officer; the same attitude of mind existed in regard to our forest resources, which were regarded as a valuable source of public revenue, in the shape of licenses and stumpage fees, and not as an economic asset requiring wise conservation. But, when the limits of the, so-called, 'inexhaustible' come within the range of our perception, then the instinct of self-preservation comes into play, and we hasten to make such amends as may be possible by endeavouring to save what remains. The true game officer to-day is more concerned in protecting such game as remains than in issuing licenses for its destruction, and, if we are to retain our game resources, their conservation must necessarily constitute the main function of the game officer; he must be truly a game guardian or warden.