

on a square-mile basis. It is impossible to conceive that we are not going to do something to extend the geography of Canada, so far as civilization and utilization are concerned, nearer to the Arctic, and make use of these vast domains which, while not comparable with the rest of the Dominion, will, if properly administered, become an exceedingly valuable asset among the natural resources of Canada.

I am glad indeed to find that such a distinguished gentleman as Dr. Hornaday, the Director of the New York Zoological Park, is to be among the contributors to the value of this conference, and also the gentleman who, on behalf of the United States, is responsible for the administration of the Migratory Bird Convention to which I have referred, Mr. Nelson. I earnestly hope that I shall be able to be present to hear what they have to say.

Wild Life and
the Indians

There is another reason why I am interested in this conference. Not as Minister of the Interior, but because I am Minister of the Interior, I happen also to be Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. To the Indian, wild life is almost all of life. Possibly for many generations yet the Indian will not be able to subsist, to fight against the inroads of disease, and to maintain himself as a healthy and real Indian, except by access to sufficient wild life to enable him to so do. By reason of the depletion of deer and other game in the Ungava district—which depletion took place most pronouncedly some thirty-five years ago, at the time of the great fire—it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain the life of the Eskimo and Indians of that territory. It is not that the Department of Indian Affairs is negligent of them, because direct assistance to the Eskimos and Indians has been on the increase during all these years. But such assistance can never take the place of that ability to help themselves which Indians alone can exercise if they are in the environment of wild life; consequently we are making an effort to re-establish the conditions under which the Indian and the Eskimo can survive by their own resources and their own energies. Help them as we will, the more we help them the faster they die. Tuberculosis invades their huts; they do not get out as much as they did; if we help them more they get out the less, and we are steering towards the extinction of the Indian and the Eskimo in that territory unless some successful change of policy can be made. It is not an easy matter in a country of such vast extent as ours to bring game into a territory of that kind and to preserve it through its earlier stages and enable it to become sufficiently numerous to be of real utility to the people. We are making arrangements that, we trust, in the course of time will take care of this condition, by co-operating with a concern which hopes very shortly to