

OUR LECTURE COURSE.

On Saturday evening, February 27th a lecture was delivered in Assembly Hall, by Hon. J. W. Longley, M. P. P., of Halifax, on "North America: Its probable Destiny." Being a graduate of Acadia, who has made his mark both as a politician and lecturer, Mr. Longley, on taking the platform, was greeted with applause. The lecture was delivered in a pleasing manner without manuscript. We have only room for a mere extract:

The lecturer first dwelt upon the importance of having a country—a nationality. We could never shake off the thousand associations connected with the land of our birth. A Canadian, when going abroad over the world, could not at present boast of a distinctive nationality, like the Frenchman or the German. He was only a Colonist, a dependent. Passing on to the consideration of the exact position in which we stood, it could be affirmed that we were part of a great continent. North America was just twice the size of Europe. It was the finest producing continent in the world. It had no deserts, and had the four great belts of production in higher development than any other portion of the world,—the Sugar belt, Cotton belt, Maize belt, and Wheat belt. It was peopled by the English speaking race from the North Pole to the shore of the Great Gulf. It was the home of the arts, the very seat of political liberty and of the highest forms of modern civilization. It was free from standing armies, and every man was a bread-winner. We, on this northern half of this continent too often forget our relations to the rest of the continent, and this was the idea which we had now to look straight in the face.

The great problem now for us to consider was the ultimate destiny of this country called Canada. This should be approached in no spirit of dogmatism. The lecturer particularly emphasized the fact that he was merely asking the students to think on the subject—to enquire, in order that when the great question came up for settlement, we should be able to regard it intelligently. There were three possible alternatives: *First*, an Independent Nationality; *Second*, Political Union with the British Islands; *Third*, Identification with our own continent.

The first proposition was considered impartially; there were difficulties in the way of a consolidated

nation. Mr. Longley went to a large map of North America which was exhibited on the platform, and pointed out the geographical difficulties. There was no natural geographical connection between the Upper and Maritime Provinces. Manitoba and the North West had no relations with the rest of the country, and British Columbia was entirely separate. But there was a direct and natural geographical and commercial relationship between the Maritime Provinces and the New England States; between Ontario and the Great Middle and Western States; between Manitoba and the Western States and Territories; and between British Columbia and California. Besides we had the difficulty of a large and growing French population right in the midst of the country. There was also the matter of expense; the keeping up of a defence; the payment of consuls and ambassadors abroad; the protection of our waters and commerce. He concluded that any attempt at independence would only throw us into the hands of our larger neighbor.

The Imperial Federation idea was next discussed, and its difficulties pointed out. Our institutions were not British but American. We had no tinge of the feudalism of Europe. How could we tolerate a State Church, a titled Aristocracy, an hereditary House of Peers, Landlordism, Entails, and Primogeniture? How could we wish to identify ourselves with the entanglements of European diplomacy, and participate in the cost and consequences of wars in which we would have no interest? There was no natural or geographical relationship between us and the British Isles.

Passing to the third alternative, Mr. Longley instituted a comparison between the relative advantages of political relations with the British Islands and the rest of our own continent respectively. The matter must be looked at both in the light of the present and the future. At present the population of the British Islands is less than 40,000,000. The population of the United States is about 56,000,000. In thirty five years the population of the United States will be 120,000,000, while the British Isles will be less than 50,000,000. In fifty years North America will have 200,000,000 English-speaking people, while Britain will not have 50,000,000. Even now there are more Englishmen in America than in England; more Scotchmen in America than