

you and to express the wish that some real and lasting fruits will result from your gathering together. Indeed, the very nature of the conference is such that good results should follow.

We have come to realize in the Dominion—late, it is true, because, as a nation, like all other nations, we have only realized very late the importance of great truths—that the conservation of our game is as vital a subject for consideration and attention as is the conservation of any other of our resources. The Dominion of Canada is so situated that wild game is a larger factor in the estimate of our national resources than it is, perhaps, in many great countries. A large section of this Dominion is valuable for its game and its fur-bearing resources more than for anything else—indeed, to the utter exclusion of anything else. That great stretch between the eastern coast of the Hudson bay and the Atlantic, on the one hand, and the Mackenzie basin, on the other, is valuable for its fur-bearing; in fact, as yet, it is valuable for little else. Canada is known as the great breeding place of the wild fowl on this continent. The Interior Department administers, as you know, the Northwest Game Act, which has been on our statute book for many years, and also the recent statute ratifying the convention with regard to migratory birds entered into between the British Empire and the United States.

A glimpse of the value of your work can be had by considering the loss that we annually sustain as an agricultural community through the depletion of our insectivorous birds. In Western Canada, as in Ontario and, no doubt, in Eastern Canada, the loss in this respect is very great indeed. The figures are so great that I hesitate to quote them; and a great service, from a purely commercial standpoint, can be rendered by a study of the best means of preserving our wild birds.

Fur-bearers of  
the North

Our fur-bearing resources are also very extensive in what are known as the 'barren lands' of northern Canada—but which are not in any real sense barren lands. I do not know whether Senator Edwards will agree with me in this, because he and I are at opposite poles on this question of Canadian resources. But they are not *barren* lands, because no barren land can sustain the animal and plant life that these lands sustain. In that district, therefore, there are tremendous possibilities of greater fur-bearing and, indeed, meat-bearing development. I think it was Seton Thompson who fixed the number of caribou of that country at very many millions, and that it was Mr. J. B. Tyrrell who referred to them as being like the sands of the sea, not capable of being numbered, but only to be estimated numerically