

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN—

The honour you have conferred upon me, in having placed me in the proud position which I occupy this evening, is one of which I shall ever retain a grateful remembrance; and although I feel I am unable to do justice to the task which your kindness has imposed upon me—though I freely yield the precedence to *some* of you in education, to *many* of you in position, to *all* of you in talent—yet, gentlemen, to not one amongst you, do I yield in lively interest in the future prospects of this Society, and in deep and heartfelt solicitude for its welfare. I come not here with the weapons of the orator in my hand, nor ~~I~~ am I provided with the light-arms of the rhetorician. No armour have I to protect me, but your indulgence—no weapon shall I use but the appeal to your intelligence. I trust that the sincerity of my heart will make amends for the inadequacy of my power, for truly in my case it may be said, “*ex abundantia cordis os loquitur.*” Would you know, gentlemen, why we have been summoned together? Would you know what brings me here? My intention is to enlighten you on these points, and with your permission I shall arrange my discourse under two heads. In the first place, I shall endeavour to point out what are the objects—what the ends we have in view in meeting here this evening, for the purpose of forming, or rather re-forming, this Society; and in the second, I shall cast a cursory glance over the life and times of the great orator, writer and humourist, whose name we have adopted to adorn our Club; whose life presents to us, and to all thinking men, so many grave lessons “to follow the good,” and so many sad warnings “to avoid the evil,” and whose death was but another illustration of the truth of the saying of Guizot’s, that “The