

INAUGURAL LECTURE BY THE REV. PROFESSOR HATCH.

In entering upon the duties of the office which it is my privilege to hold in this College, it is very desirable that I should give some account, both of the field which lies before us, and of the manner in which I propose to explore it. And since there is considerable confusion in the common idea not only of the nature of classical studies, but also of their utility, it will be well perhaps to offer a few remarks at the outset in vindication of the place which this College, in common with the great Universities of the old World, assigns them in general education.

It is not infrequent to look upon them as being merely the coping-stone of a series of accomplishments which qualify a man to hold his own in society, as being necessary chiefly because society considers a man incomplete without them. And there is no doubt that they have suffered very much from the weak arguments of their advocates. Take up almost any defence of classical education and you will find statements true enough, and often eloquent enough, of the force of Greek oratory, of the delicacy of Greek sentiment, and of the refinement of taste which follows the acquisition of scholarship. In other words, the collateral and accidental advantages have been brought prominently forward, while the real purpose has been kept out of sight.

And this method of argument has given rise to two important classes of objections.