

area moved primarily along water courses, both as an easy mode of travel and to escape the hostility of the open plains, caused to a large extent by an unpredictable water supply within them.

As the civilization of man advanced in this area, it depended to a large degree on man's ability to control a ready supply of water. His first concern was water for himself and then that upon which his livelihood depended: animals first and then, only if available, plant-life. This priority was used mainly because the amount of water he could control would meet only the needs of himself and animals. If the supply of water gave out, due perhaps to drought or other uncontrollable force, man reacted by moving on and finding a new area to supply his needs. Man now has within his means of control a volume of water unsurpassed in the history of this region.

Man has also expanded on this earth as far as he can go; there is no place else left to go. He must now stop and work with what he now has at his command. Evidence of this is the recent renewal of interest in conservation and the broad fields that it includes: pollution, air and water; recreation in the outdoors; man's return to nature for solace and the relighting of the spark of life, free from the humdrum of the everyday world; a renewed interest in wildlife and the joys it can bring, signified by the call of the Canadian goose overhead, in the night, returning to its age-old nesting grounds to renew the thread of life. Man must now live within an environment of his own making and largely under his control. I believe it is to man's best interest to fit into the ecological system of nature as much as possible, rather than attempt to redo nature's handiwork.

Certainly man must feed his ever-increasing masses, but must he do this at the sacrifice of all that adds the little pleasures in life? Must the rasping quack of the mallard in the marsh be stilled? Must the splash of a jumping fish at twilight be lost? With the passing of these, I believe, also goes a part of the good life; a mark is erased on the plus side of the ledger of life itself.

We, as sportsmen, realize that man has not always attempted to fit into the ecological system of nature, he has attempted to modify nature to meet his own needs. Largely this was a result of the philosophy that wildlife could fend for itself; move to a new home, just as man had done; adapt or perish. But now, just as there is no place else for man to go, there is also no place else for the wildlife populations to go. Man should, man must, provide a place in his environment for everything he holds of value in life. And who among us does not hold dear some short moment in life when nature held his undivided attention, perhaps it was the cackle of a cock pheasant as he burst forth on powerful wings from under our very feet; perhaps it was the thrill of our first fish, pulled still flipping and wet from the stream. These events are treasures we hold within ourselves, as dear as life itself. These experiences we must not, we cannot take from future generations. What we do here and now, we will be judged time and time again by uncounted generations of the future.

Let us then see that we pass on to those generations of judgment the best of all that we have today; not just that which will enliven our dollar economy today, but also that which will enlarge and broaden life to the fullest, the better life which we all wish our children to live.