

## GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Consideration of the motion of Mr. D. L. Redman (Calgary East), for an Address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the Session, resumed from Monday, March 17.

Mr. JOHN A. CURRIE (North Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening when the House so kindly granted my request for adjournment, I stated that it was my intention to-day to deal with the question of the tariff and the economic condition of this country. The great war in which our soldiers have been engaged is over, and this country like every other country, is now confronted with the weighty problem of reconstruction. Very few people, when they speak of reorganization and reconstruction, realize the vital importance of those matters to Canada. Such a war as this was an unheard of thing before. In the whole history of the world, nothing like it had ever before occurred. It has swept away old traditions. It has destroyed old institutions, and many preconceived notions. In fact, all the old ideas of public men and of the people generally have undergone a change. This was brought very strongly to my mind the other day as I listened to the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding), discussing, in the same old tone, in the same old words, old policies and old matters that do not count at all to-day amidst the vital issues that confront us. His speech reminded me very much of J. M. Barrie's play "the Mollusc," which I had the pleasure of seeing not long ago. As J. M. Barrie's plays always contain a moral, this play contained a moral for the politicians as well as for others. According to the play, a mollusc is a shell-fish that attaches itself to a rock or some other object and that never moves. When I heard the hon. gentleman quoting from the speech of President Wilson about the waves and the tides moving on and sweeping things before them, the idea of the mollusc naturally occurred to me. As a mollusc attaches itself to a rock and never moves from that spot, so, many public men holding certain views, are determined to stick to them; never to change their policies; to carry on consistently forever with the same old politics, living entirely in the past. When I heard him speaking of free trade, and also my good old friend from Red Deer (Mr. Michael Clark), whom I love to listen to, speaking

about free trade, at this present moment, knowing the actual condition of the economic affairs of the world, the idea of the mollusc instinctively occurred to me, and I realize that no wave, even of war, pestilence and famine, will move those people one inch from the same old ideas.

Listening to these speeches, one would think for the moment that the whole world had stood still during the war and was starting on from 1914 as if nothing had occurred in the meantime. What are the facts confronting the people of this country? The whole world is, at the present time, engaged, not in a war of arms, but in an economic war. We find that England has slammed the door shut with embargoes on every country; that the United States has closed its doors and embargoed everything; that France has embargoed the foodstuffs and manufactures of the whole world. In fact, there is, at the present moment, no country discussing or even mentioning the words "free trade" except this country of Canada. These are facts. England will never go back to the former state of affairs, so Lloyd George says. England, at the present time, is in exactly the same position as she was in the time of Cromwell. She has Navigation Laws as she had then and Protection as she had then, and that Protection is even more effective now. You cannot get a dollar's worth of your manufactured goods into England, and England has decided that the manufacturers of Germany, the United States, or any other country, can no longer dump their goods into England to the detriment and injury of the English workingman. Not only is that the condition, but the agricultural situation has entirely changed. We listened with a great deal of pleasure to the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. Maharg) who, last evening, gave the story of the West—and a very fine story it was. If I did not know the actual conditions I should be very much inclined to agree with his view.

Let us first consider the conditions confronting the agriculturists of this country, and then see whether free trade (or in other words economic destruction) is going to assist them. A significant statement was made in this House a day or so ago by the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Meighen). He is fully aware of the principle of cabinet responsibility, and therefore his statement that he stood for the total abolition of the tariff on agricultural implements, as he did in 1908-1909, was very significant. The manufacturers and working men of the