

patriotic channels, and it has been winked at throughout Canada as a whole. Men in public life have disliked to express freely their views of the inevitable consequences for fear of offending French-Canadians as a class.

One cannot really blame the young men of French Canada for their enthusiasm in this cause, which is really a revival of the political doctrines of Papineau. They have been misled by false teachers and have never had the opportunity, or even been permitted in their environment, to know the truth as it is, and to study Canadian history in the light of fact.

The French-Canadians have inherited many of their characteristics from their Normandy, Anjou, Maine and Poitou French ancestors. They are naturally susceptible to the influences of poetry and eloquence. The educated young French-Canadian is idealistic and imaginative. He has, therefore, many of the qualities of mind and heart that made the Republic of France.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier is intellectually too large and too well developed in statescraft to believe in the possibility of a French-Canadian republic on the banks of the St. Lawrence. It is true that as a young man, and the flights of fancy of the young man are not to be held up against him in mature years, he was opposed to Confederation. He wrote and spoke vigorously in opposition to it. In this attitude he declared himself a follower of Papineau.

By a strange chain of circumstances he became the Premier of the Confederation of which he was so earnestly skeptical and the principles of which he so vehemently denounced. He became the hero of his race and in a large sense the pride of all our people.

Before, however, he became the leader of the Liberal party, and not yet a conspicuous Canadian politician, he espoused the cause of Louis Riel, whom he refused to regard as a rebel, without question, from racial reasons. Years later, speaking of the Riel rebellion, Sir Wilfrid averred that