

game protection is to prevent the general public from the enjoyment of the health and recreation of taking, and the nourishment of partaking of wild game. Without pretending that sportsmen are possessed of more disinterested benevolence than the rest of mankind—without asserting that they labor more assiduously for the public good than those who do not enjoy the healthful recreation of forest, field, and stream sports with rod and gun—it is an unquestioned fact that the accomplishment of the objects for which game protection and sportsmen's associations are organized will promote the welfare of all classes of the community. Our object is to treat the wild game with which our State was once liberally supplied, as a wise husbandman would treat his domestic animals, so as to continue and increase the supply, that as population increases there may be an occasional full meal for all. We desire to prevent the destruction of game during their breeding and rearing seasons, and to prohibit all murderous systems of slaughter. We wish to prevent the killing of all kinds of animals when their flesh is unclean, unhealthful, and therefore not fit to eat. As a *sanitary measure*, this object of our Association should commend itself to every well-wisher of our race. It is impossible to tell how many of the insidious diseases that invite death to our dwellings, and clothe the people with the weeds of mourning, are produced by eating of the flesh of animals killed when they are unclean. Yet that sickness is so caused is patent to every one who has given this subject careful attention. It is a question worthy of consideration whether further legislation to prevent the sale and use of unclean meats is not demanded.

Again, as a *food supply measure*, the protection of game, quadrupeds, birds, and fishes, is one of vast importance. I do not need to read you, gentlemen, statistics to prove the point. The annual product of field and stream, lake and forest, provided free of cost by a bountiful Creator, is so important an item of the food of the people that an immediate stoppage of that supply would almost, perhaps quite, cause a food panic. During the open season (would it were only then) there is hardly a table in the land that is not frequently furnished with healthful nutritious game and fish food. How to continue and increase that supply is the question before us—the problem to be solved.

Then there is another reason why we should so manage as to increase rather than diminish

our stock of game and fish scarcely less important than those mentioned. And that is the healthful recreation enjoyed in its pursuit and capture. Everybody needs recreation—rest; and everybody will have it in some shape, and it is right, for nature demands it. Now, as there is no recreation more beneficial, and less harmful than true sportsmanship, or the pursuit of field sports with rod and gun, are we not engaged in a humane work while seeking to maintain the supply of game animals so as to make such sport possible? Mere out-door exercise without some intelligent pursuit, something in itself innocent to stimulate the mind, is of but little value as a recreation. All these are supplied in the pursuit of sportsmanship. The sportsman has to study the natural history of his quarry, and is frequently called upon to make the best use of his reasoning powers, as well as skill, in order to compass the capture of the wily object of his pursuit. I believe if there were no other reason for the protection of wild game than the incentive it gives to healthful out-door exercise, this alone would be sufficient to demand the most carefully considered legislation on this subject, and the most strict enforcement of the laws. These are but few, and perhaps not the most important, of the reasons that might be mentioned to show that the object for which sportsmen's association are organized—if accomplished—would promote the welfare of the people of the whole State. The mission of this association is to educate the people as to the habits of game animals of "fur, fin and feather," the best time and manner of capturing them, the correct names—both popular and scientific—by which they are, and should be, known; to teach the value of game birds as insect destroyers, as well as the usefulness of insectivorous birds that are not classed as game, in preventing the destruction of the crops of the husbandman by noxious insects; also to teach the farmers that true sportsmen are their best friends, for the above-named reasons; and to show by our actions as well as by precept that there is a vast difference between sportsmen and poachers, who slaughter with gun, trap and net, at any and all times, not only game but any other useful animal that may come within their reach.

The true sportsman is engaged in a work of benevolence and good will. Let us all be careful to so conduct ourselves at all times as to command the respect of all our fellow citizens.