

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 for ever 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 those 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.

It would provide
scope for elevating
the ambition of
aspiring men.

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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 development. 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 in the Colony, beyond what he forcibly terms the present "petty prizes of the paltry raffle of colonial faction." A general Legislative Union would elevate and gratify the hopes of able and aspiring men. They would no longer look with envy and wonder at the great arena of the bordering federation, but see the means of satisfying every legitimate ambition in the high offices of the Judicature and Executive Government of their own Union.

Reasons for union
in common foreign
relations.

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Nor would an union of the various Provinces be less advantageous in facilitating a co-operation for various common purposes, of which the want is now very seriously felt. There is hardly a department of the business of Government which does not require, or would not be better performed, by being carried on under the superintendence of a general Government; and when we consider the political and commercial interests that are common to these Provinces, it appears difficult to account for their having ever been divided into separate governments, since they have all been portions of the same Empire, subject to the same Crown, governed by nearly the same laws and constitutional customs, inhabited, with one exception, by the same race, contiguous and immediately adjacent to each other, and bounded along their whole frontier by the territories of the same powerful and rival State. It would appear that every motive that has induced the union of various Provinces into a single State, exists for the consolidation of these Colonies under a common legislature and executive. They have the same common relation to the mother country; the same relation to foreign nations. When one is at war, the others are at war; and the hostilities that are caused by an attack on one, must seriously compromise the welfare of the rest. Thus the dispute between Great Britain and the State of Maine, appears immediately to involve the interests of none of these Colonies, except New Brunswick or Lower Canada, to one of which the territory claimed by us must belong. But if a war were to commence on this ground, it is most probable that the American Government would select Upper Canada as the most vulnerable, or, at any rate, as the easiest point of attack. A dispute respecting the fisheries