

means the repudiation of that famous creed which was presented to us in such an attractive form. Therein lies its danger. Ever since the woman looked upon the forbidden fruit and saw that it was pleasant to the eye, evil has been most insidious when presented in a form that was not outwardly repulsive. Sometimes it has worn the garb of innocence; indeed sometimes it was seemingly good. We recognize this in our English speech; we refer to the wolf in sheep's clothing; we speak of Satan arrayed as an angel of light. So this creed, containing as it does many beautiful expressions, nevertheless contains the germ of that disease which has been afflicting the world, that extreme nationalism which has brought our modern civilization to the very brink of the precipice.

This is not the only confession of past error we have had since the opening of this session; we had another from the Prime Minister. When the hon. member for Antigonish-Guysborough (Mr. Duff) moved his resolution advocating reciprocity with the United States we were completely astonished to hear the Prime Minister raise his voice in favour of that suggestion. There is no question of what his attitude has been in the past, but when he changes his faith I think he should take his supporters into his confidence so they will not make contrary statements. For example, it would have been well if the right hon. gentleman had taken the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Beaubien) into his confidence before that hon. gentleman issued this long letter to his constituents, in which he said:

Canada may as well make up her mind that she cannot hope for anything like dependable trade arrangements with the United States. That country, whether it is a Republican or a Democratic administration, and no matter what the political complexion of congress, doesn't propose to buy anything from Canada that it can help; and any arrangements that it can make with Canada of a contrary nature will be a temporary arrangement, subject to withdrawal at congressional caprice.

That is just one paragraph from this letter; it is not at all in agreement with the statement made in this house by the Prime Minister, in the course of which he said that he now favours a reciprocity with the United States. There is no question that in the past the Prime Minister did commit himself to the policy of no trade with the United States except when we could not deal within our own country. Evidently the right hon. gentleman has seen the error of his ways; he has seen the complete breakdown of that policy of extreme nationalism which has been the curse of modern times. It would be more honest if he would candidly admit his error and not try to give the country the im-

[Mr. Brown.]

pression that it was not the principle of reciprocity that he opposed but the form in which it was presented to the people. That is what he tried to tell us in the house when the matter was before us a few weeks ago. Oh no; he did not seem to be opposed to reciprocity, but he did not like the idea of a loose agreement that could be cancelled in a very short time.

I know it is not permissible for me to quote from a former debate in the same session, but we all remember that speech and we remember the reason he gave for his having opposed reciprocity back in 1911. But that was not the attitude taken by the Conservative party at that time. They opposed reciprocity because they thought they saw in that agreement our entire separation from the British Empire. One of the chief Conservative leaders at that time was the late Sir George Foster, and I want to read the closing words of his speech, delivered in the House of Commons on February 14, 1911, so that the house may see the reasons he gave for opposing the reciprocity pact, and also just to what extent his reasons agreed with what the Prime Minister told us a few days ago. Let me quote:

This proposal cuts square across that national ideal, challenges it at every point, will endanger it undoubtedly, may destroy it entirely. Should we not think before we enter into it? Ninety-three millions to the south of us mean it in the way of absorption and hegemony and mean it in no other way, hence these gifts. This proposal cuts our country into sections and at every section bleeds the life blood from it. The well-filled arteries of interprovincial trade will be drained until the whole system grows anaemic and flabby. Do not treat it lightly. The sustained pressure of ninety-three millions to eight millions, the far-reaching effect of business affiliation, the close proximity and constant efflux and influx, the seductions of commercialism, the constant intercourse of business, social and official life, will inevitably weaken the ties of empire and wean the thoughts of our newer generations, if not of ourselves, towards the predominant power, and create new attachments, until like Samson we would arise and would shake ourselves and find that our strength is gone.

I utter the most solemn words I have ever uttered in my life, and I believe them to the very bottom of my heart, that there is danger, and deep danger ahead. This path entered upon leads us away from home to a strange country. I pray, sir, that the full meaning of this first step may sink into the hearts of members of parliament and into the hearts of the people of this country until there shall burst forth a protest of such strength that the steps contemplated will be recalled to the old paths, leading east and west, in and out amongst our own people, converging on the great metropolis of the mother land, and which we may follow without uncertainty and without menace to our national existence.

Mr. CANTLEY: Good stuff.