

mean; the best, the true, the sole policy which can obtain in our country.

"Sprung from a vanquished people, yet a people who, in their turn had themselves made the conquest of Liberty, his dream was to unite the two races on the only rational basis; equality of rights, mutual respect and tolerance. His political vision moved to seal anew the pact entered into by Lafontaine and Baldwin in days gone by and so bring fresh strength to the work of the Fathers of Confederation.

"Was this majestic vision too ambitious? History, that impartial judge of men and events, will say whether or not he brought it to realization, but what we of his time may uphold from this moment is his untiring perseverance, his steadfast courage, his invincible faith in the ideal he set out to attain from the very start of his career. However, he was too well versed in psychology not to realize the difficulties which beset his path.

"In 1887, hardly a year after that historical debate when, at one flight, he had risen to the greatest heights of parliamentary eloquence, when the English speaking press had acclaimed him as the 'silver-tongued orator,' the Liberal party, helpless after the retirement of Edward Blake, was casting about for a leader. The French Liberals formed a minority in this party, as they formed a minority in the country. Let it be said to the honour of the English Liberals, it was Edward Blake, it was Sir Richard Cartwright, it was David Mills, who selected the leader, and the unanimous choice fell upon Wilfrid Laurier. What was the answer of the young member for Quebec East? Ah, Mr. Speaker, our great countryman, despite his marvellous endowments, did not covet the honour offered him. He well knew the burden he was assuming; already he could catch a glimpse of the obstacles which lay in wait for him, and the answer of this man who, beneath a stolid exterior hid very deep emotions, his answer was a sob.

"Thus, unable to escape the earnest entreaties of his English-speaking friends, he undertook to lead the Liberal party, determined to steer the ship of state towards progress and liberty, to bind together, by conciliation in both word and deed, the heterogeneous elements which