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CANADA'S LOSS OF POPULATION BETWEEN 1866-1896.

REPORTER. Talking of the union with British Columbia and the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, no doubt Sir John Macdonald and his Cabinet took risks, but was not all well that ends well?

SIR RICHARD. Unfortunately it did not by any means end well. But you have touched on one of the great difficulties which attend any attempt to make the public of to-day understand the real situation thirty or forty years ago. To-day Canada is prosperous. The C. P. R. itself is now a great success. Canada at large occupies a very influential, if not even a commanding, position in the Empire. But in 1896 Canada was not prosperous. The fortunes of the C. P. R. were far from being assured. There was no immigration of any consequence to the North-West, and Canada was very apt to be ignored, if not actually slighted, when any matters affecting her interests were in question. The plain if disagreeable truth is that from 1866 to 1896, a period of full thirty years, Canada as a whole, with one or two brief interludes, retrograded in every way, physically, morally and materially. No country in her position ever misused her opportunities or committed more serious blunders than Canada in the period I have referred to.

REPORTER. You amaze me. I thought Canada had done fairly well all along from Confederation downwards.

SIR RICHARD. Take three simple facts. As to the C. P. R., their stock, which is now near \$300 per share, was selling at \$50 in 1896. In other words, the whole common stock of the C. P. R. was worth at current market price thirty-two millions in 1896. It is now worth over five hundred millions. The total number of homestead entries in the North-West was in that year 1,300, as