

ant of what had been done by their leaders. Since his re-election as leader, they became just as guilty as he was and equally responsible for the steady degradation of the standard of public morality which set in then and which I fear is not likely to be arrested for many a year to come.

REPORTER. You put the case strongly.

SIR RICHARD. Not one whit more strongly than the facts warrant. I am neither Puritan nor Pharisee, but there are certain offences which, if proven, should banish the offender from public life for ever, and Sir John's was one of them. Consider what selling the charter of the Canadian Pacific Railway to Sir Hugh Allan for funds to carry on an election really meant. Here was a gigantic work likely to tax the then resources of Canada to the very uttermost and on the speedy and proper construction of which the whole future of Canada might very well come to depend, and the man who of all others was bound by his oath of office and by every possible consideration of honour and good faith to see that this great work was well and properly carried out, deliberately put it out of his own power, for a consideration, to secure that the most ordinary safeguards should be taken to protect the interests of the public, whose guardian and trustee he was. For one thing, there is not and never can be the shadow of a doubt, that the minister who allows a contractor to finance him through a general election becomes that contractor's paid servant, if not for the rest of his days, at any rate till the completion of that particular work, and further that he is in no position to protest against such work being scamped or to insist on the performance of any portion of such contract which the contractor may see fit to disregard. As a matter of fact, our one chance in 1872 was to utilize the North-West in such fashion as to prevent the tremendous exodus which subsequently took place. A wise land and railway policy might have done this. Sir John's conduct made this impossible, and on his head more than on that of any other must rest the loss of two millions of people