

Mr. Ross said that the practice in different counties varies. In some the cost is levied upon the whole municipality. In others it is levied against the school section. He did not think the matter was of sufficient importance to require an amendment to the school law.

THE FOREST RESERVATION.

Mr. Meredith moved for copies of the order in Council for the appointment of a commission as to the proposed forest reservation and park in the Nipissing District, of the commission issued in pursuance thereof, and the instructions to the commissioners. He said he did not propose to anticipate the discussion which would arise later regarding the forests. But some more definite statement should be made regarding the scope of the commission, the names of the commissioners, etc.

Mr. Hardy said the scope of the commission was not so extensive and the park was not of such magnitude as Mr. Meredith's expressions implied. Neither was the result which was expected to flow from the commission. The district which it was proposed to reserve was north of Haliburton, south of the Mattawa River, west of the Ottawa and east of Parry Sound, embracing about fifteen or twenty townships, more or less. In six, eight or ten of these was a number of small lakes, which are the fountain heads of several rivers flowing east and west. There is a great accumulation of water in these townships. They are practically unsettled and are considered unfit for agriculture; the pine is off them, the hardwood remains. It would be to the interest of the Province to establish such a reservation for several purposes. In the first place, a forest reservation would help to a rainfall. There is no doubt that the rainfall lessens as the forest is removed. The reservation will not involve any great cost or any considerable cost. The commission consists of Mr. Aubrey White, Assistant Commissioner of the Crown Lands Department; Mr. Archibald Blue, director of the Bureau of Mines; Mr. A. Kirkwood, chief clerk of the Crown Lands Department; Mr. Dixon of Fenelon Falls, inspector of surveys, and Mr. R. W. Phipps, superintendent of forests. Mr. Gibson of the Department of Mines is secretary. The only person who will be remunerated for his services will be Mr. Dixon, the surveyor. The object of the commission will be first to investigate the character of the townships and ascertain those best adapted for the purpose, having regard to the nature of the soil, etc., and then to tabulate and schedule the information for the benefit of the House. In the next place, the commission will ascertain by correspondence the mode, system and cost of maintaining such reservations as the Adirondack and the Yellowstone Parks. The commission will also investigate what may be done in the way of reforestry. Mr. Hardy said that when this subject was discussed some years ago, about the time he assumed office, he thought that it would not be a difficult process; that the planting of some seed might be sufficient. But on inquiry he found that sowing seed was impracticable; that there would be no result from scattering seed. The young trees must be grown in nurseries. Mr. Joly, who has devoted a great deal of attention to the matter, says that sowing seed is impracticable in this country, and that the only practicable method of reforestry is by means of a nursery, and then transplanting the young trees. But this would be an extremely expensive process. Mr. Hardy believed that their greatest hope was in preserving the young pines which were too small to cut and in protecting them from destruction and fire. There were other reasons which warranted a limited expenditure. These lakes and streams abound in fish, and the district is also the home of game and deer. It was thought it might be well to set apart this county as a refuge for all wild animals and a place where fish could not be caught by seine, or to any large extent, and to do both of these things at no great cost to the country.

Mr. Meredith—Is it proposed to with-

draw from settlement the land in these townships?

Mr. Hardy—The district was never open to settlement. A few straggling squatters came in. The motion was then adopted.

A TEMPERANCE DISCUSSION.

Mr. Meredith moved for an order of the House for a return of copies of the case submitted for the opinion of the Court of Appeal as to the validity of the local option provisions of the Municipal Act, and of the opinions of the judges of the said court thereon, and of the judgment pronounced by the court in the premises.

In moving for this order Mr. Meredith made an attack upon the Government in regard to its position on the temperance question. He claimed that recent decisions showed that the power heretofore exercised by the Dominion belonged to the Province, that the Ontario Government was only playing with the temperance question, and that the legislation passed was merely to strengthen them in the country. They administered the law through their friends, and they were chargeable to a great extent with the Scott Act being a failure. They were trying to hold the liquor interest, which was an enormous power, in their hands, enabling them to replenish a diminishing revenue by some \$400,000 per year. If they were sincere, and if the power rested in this Legislature to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors, he would ask them to show their sincerity by carrying out the principles which they professed to have so much at heart. If this Legislature had power to confer upon municipalities prohibitory power then it must have power to act directly, and he urged the Government to take up this question of prohibition, which they professed to be in favor of in the Dominion. His object in introducing the order was that he might have an opportunity of bringing this question before the House.

MR. MOWAT'S REPLY.

Mr. Mowat said that the motion of the hon. member merely called for the production of certain papers, &c. he had gone much further than that. He had made a very warmly expressed attack for a gentleman who had not and did not announce himself as in favor of prohibition. He was tremendously anxious that the Reform party should adopt as part of its platform the prohibition of the sale of intoxicants, while he did not himself adopt that platform. He thinks it would be a good thing for his party, that if we were to adopt this as an essential part of our policy he would have a better chance than during the past twenty years, or than he is likely to have during the next twenty years. (Applause and laughter.) In the Russell case it was held that the decision rested with the Dominion only, and while it might be said that the Province had power to confer this legislation, it was impossible to decide until the matter came before the Privy Council again. The hon. member had stated that the Government and the Reform party had boasted throughout the country that they were prohibitionists. This was not so. Some were in favor of prohibition and some were not. They had never boasted of being a prohibition party, but at the same time they were anxious to promote temperance by such legislation as the public sentiment of the Province would warrant. The hon. member had charged that they had administered the liquor laws for the purpose of strengthening themselves with the country, and not for the purpose of promoting temperance. He denied this. The sole object which they had in view was the promotion of temperance, and this was the object contemplated by their legislation and administration. It was true that they might have gained some strength because of the temperance laws enacted, but no such object had been in view when they introduced those measures. On the contrary, these laws had been adopted with reluctance, because, while they were in thorough sympathy with the legislation, the measures were likely to weaken rather than strengthen them as a