

THE AIM OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION.

The Inaugural Address delivered before the Philosophical and Literary Society,
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By the President, N. D. KERR, B.A.

Some of you will remember that on the occasion of our last Convocation, the honor fell to me of presenting to the meeting the successful competitors for the laurels of this society last session, and in the course of my remarks I stated, in brief, what I considered to be the object of a college education. Since then, in thinking of a subject appropriate for this occasion, it occurred to me that the germ-thoughts then expressed might be developed with profit to myself and not without interest to you. I therefore propose as the theme on which to speak to you to-night "The Aim of a College Education."

One of the chief elements of success in anything we do or attempt to do is to have a clear conception of the object to be attained. To be in ignorance on this point is almost invariably fatal. The paramount value of clear conceptions we see everywhere exemplified. The man of business never thinks of buying his goods blindly and trusting that somehow he will get purchasers for them. On the contrary, he calculates carefully, and keeps steadily before him the constituency of customers on whose patronage he can depend. The engineer who would build a bridge does not gather together a mass of stone, and brick and mortar, iron beams and steel cables, and think that in some way or other, by some fortuitous chance a Brooklyn Bridge or a Forth Bridge will evolve from the heterogeneous pile. The sea captain knows the port at which he hopes to land. Never for a moment does he take his eye off it. By tack and shift, through calm seas and rough, he is ever bearing down upon it.

The same is true in Education. In order to make the most