

influenced the statesmen of British America to urge a union of these colonies, it is the necessity of possessing that means of combination which is found all powerful in time of war to repel aggression.

An analogy may be drawn between the present position of British America and that of the Thirteen Colonies a little over a century ago. The old colonists then looked with suspicion and dread upon France just as we do now upon the Republic on our borders. It was a matter of notoriety during the years that followed the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle that France was desirous and was actually making preparations to hem in the British colonies as thoroughly as it was practicable by a chain of posts along the Mississippi. If the war, when it broke out, had found the colonies united as one, the mother country might have been saved a vast amount of annoyance and responsibility. Faults there were undoubtedly on both sides; no common understanding appeared to exist between the parent state and its dependencies; each seemed jealous and suspicious of the other. If the colonies yielded to the demands of Great Britain and granted pecuniary assistance for the conduct of the war against French aggression on this continent, they did so in a spirit that reflected little credit on them. Each colony had its own peculiar views on the subject, and only consented to pass bills for the requisite supplies, that were clogged by unnecessary stipulations—some of them encroaching directly on the prerogative. When WASHINGTON was conducting an expedition against the French who had established themselves on the Ohio, in accordance with their plan of hemming in the colonies, his efforts were rendered entirely nugatory through the want of the requisite aid. Appeals were made to the colonies, but no relief arrived. At last, outnumbered by the French, he was obliged to capitulate, and on the fourth of July, 1854, says BANCROFT, "in the whole valley of the Mississippi, to its head-springs in the Alleghanies, no standard floated but

that of France." In this same memorable year assembled at Albany an important Congress composed of delegates from several of the colonies. At that Congress the deputies came to a resolution that "it seemed necessary to take the most speedy measures to secure the colonies from the slavery they are threatened with, as the French Court have, since the peace, more than ever made this continent the object of their attention." They also came to the conclusion that the danger arose principally from the fact that the French possessed compact organization, whereas the British colonies "never entered into any joint exertions or counsels." "We know well," exclaimed a Frenchman, in the presence of WASHINGTON at the time he was despatched by the governors of Virginia to the Ohio to demand certain explanations of the French, "that you could raise two men for our one, if your assemblies were only united among themselves; but you dawdle over your preparations till the time for action is over." A plan of Union was accordingly drawn up by FRANKLIN, at the Albany Congress, for the better political and military organization of the colonies. This plan of Union, however, came to nothing. "The system," says BANCROFT, "was not altogether acceptable either to Great Britain or to America. The fervid attachment of each colony to its *own individual liberties* repelled the over-ruling influence of a central power. Connecticut rejected it; even New York showed it little favour; Massachusetts charged her agent to oppose it." If British statesmen in those days had better appreciated the temper of colonists, and could have been brought to look without suspicion upon combinations between them for political or commercial objects, they would have been saved a vast amount of heart-burnings, expense, and bloodshed in the end. The Congress at Albany was an evidence that the Colonies were commencing to appreciate the extent of their dangers and see the necessity of combination between each other. Such a Union as was