

Having accepted this important public trust, it becomes our duty to unite in discharging our responsibilities with whole-hearted enthusiasm and with single-minded determination to advance the public interest in every way possible within the legitimate scope of the powers conferred upon us.

The Commission is not an executive nor an administrative body. It has no executive or administrative powers. Its constitution gives it power to take into consideration every subject which may be regarded by its members as related to the conservation of natural resources, but the results of that consideration are advisory only. In a sentence, the Commission is a body constituted for the purpose of collecting exact information, deliberating upon, digesting and assimilating this information so as to render it of practical benefit to the country, and for the purpose of advising upon all questions of policy that may arise in reference to the actual administration of natural resources where the question of their effective conservation and economical use is concerned.

The effectiveness of our work will depend upon its own merits. We can only study, investigate and advise. The Governments concerned must take the responsibility of accepting or rejecting what we recommend. So far as the work consists in collecting and digesting information, it will, in any event, be of great value. When it comes to the acceptance by Governments of specific recommendations for action, or the adoption of policies, then the strength of the advice, its effectiveness and influence, must depend upon its own inherent and obvious wisdom and the soundness of the reasons advanced in its support. Obviously, therefore, there will be no room for haphazard conclusions or careless or unscientific work. Each question dealt with must be approached with an absolutely open mind and an unyielding determination to make the investigation thorough and complete and to reach the best possible conclusions. If the work be undertaken in such a spirit, it may reasonably be hoped that it will bear important fruit. The men who are in charge of the administration of our natural resources are, we may assume, desirous of giving the best administration possible. But it is most difficult for them always to know what is best. The subjects are complicated and the information necessary to a really intelligent conclusion often widely scattered, difficult to procure, and of such a character as to require much time and long study to digest. This is peculiarly true in Canada—a country of sparse population and of immense resources yet comparatively little known. One man, in Canada, is often charged with the administration of resources so vast in extent that it is difficult for him to gain even the