

SIR RICHARD. In this way. Mr. Mackenzie at that time was but little known outside of Ontario, and a good many persons on both sides thought that he would prove quite unable to cope with Sir John A. Macdonald as leader of the House, in which, as subsequent events showed, they were very much mistaken. Also, they were aware that Mr. Mackenzie could not depend on a majority in the House as it then stood, and they expected that, as it had been so very recently elected, he would nevertheless hesitate about dissolving it and going to the country till he had held at least one more session. In such case they had great faith in Sir John's power of laying traps for his opponents, and, I presume, in the chapter of accidents generally. Under ordinary conditions it was not unlikely that their expectations would have been realised. At any rate I know that many of them were very disagreeably surprised when the dissolution took place.

REPORTER. Pardon me, Sir Richard, but what exactly did Mr. Huntingdon charge Sir John Macdonald with?

SIR RICHARD. In two words he accused Sir John of having sold the charter for constructing the Canadian Pacific Railroad for a large sum of money to be used for election purposes, and he demanded a committee to investigate the charges. As I mentioned above, Sir John refused in the first instance, but shortly after proposed a committee himself. This consisted of five members and was chosen by the House directly.

REPORTER. Was not this a rather unusual proceeding?

SIR RICHARD. Yes. I can only recollect its being done in this single instance. Each member has one vote and casts it for whomsoever he pleases. Practically the result is much the same as if the parties forming the committee were chosen in the usual way by the leaders of the House on one side and the leaders of the opposition on the other. But as in this case it was the leader of the House himself who was impeached, it was probably felt that it would be more decorous to have the committee named by the House.