

Colonies was as great as their geographical separation, and they desired a colonial policy framed accordingly. The Colonies seemed to be a millstone round England's neck; why not cut them loose? Lord John Russell spoke the mind of England very moderately when, upon the floor of the House of Commons, he said: "I anticipate, indeed, that some of the Colonies may so grow in population and wealth that some may say, 'Our strength is sufficient to enable us to be independent of England. The link is now become onerous to us. The time is come when we think we can, in amity and alliance with England, maintain our independence.' I do not think that time is yet approaching. But let us make them, as far as possible, fit to govern themselves; let us give them, as far as we can, the capacity of ruling their own affairs; let them increase in wealth and population, and, whatever may happen, we of this Empire shall have the consolation of saying that we have contributed to the happiness of the world."¹ This school of thought, with Goldwin Smith as its chief exponent, held

¹ Speech in House of Commons, February 8, 1850, quoted in Egerton and Grant, *Canadian Constitutional Development*.