

quality than we did in quantity. If this huge exodus was due to causes we could not have controlled, it was a very grave misfortune. If it was due to negligence or misconduct on the part of those at the head of affairs, no words are strong enough to condemn their conduct.

REPORTER. You say we lost in quality by immigration?

SIR RICHARD. That was perhaps the worst feature of all. The people we lost—and remember that the drain was continuous during most of those thirty years—were the very choicest part of our population. They were very largely men in the very prime of life, and contained an immense percentage of the most intelligent and adventurous of our people. There is every reason to believe that between 1866 and 1896 one-third at least, and very likely more than one-third, of the whole male adult population of Canada between the ages of twenty and forty found their way to the United States. This sort of drain does much more than merely keep the number of the people down. It saps the vitality of the whole nation. You cannot part with so large a proportion of the boldest and the best of your people without sensibly lowering the standard of the whole. So it was in Ireland for centuries, as Mr. Lecky and others have pointed out. So it was with us, and so it must be everywhere.

REPORTER. Was it not inevitable in the relative position of Canada and of the United States that something of this kind should have taken place?

SIR RICHARD. There was a risk, and for that very reason every effort of Canadian statesmen should have been put forth to induce these men to remain with us. But I must postpone that question for the moment.

REPORTER. What occurred at the general election of 1872?

SIR RICHARD. Sir John's forecast was pretty well verified. He lost considerably in Quebec and he was badly beaten in Ontario, but he managed to maintain himself for a time by the aid of the votes he had dishonestly acquired in Manitoba and British Columbia. Both of these were