

benches—but that there is throughout the entire country amongst thinking men engaged in business, (not only in manufacturing business but in agricultural pursuits as well) a great desire at the present moment to know what is in reality the preponderant element of that party which as the right hon. gentleman says himself is divided upon a question of vital moment in this country—and, whether we shall have in reality a policy of Canada for the Canadians, or whether this government is going to pursue a course which the right hon. gentleman sums up when he said: That the part of government consists in reconciling and in balancing these divided opinions which he himself admits exists in the ranks of his own party.

On this side of the House there is no difficulty of that kind. I will advert in a moment to this statement of policy, which is consistent throughout—frank and outspoken, and which won the praises, not only of the followers of my hon. friend at my right, the leader of the opposition, but the praises in many instances of numbers of the right hon. gentleman's own followers. The right hon. gentleman states that there are divergent views within his own party in respect to that most important principle of protection. He did not require to make that statement for us to know that that divergence exists, and it has produced within the ranks of my right hon. friend's own party divisions far deeper and far greater than any which my right hon. friend is able to point out on this side of the House. It is not with equal justice that my right hon. friend treats those who are in favour of a strong national policy, and those who on the contrary believe, as some hon. gentlemen who sit on the opposition benches believe, that the present tendency ought to be in favour of a lower tariff, and of admitting, as we claim the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite admits, the great competitors of our own country to a privileged position in our own markets. Mr. Speaker, we have had by-elections, and, speaking for myself, our party has not been as successful in my own province as I would have liked; but we have had the spectacle in the province of Quebec, which I have no doubt has been repeated elsewhere, which the right hon. gentleman claimed with pride as one of the great qualities of the party which he leads. In the electoral district of Argenteuil we had the members of the present cabinet and all their supporters speaking strongly in favour of a reduced tariff. I have not here with me, but I am prepared to lay on the Table of this House the campaign speech of my friend Mr. Weir who led the ministerial forces in the electoral district of Argenteuil; and what did he say in that pamphlet which was spread broadcast throughout the constituency? He stated that the party led by my right hon. friend was a party who remained faithful even to-day to the policy

enunciated by my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), and he quoted the minister's own words, which consisted in a repudiation of every element of protection, and in a condemnation of that policy as being a policy of robbery and scoundrelism. During the very time that campaign was being waged, we had the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Hon. Mr. Préfontaine), in the division of Maisonneuve, a great industrial division of the city of Montreal, posing before the electorate as a man who would not adhere to any other policy than the policy of protection, and who was prepared at any moment, upon sufficient cause being shown him, to raise the tariff, and who went around begging the names of the manufacturers of the city of Montreal, imploring them to sign his requisition paper, in order, as he said, to show to the manufacturing people and to the workmen of that important district, that the government were pledged to the protection of their interests, and going so far, as I am informed, as to write letters, pledging the government in certain cases to an increase in the tariff, in order to secure the support of those important elements of our population. Shortly afterwards, if not at the same time, down in the electoral district of Yarmouth, we had the Minister of Finance upholding the policy of a lower tariff, of a tariff for revenue only; and at a great banquet given to celebrate the victory of the free-trade candidate, my hon. friend the member for Guysboro' (Mr. Fraser) reproved the Minister of Marine and Fisheries and condemned the system pursued in the province of Quebec of pandering to the taste of those who wanted to build up once more the national policy, and stated that the result obtained in Yarmouth ought to encourage the party to which he belonged to fly frankly and boldly the colours of a lower tariff and even of a revenue tariff. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that we who sit on this side of the House should point out the inconsistencies of hon. gentlemen opposite, as it is our duty to do; and we shall endeavour to perform that duty in such a way as to give satisfaction. And I will say to the right hon. gentleman that if the improvement in the condition of his health depends on us, we will favour it in every way possible, and we will trust that the example which I hope we shall set patriotically, will be followed by his own friends, and that they will contribute, as we desire to do, to the complete restoration of his health.

But, Sir, it was said by the right hon. gentleman that divisions have existed in past cabinets. It may be so; but I took note of what the right hon. gentleman further said, that those divisions manifested themselves in the council chamber, where, as Lord Melbourne aptly said on a celebrated occasion, they should manifest themselves. But what of the divisions purport-