

It can be said of them, as has been said of the maxims of civil law which have come to us from the Roman jurists, and which are the basis of the civil law of most of the nations of Europe, that they are reason crystallized into writing. The maxims of the civil law have been applied to the relations of the people in daily life, and the maxims of our parliamentary procedure have been accepted as the duties of the transaction of business in all deliberative assemblies.

Sir, these rules are to be swept away, they are to be ridden over rough shod; they are to be put aside, and we are to have the gag substituted for them. And what is the pretence? The pretence is that there has been obstruction in the House. Sir, if obstruction be a fault, if obstruction be an offence, I call upon the man on that side of the House who is without guilt to cast the first stone. I read in some Conservative newspapers that obstruction was the murderer of parliamentary government. I do not here now challenge the statement; but if obstruction be the murderer of parliamentary government, the murderers are on that side of the House, and not on this. My right hon. friend has experience, and he will experience still more, that as you sow, so shall you reap; and Sir, it does not lie in his mouth or in the mouth of his followers to say that there has been obstruction in this House by the parliamentary minority.

The Effect of Closure.

My right hon. friend, as usual, has attempted to justify his course by opinions of Liberal newspapers and Liberal members of Parliament. True it is that in the party to which I belong there are men who were in favour of closure, just as in the party of my right hon. friend there are men who were opposed to closure. My right hon. friend has quoted with great relish the opinions of the *Toronto Globe* and the *Manitoba Free Press*. I do not observe that he has quoted the opinion of the *Ottawa Citizen*. If he had prolonged his investigations and pursued them in the press of his own friends, he would have found something which perhaps would have induced him to act differently, because in the *Citizen* of to-day I find in the course of an article of one column in length directed against closure, these words:

'The closure will not better matters in the least, it will pass the Bill, but a Bill which will represent \$35,000,000 plus bitterness, plus protest, plus division'.

It is true that in these matters there may be divided opinions. My right hon. friend has quoted the opinions of some friends of myself. But, Sir, I also have the honour to belong to the great Liberal party of Canada. I have occupied a position of some importance in it; nay, I may say that for twenty years and more I have been entrusted with its chief command. During the fifteen years I was in office it sometimes happened that friends came to me and told me that I was not doing justice to myself or to the party, but that I should impose closure, as had been done in many other parliaments. Sir, I am a Liberal of the old school; I have been brought up in the school of Fox and of the old leaders of the Liberal party; and I could not bring myself to the point of depriving a