

have had to deal with in British Columbia, but we are gratified to have such a generous reference to a measure on our statute-books. Now our mining laws, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, are framed with this policy behind every section of the statutes, that the legitimate prospector is the man entitled to the property, and that the Act must be construed with such intention, not to keep his prospect from him, but rather to see that he gets it and that he gets an unquestionable title to it. This encourages the prospector, it is a fair and reasonable thing, and it is what later on brings the operator and the developer on the scene. In the next place, our laws are designed so that a man cannot go in and if he finds a new camp or a new prospect practically cover the whole ground to the exclusion of his fellow-citizens. We give a prospector, in the case of a placer mine, a large discovery claim and two or three rights that would ordinarily follow, but we do not give him a monopoly. There is the doctrine of conservation behind that law which makes provision that another prospector may come in and share in the field. With regard to lode mines, reasonable ground may be staked, but nothing is permitted in the way of monopoly. Generally speaking, we have tried, both with respect to coal and metalliferous mines, to have fair and economic regulations observed. So, in conclusion both with regard to coal mines and metalliferous mines, we have tried to fairly enforce by legislation the principle of conservation, still retaining to the State a fair and reasonable interest in all profits that may accrue to the private individual or to the corporation in each or any of these operations.

I could speak to you about the conservation of our many Government possessions in British Columbia, including buildings, roads, bridges, etc., because it is a very wide subject. I could say to you that of the many and important duties that fall to that far western province we are trying to keep permanently before us the fact that the conservation work of to-day stands on a very high plane, and as I said in my opening remarks, we keep prominently before us the thought that such conservation represents the very highest duties of citizenship that we may be called to perform. As I sit down, you will be interested to know that in addition to the conservation policies with regard to our timber, we have for some seven and a half or eight years past enforced reservation against the sale of any more timber in that country. This you would perhaps like to learn is the act of Mr. Green, who is now member for Kootenay, and who is an old colleague of mine, and it has been calculated that it will undoubtedly add millions and millions of dollars to the national wealth of the Dominion of Canada without at all impairing the value of the investment held in that far-off province by many timber operators. Mr. Blain and gentlemen, you are most kind to have me come here and tell you in these few words of mine the story of conservation in British Columbia. If anything I have said can assist you in your labours, or if you can find anything interesting in it at all, I shall, gentlemen, feel more than gratified for the privilege you have offered me in addressing you. I thank you.

Mr. MACDONELL: If you will permit me, Mr. Chairman, to make a motion, I think it is felt by every member of the committee that it is due to the distinguished gentleman who has just spoken to move a very cordial vote of thanks for the splendid address he has given us. Sir Richard McBride apologized in his opening remarks for coming here unprepared; I think those of us who have had the privilege of listening to his remarks feel there was no occasion for those apologies, and that the very shortness of his remarks accentuated the prominent points that he desired to bring out. Personally, I listened with the greatest possible pleasure to his address, and I think that the liberality and the breadth of vision with which the province of British Columbia has dealt and is dealing with her natural resources is an object lesson not only to other provinces, but to all civilized countries. Sir Richard has told us plainly that he and his Government have not done this from a provincial stand-