

the sporting world — the bighorn ram, and great grizzly — kings of all large game — are worth, approximately, eight thousand dollars per head.

Both these latter, with the wapiti and mule deer, are steadily decreasing with the years, even in their last refuge in the Rocky Mountain regions, and in the near future, under the present system of protection given them, they soon will be classed as extinct fauna.

Were Wild Life to become extinct, the lifeless forests would cease to attract because of their gloomy, lifeless aspect, and so would quickly pall upon the senses and become monotonous to all who visited or lived in them. Should the forests be destroyed, these wild denizens would automatically disappear with them, the destruction of both endangering the very existence of man himself.

All Wild Life — on the earth, in the air, and under the water, have had duties allotted them by an all wise Providence: duties that are faithfully performed so long as the even balance set by Nature is not upset by Man.

Economically, the Dominion cannot do without its wealth of valuable Wild Life, which, up to the present, has been, as it must continue to be in the future, the great breeding grounds of North America.

Wild Life of Early Eighties

In the early eighties of the last century, when I first passed over the then recently completed Trans-Continental Railroad, the broad Dominion from east to west teemed with Wild Life, in the forests, on the plains and in the mountain ranges of British Columbia. Indeed one could be forgiven for supposing oneself to be passing day after day through a huge well preserved game park, unsurpassed, with the exception of Africa, by any other country on the face of the globe.

The unbroken forests of the eastern provinces were well stocked with all their native species of large fur and feathered game, including wolves in abundance. Across the great plains, myriads of wild fowl and prairie-chicken met the eye at every turn. Farther west, bands of antelope were constantly in sight between the railroad and the horizon. Deep cut trails criss-crossed the virgin prairie, marking the paths of



the departed bison, the bones of which were being gathered up and piled in great stacks at side-tracks awaiting shipment. Civilization is no friend of innocent wild life, yet for centuries to come there is room for all. In British Columbia, the same game park conditions prevailed, only on a larger and grander scale.

An Orgy of Destruction

But their doom was at hand throughout the southern zone for the mining excitement was then at fever heat, and hordes of excited prospectors were rushing from one district to another, carrying death and destruction to all kinds of game. Through the Summer months the air was suffocating with acrid smoke of forest fires that raged in solid sheets of flame up the mountain sides. Meat-hunters, pelt-hunters, head-hunters, had a free hand in the destruction of valuable game and their only home, in a manner that was appalling in its senseless stupidity.

A decade later I was to see the finest game districts so depleted that they have, though game laws have been in force now for nearly twenty years, not recovered up to the present time. Nor will they until under the management of technically skilled men.

Gone also were the large bands of antelope, with a marked decrease in wild-fowl and the true American grouse (prairie-chicken) on the plains.

Ontario showed the same marked decrease in many districts, with the exception of wolves, whose cowardly cunning keeps their skins intact. Every decade, in short, down to the present, showed a decline clear across the Dominion. Yet each province has enacted game laws. No increase over waste is possible, because the system employed for enforcing the laws is so inadequate and farcical that it defeats the object in view. Our diminishing wild life in the principle provinces for the last 35 years is proof of this contention!

Wolves Should be Destroyed

In the first decade of the present century, I was hunting in mid-winter the great gray timber-wolf in Quebec and Ontario under the auspices of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and noted, among many other things, the trek of the caribou farther north, the moose following and occupying their feeding grounds; the deer sorely harassed by hounds and wolves following in the wake of the moose, much to the astonishment of the old hunting Indians, many of whom had never seen the virginian deer, at this strange evolution in Nature. I also noted why the game laws could not be enforced.

The hounding of deer in the "rutting" season should never have been allowed, for many reasons. Nor would it under the control of practical men. Wolves should be killed in great numbers. Though the most cunning of all forest denizens they are, when the proper methods are employed, surprisingly easy to destroy in the mid-winter and Spring months. Cowardly in the extreme, even when in large packs, they prefer the doe to the game fighting buck. With so many two-legged animals preying upon the deer with all kinds of destructive weapons, there is no room for the wolf and the hound. The former should be destroyed, the latter disallowed.

Drastic Reforms Necessary

Drastic reforms are called for in the game departments of the Dominion if one of our finest assets is to be saved from destruction within the next twenty-five years. And it is mainly through our schools that this can be accomplished. We talk about citizenship, but our citizenship is good or bad, just as our schools