

any part in the election outside of my own riding. Mr. Blake was absent in England till the very end of the contest. But I remember being surprised at the time to see how comparatively easily Sir John was let down for an act which I thought then, and think still, was as gross an outrage as was ever perpetrated. The fact was, however, that his conduct in the matter of Riel and one or two other affairs of less moment attracted most attention in Ontario, and it is rare for the public in a general election to concern itself with more than one or two issues. More was said, and perhaps naturally, about the folly of engaging to build a road to the Pacific, over three thousand miles of unsurveyed country, than about the violation of constitutional principle in giving one man in British Columbia as much voice in controlling legislation as ten men in any of the older provinces. As for the Conservatives proper they rather chuckled over this instance of Sir John's smartness in circumventing the Grits, though they would not openly defend the proceeding. I think, too, the actual facts were not generally known in the election of 1872. The census had only been taken the year before and, though the numbers in the several provinces had been declared, it certainly was not generally known that there were only ten thousand whites in British Columbia and that the balance were Indians. Moreover, it is probable that not one man in a hundred, perhaps not one man in a thousand, outside old and experienced politicians, will ever understand how greatly the introduction of even eight or ten illegitimate votes into an assembly of two hundred may affect the entire result. In this case, as I have shown above, Sir John Macdonald's genuine supporters, outside of Manitoba and British Columbia, were under one hundred. His declared opponents mustered some eighty votes, and there were at least a dozen independents on whom he could not pretend to rely in an emergency. His political life, therefore, may be said to have depended on the votes he had fraudulently manufactured in Manitoba and British Columbia.