

The page is framed by a wide, ornate border of black and white floral and foliate patterns. The patterns include large flowers, leaves, and scrolling vines, creating a decorative frame around the central text.

# The Democracy of Canada

*By Sir Wilfrid Laurier*

¶ I live myself in this land as an example of the breadth of British institutions. It is an illustration of that thing upon which the British system is based. I am not of English blood. My ancestors were of that great race—the French. Yet I am acknowledged as the leader of the Parliament of Canada, irrespective of the blood in my veins. Twenty-two years ago I took the leadership of the Liberal party. My friends came to me after Mr. Blake's retirement and offered me the leadership. I hesitated. They insisted, and I still hesitated. I told them that I thought it was not fitting that I, coming from the race of the minority, should accept it. In reply they told me that the Liberal party knew neither creed nor race. They said "Whoever is worthy of our land is worthy of our leadership," and I accepted.

¶ The race is open to all. Any man may come to this land who is willing to work. It matters not who his father was or from what land he came, or at what altar he bows, he can aspire to the best and highest this land has to offer. Whatever a Briton born can claim he may claim. British institutions know no difference whatever.

¶ The newcomer accepts the rights of this land and also the duties of Canadian citizenship, for where there are rights there are obligations.