

give a verdict, whether just or whether right or wrong, in favour of the Crown. I say unhesitatingly that the day has gone by, and it should go by, in this country, where any officer of the Crown can stand up, as if he were at another bloody assizes and cause every juror that is called to stand aside until he can get men who will give him a verdict, whether it is right or wrong. For that reason I approve of this Bill and am going to support it. It is a terrible thing to think a man for very little cause can be placed on trial for a political purpose, and virtually his honour and everything he has in the world jeopardized. Jurymen after jurymen is brought forward, and without the slightest reason being given the Crown says, "Stand that man aside." Why? Because the man might give a straight and honest verdict. If the Crown has an objection against a man acting as a juror, the Crown counsel should be prepared to stand up and say, "This man is a Tory and might not give a straight verdict." He should come out openly and say so. After a juror has been put in the box, the Crown can question him and say, "Have you made up your mind on this case?" That is when the Crown challenges for cause. And the Crown can question a man, and the Crown has lots of room left to see that a panel of jurors is established to try anybody in this country.

Supposing a man happened to be arrested at some future time for committing some act against the laws we have passed in this House, would it be fair to this man, for instance, if he were against conscription, that he should be placed on trial and that nobody should be allowed to sit on a jury unless the Crown was sure that he was in favour of conscription, and that he would soak that man. I say that this law is absolutely necessary. I will refer to my own experience, in my own election. Naturally when you go up against a man in a fight he takes his favourite weapon, the one he has been accustomed to fight with. If you are fighting with a man who has been digging ditches, he will take a shovel or a pickaxe, and when you fight a lawyer he starts out with a writ. In my election no less than fourteen bogus writs were fired at me, because I was running against a lawyer. None of them went to trial. This weapon has been used politically against people in Manitoba and elsewhere, and unjustly in many cases. It is time a curb was put on those bloody political assizes, and the limit of the Crown's jurisdiction should be settled by the people of this coun-

[Mr. Currie.]

try and by this House. For that reason, I am in favour of this Bill and will fight for it, and I trust this House, and those who may have certain cases in their minds as possibilities, will see that there is a limit placed on the panel, so that the Crown cannot call three or four hundred jurors and tell them to stand aside, till they are sure they cannot get a man who has no idea in his head, except to soak the prisoner. I am in favour of the Bill, and I do not think there is any argument against it.

Mr. C. A. WILSON: I desire to say—

Mr. CURRIE: The hon. gentleman has already exhausted his right to speak on this measure.

Mr. C. A. WILSON: I will rise to a point of order and will discuss the point of order. This is what happened when you Mr. Speaker, were not in the Chair. I rose to ask a question—however, I see the minister agrees that I am in order, and I will proceed.

Mr. CURRIE: I have no objection.

Mr. BUREAU: Do not speak by the hon. gentleman's grace.

Mr. C. A. WILSON: No, I am speaking as a matter of right. The question involved in this Bill is a most serious one. It is against the law of the land, as I find it in the Criminal Code and in the Revised Statutes of Quebec especially, with which I am more familiar. It is the same principle all over the country, in every province. My hon. friend from North Simcoe is not in accord with what the law says as to the question of jurisprudence.

Under section 3,437 of the revised statutes of the province of Quebec it is provided that except in the districts of Quebec and Montreal the panel shall consist of forty jurors, speaking either one or both languages; there is no distinction between the two. In the cities of Quebec and Montreal, sixty jurors are empannelled; I mean, outside of the twelve grand jurors. But in those two cities thirty jurors must be familiar with the French language and thirty with the English language. That is the reason the number has been raised from forty in all districts to sixty in those two districts, Quebec and Montreal. I have acted on both sides for a good many years and I know the position in which a Crown prosecutor is often placed. In the district of Three Rivers I acted as Crown prosecutor, specially appointed, in connection with two very noted murder cases, in both of which the verdict was quashed by the Court of