

legislature thus strong, and thus self-governing, would desire to abandon the connexion with Great Britain. On the contrary, I believe that the practical relief from undue interference, which would be the result of such a change, would strengthen the present bond of feelings and interests; and that the connexion would only become more durable and advantageous, by having more of equality, of freedom, and of local independence. But, at any rate, our first duty is to secure the well-being of our colonial countrymen; and if in the hidden decrees of that wisdom by which this world is ruled, it is written, that these countries are for ever to remain portions of the empire, we owe it to our honour to take good care that when they separate from us, they should not be the only countries on the American continent in which the Anglo-Saxon race shall be found unfit to govern itself.

I am, in truth, so far from believing that the increased power and weight that would be given to these colonies by union would endanger their connexion with the empire, that I look to it as the only means of fostering such a national feeling throughout them as would effectually counterbalance whatever tendencies may now exist towards separation. No large community of free and intelligent men will long feel contented with a political system which places them, because it places their country, in a position of inferiority to their neighbours.—The colonist of Great Britain is linked, it is true, to a mighty empire, and the glories of its history, the visible signs of its present power, and the civilization of its people, are calculated to raise and gratify his national pride. But he feels, also, that his link to that empire is one of remote dependence; he catches but passing and inadequate glimpses of its power and prosperity; he knows that in its government he and his own countrymen have no voice—While his neighbour on the other side of the frontier assumes importance, from the notion that his vote exercises some influence on the councils, and that he himself has some share in the onward progress of a mighty nation, the colonist feels the deadening influence of the narrow and subordinate community to which he belongs. In his own, and in the surrounding colonies, he finds petty objects occupying petty, stationary, and divided societies; and it is only when the chances of an uncertain and tardy communication bring intelligence of what has passed a month before on the other side of the Atlantic, that he is reminded of the empire with which he is connected. But the influence of the United States surrounds him on every side, and is forever present. It extends itself as population augments and intercourse increases; it penetrates every portion of the continent into which the restless spirit of American speculation impels the settler or the trader; it is felt in all the transactions of commerce, from the important operations of the monetary system down to the minor details of ordinary traffic: it stamps on all the habits and opinions of the surrounding countries the common characteristics of the thoughts, feelings and customs of the American people. Such is necessarily the influence which a great nation exercises on the small communities which surround it. Its thoughts and manners subjugate them, even when nominally independent of its authority. If we wish to prevent the extension of this influence, it can only be done by raising up for the North American colonist some nationality of his own, by elevating these small and unimportant communities into a society having some objects of a national importance, and by thus giving their inhabitants a country, which they will be unwilling to see absorbed even into one more powerful.

While I believe that the establishment of a comprehensive system of government, and of an effectual union between the different provinces, would produce this important effect on the general feelings of their inhabitants, I am inclined to attach very great importance to the influence which it would have in giving greater scope and satisfaction to the legitimate ambition of the most active and prominent persons to be found in them. As long as personal ambition is inherent in human nature, and as long as the morality of every free and civilized community encourages its aspirations, it is one great business of a wise government to provide for its legitimate developement. If, as it is commonly asserted, the disorders of these colonies have, in great measure, been fomented by the influence of designing and ambitious individuals, this evil will best be remedied by allowing such a scope for the desires of such men as shall direct their ambition into the legitimate chance of furthering, and not of thwarting, their government. By creating high prizes in a general and responsible government, we shall immediately afford the means of pacifying the turbulent ambitions, and of employing in worthy and noble occupations, the talents which now are only exerted to foment disorder. We must remove from these colonies the cause to which the sagacity of Adam Smith traced the alienation of the provinces which now form the United States; we must provide some scope for what he calls 'the importance of the leading men of the colony,' beyond what he forcibly terms the present 'petty prizes of the paltry raffle of colonial faction.' A general legislative