

by laws made by themselves and live under a government derived from their own consent".* By the course of events the right of imposing taxation had come to be regarded as the supreme proof of a self-governing community, and until this right had been entrusted to them their status as freemen was not complete.

We turn to the other half of the English-speaking world. The creation of the American Commonwealth of set purpose and with a rigid constitution to which the legislative action of Congress must conform, is quite different from the rise and character of the present British Empire.

When the thirteen colonies revolted England was ruled at home by incompetent politicians and led in the field by feeble generals. It seemed as though she must do the wrong thing on every occasion. It was the Colonists not the British Government who were defending a true principle of genuine English political development.

The years that followed were among the darkest of England's history. Many thought that her day was near its close. Her greatest poet, Wordsworth, read the causes of her trouble in domestic conditions; and yet in the worst moments he never lost hope in her because he knew that the heart of

*Firth, *The Parallel between the English and American Civil Wars*, p. 6.