

down with the stream and perish forever out of sight.

Mr. J. A. CURRIE (North Simcoe): I would not at this late hour and at this late date in the session presume to occupy any of the time of the House were it not that during the debate the other evening unfortunately some charges were made against me by the hon. member for North Cape Breton (Mr. McKenzie). Under the rules of the House it appeared impossible for me to make any explanation, however—

Mr. PROULX: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is not keeping to the subject under discussion. The question before the House is the Franchise Bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Rainville): I will take note of the point of order raised. The hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. Currie) has just said a few words, not sufficient for me to make up my mind.

Mr. CURRIE: The hon. gentleman should wait until I transgress the Rules of the House before he rises to a point of order. In this House we are supposed to have a certain amount of free speech. It is unnecessary for me to point out that according to the Rules of the House members of His Majesty's service are not supposed to have aspersions cast upon them. In the discussion of the Franchise, naturally hon. gentlemen get a little warmed up, and they say things to each other which, perhaps, may be a little aside from the question. During the course of the debate I addressed a remark to the hon. member for North Cape Breton. I asked him if he would permit me to put a question to him. Hon. members will remember that instead of extending to me the courtesy of allowing me to ask him an innocent question, or in any event a question pertaining to the measure before the House, he jumped up in a passion and said he would not be interrupted by me, and that I was the "chucker-out" of the Conservative party, or something to that effect. Of course, that is a term which is, to my mind, insulting, to a certain extent. However, that is altogether aside from the question. Naturally, when I got an opportunity the other evening, I returned in kind, and gave him a name. Now, unfortunately the Rules of the House do not permit of my explaining what a mud-gun is, or I would explain it. If I gave an explanation I would be immediately called to order. In reply, he cast some reflections upon my character as an

officer of His Majesty's forces, to which the ex-Minister of Militia (Sir Sam Hughes) answered yesterday. If there is one thing that this electoral law has to do with, it is with this war. It is well known that the intention of this Act is to permit of our having a war-time election. An electoral law is always intended to return a Parliament for a definite purpose. Parliament has a perfect right under the Constitution to make its own electoral laws. The Constitu-

tion is society at rest; the electoral law, such as we have now before us, is society in action, the state in action, and for that reason this electoral law is intended to give the people of this country an opportunity of casting their votes and having their say, as to whether the men at the front are going to be supported or not.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Some of the people.

Mr. CURRIE: That is the issue. Three or four weeks before the next election, there will be only that one issue before the people of this country. We must submerge all questions of economics for the moment. I confess that as a hide bound protectionist I have had to surrender all my tenets in the presence of the common danger, and many a Liberal has had to surrender his theories of free trade in presence of the common danger. For that reason, when an hon. member rises in his place in this House and casts reflections upon a member of the House who is debating this Bill, it comes within the purview of these rules. The hon. member for North Cape Breton stated that I was up to my neck in mud in a dugout whilst my men were fighting. There are thousands of soldiers in the dugouts in Flanders to-night. The dugouts in my day were not what they are now, concrete bombproof dugouts. The testimony of my men in regard to my conduct in the war is ample, so far as I am personally concerned. That testimony speaks for itself. I never was in a dugout during a battle, unless it was to carry a wounded man into some of the little shelters that were then termed dugouts. Many of the poor men that I carried into those dugouts during the battle were afterwards bayoneted by the Germans, to whose relatives my hon. friends opposite are so anxious to give the vote. They will never come forward to give testimony as to what I did on that occasion. I will meet them perhaps; I am assured that I will meet them, in the future; but in this world they can never give testimony