

importance that it should be effected at the earliest possible moment. It is well to remember that these Colonies are not in the safest of neighborhoods. Twice has the adjoining Republic made an attempt to seize upon them. More than once within the memory of many persons still living, it seemed not very improbable that their fate would be an amalgamation with the United States. At the present time, we can see nothing in the aspect of British American affairs which seems to indicate such a result. Still, as the Colonies are dissatisfied with their present insignificant rank, it is uncertain what the future may bring forth; and this appears more uncertain when we recollect that some of the greatest and most startling political changes which have taken place in the world, of late years, particularly in some other parts of the British Empire, have been wholly unexpected. But, although the Colonies, as a whole, seem not likely ever to amalgamate with the United States, that Republic may make serious encroachments upon their territory and do much damage to their interests, in the event of hostilities breaking out between it and Great Britain, whilst these Colonies remain still dis-united. A like result might be anticipated in the event of Britain being at war with any other great power which could muster a considerable force in North America; for the disconnected condition of the Colonies renders them incapable of doing very much in their own defence. It will not probably be contradicted that any such injury to them would be an injury to the Mother Country.

Many indications have been observable, of late years, of a disposition on the part of the Imperial Government to throw the North American Colonies, in a great measure, upon their own resources, for their own defence against foreign aggression. The principle of insisting upon their bearing a large portion, or even the whole, of the burden of their own defences, is one to which no one could reasonably object, provided that those Colonies were first placed in a position which would enable them to act with vigor and unanimity; otherwise it would impose upon them great hardship, if not injustice. Were they now to be thus thrown upon their own resources, they would be exposed to great dangers. Each Province would naturally measure only its own resources against those of the real, or suspected, enemy; and the calculation would have a disheartening effect, which would prevent that Province putting forth efforts even to the extent of its own ability. Such force as they could raise collectively would be of comparatively little service; for they would be under no single direction, and in all that related to the raising, equipment, and management of such a force, the various Colonies would, sometimes unintentionally, at other times through local jealousy, or sectional selfishness, be almost incessant-