

## BANFF NATIONAL PARK BILL.

REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE.

HON. MR. ABBOTT moved that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Bill (16) "An Act respecting the Banff National Park." He said:—I beg to offer, as I did not do so on the second reading, a few remarks on this Bill, although it seems full and clear and requires very little explanation. Hon. gentlemen are all aware of the fact that there is a very picturesque, and I might say very romantic tract of country surrounding the Banff Springs, which have already developed wonderful curative properties, and it is thought that this is a desirable place for the establishment of a national park. I do not know where this idea originated, but it has been spoken of and advocated by gentlemen of all political parties who have seen it and have recognized in it a territory which would be an advantage for the Dominion to set apart and protect in its present condition as far as possible for the recreation and amusement of our people. The climate is extraordinarily healthful. It is a change from both sides of the continent, and in addition to that the springs are perhaps second to none on the continent for their curative powers in certain diseases. For this reason there has been a park reserved there comprising an area of about ten miles wide by twenty-six miles long. It comprises the Banff Springs, a beautiful sheet of water called Devil Lake about 16 miles long, and the lower portion of the largest of the mountains in that neighborhood. In order to make a park of this tract of land, of course it becomes necessary to improve it to a certain extent. It requires a bridge over the Bow River, and another over a small river adjoining it to connect with the town plot on the opposite side of the Bow River. Roads have to be made and provisions are required for the regulation and government of this park, for protection against disorder and destruction (which I am sorry to say have been somewhat prevalent in some other parks south of the line) for the regulation of any trade carried on within its borders, and for the preserva-

tion of game and fish and other matters of interest. For this purpose it is provided in this Act that the Park shall be under the control of the Minister of the Interior, as in fact all the other public lands in the North-West are until disposed of. In that respect the Park is placed by this Section pretty much in the same position as the other public lands in the North-West. The Minister of the Interior regulates and controls it under rules and regulations which are to be approved by the Governor in Council for the purpose, and those rules and regulations are intended to provide for the care, preservation and management of the park and of the water courses, lakes, trees, shrubberies, minerals, natural curiosities and other matters therein contained; also for the control of the hot springs situated in the park and their management and utilization for purposes of bathing and sanitation and in every other respect. He is also authorized to lease for any term of years such parcels of the lands in the Park as the Minister may deem advisable in the public interest for the construction of buildings for ordinary habitation and purposes of trade, and for the accommodation of persons resorting to the park. As it has been ascertained that minerals exist in the Park these rules and regulations apply to minerals. In this respect the powers differ very little from the powers already granted to the Governor in Council by the Dominion Lands Act. But there is a limitation in sub-section D of the Bill which requires that no license or permit shall be made or issued for the working of mines or development of mining interests which will in any way impair the usefulness of the park for the purposes of public enjoyment and recreation. Rules also may be made for the protection and preservation of game and fish and of cattle allowed to pasture in the park. I propose before the bill is reported from Committee to move an amendment which I think is important. It is to provide that those rules and regulations which are to be made by the Governor in Council shall be subjected to the same rule as the rules and regulations made under the Dominion Lands Act—that they shall be laid on the table of Parliament within 15 days after the com-