

open question! [Cheers, and cries of "Shame! Shame!"]

Then as to the Clergy Reserve question, he would ask, had the public no opinion on that question? did the people of the province deem it a matter of little or no moment whether these reserves were vested in the ecclesiastical corporation or not? [cries of they did! they did! ]—he [Mr. Baldwin] well knew that they did, and that no one acquainted with the state of public opinion in Upper Canada but was well aware that a large, an immense majority of the people of the country were opposed to any such investment [cheers, and cries of they are! they are! ], and yet, this too, was left an open question by a ministry claiming to possess the confidence of the country. Upon this vitally important question, the administration presented a beautiful equilibrium of opinion. [Cheers and laughter.] There was Mr. Atty. Gen. Draper on the one side, and that there might be no jealousy as respects official rank, Mr. Atty. Gen. Smith on the other [laughter]. Mr. Sol. Gen. Sherwood, since replaced by Mr. Sol. Gen. Cameron, on the one side, and Mr. Sol. Gen. Taschereau on the other, Mr. Inspector Gen. Cayley on the one side, and Mr. Sec. Daly on the other [laughter], and lastly, Mr. Commissioner Robinson on the one side, and Mr. Commissioner Papineau on the other. Mr. Viger having, he presumed, retired that the Ministerial Phaënx in the Commons might not be disturbed by an odd number to interfere with the exactness of its equilibration. [Renewed laughter.] These two great questions had been thus made what were called open questions, that is, questions upon which the ministry, as a ministry, have no opinion. Now he could well understand how, as questions were growing upon public attention and before the public mind had become fixed upon them, it might happen—nay, would necessarily happen—that a government could not be formed without having such questions in the position alluded to. The Slave Trade, Catholic Emancipation, and other great questions, had for a long time occupied that position in the parent state. But such was not the position of the two great provincial questions to which he had alluded. Upon them public opinion had long been fixed, and it was trifling with their most sacred obligations to the public, whose servants they were, in any ministry to treat them in the manner that the present administration had done. [Great cheering.]

He had thus directed their attention to the history of the past, while dwelling upon the events of the present, and pointing to the prospects of the future, and, had, he trusted, convinced them that those prospects were, thus far, as fair, as under any circumstances could have been expected. But before concluding, he must remind them that their prospects may all be blasted if they, the people, remained inactive, or ever confident, or if they suffered those miserable divisions as to the choice of candidates which had cost them five constituencies at the last election, and would lead to their certain defeat if suffered to prevail at the ensuing one. *Union is strength*, was a truth of which their opponents always showed themselves fully sensible, and never failed to act upon—a particular in which their conduct was worthy of the most careful imitation. [Cheers.] It mattered not to them who the candidate of their party was, all rallied in his support, and the consequence frequently was, that they carried constituencies in which the Reformers had an undoubted majority of the voters. If they, the Reformers, were desirous of sustaining their reputation—if they were desirous of proving that they were deserving of the name of a *great party*, their divisions must be put an end to. [Cheers.] He, for his part, was willing to do his duty, and sustain the battle so long as there remained a reasonable prospect of doing so with advantage to the public interest, and credit to themselves—[cheers.] But this could not be done by a disunited, disjointed body, in which the great interests of the whole were sacrificed to local or individual jealousies, and if such were permitted to spread their baneful influence, his friends had no right to expect him to continue the political contest. Now was the time to avoid these difficulties by early fixing on the candidates to be run for the different counties and ridings. It was true there was no particular reason to look for an immediate dissolution, but affairs were exactly in that position, and the ministry held office by exactly that precarious tenure, that while an election might not take place till the expiration of the term for which the present parliament was elected, on the other hand it might be on them before they were aware of it; and at all events it was their duty to themselves, and to the great principles which they had so long and so successfully advocated, to be prepared for the contest. [Repeated cheers.] His advice then was to them, and to all the