

EXTRAORDINARY PARLIAMENTARY OBSTRUCTION.

It might reasonably be supposed that an arrangement of this character, covering the tariff concessions in many natural products which have been so long sought, and yet leaving Canada absolutely free as to her future action, free to repeal the legislation if after a short trial it proved unsatisfactory, would have been welcomed by all parties. Unfortunately, this did not prove to be the case. The Opposition in Parliament, not content with that full and fair discussion of the subject for which the Government gave the most ample opportunity, soon made it clear that they were determined to obstruct the enactment of the measure necessary to confirm the agreement. We have good reason to believe that if a vote had been reached the measure would have been approved, not only by a Liberal majority, but also by some of the members on the Opposition side. But the Opposition leaders apparently shrank from allowing their followers to go on record and endeavored by every possible device of obstruction to prevent the determination of the question in the usual Parliamentary way. The agreement was submitted to the House of Commons on the 26th of January. In May the House adjourned for a few weeks to enable members to attend the Coronation of His Majesty. On the resuming of the Session on the 18th of July the obstruction was renewed. As often as the motion was made to advance the reciprocity resolutions, Opposition Members rose and continued to talk, not, usually, on reciprocity, but more frequently on some matter designed to divert attention from that question. In this way a few men were able, under the present rules of the House, to obstruct the whole business of Parliament.

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