

it will amuse and interest him, will also elevate and improve him. (Loud applause.) It is truly said therefore, I think, that the best mode of proceeding is to establish a reading room wherever a reading room can be established, accessible to the working man, comfortably lighted, with a cheerful fire, and with other requisites which are necessary in order to make it attractive; and by so doing you present to him, as a reasonable being, as a being accountable not only to the laws of his country, but accountable to God, you place before him enjoyments and objects of interest which, when once appreciated, will withdraw him from those debasing pleasures in which so many in the absence of other objects of interest are disposed to indulge. I say that this association appears to me to be one of the most useful in adopting varied methods for effecting this object, and for attracting people to higher and nobler pursuits than that to which they are naturally inclined. It has its reading room, it has its itinerating libraries,—most useful in the way of extending that knowledge which can be procured through books of a valuable kind, and placed within the reach of remote hamlets and villages; it has its lectures,—admirable in their way; it has its evening classes, and those evening schools to which useful allusion was made to-day, and which I think are the most valuable efforts of this society; it has its system of examination, and it has also those prizes which I have seen awarded to-day—which stimulate rising genius, and which are sufficient to induce men to devote their minds and faculties to the attainment of high and useful ends. Speaking of the evil effects of intemperance. I may just advert here to some very excellent friends of my own in this county, with whom I have had much intercourse on the subject, but who certainly go further in some of their views than I can go with them, because I think it is not by prohibitory laws so much as it is by presenting counter attractions that you can successfully encounter and defeat the monster evil of intemperance. (Loud applause.) I was struck the other day, in reading one of the works of that lamented man, Hugh Miller, whose writings I have no doubt most of you are acquainted with, with the pas-

sage in which he records some of his earlier days, when he was actually working as a mason, but when his mind was also at work upon higher objects than those on which his hands were engaged—when he had learnt to appreciate the maxims and philosophy of Bacon, and to return from his day's work to his lodging to enjoy the intellectual feasts which works of that kind presented to him. He says that on one occasion he was tempted, in his intercourse with his fellow-countrymen, to transgress the bonds of temperance and to indulge with them in excessive drinking. He returned to his lodging and opened his *Bacon*; his intellect was clouded; and he was unable to appreciate and enjoy it, and from that day made a resolve—a resolve which I believe he uniformly maintained afterwards—never again to cloud by intemperance that intellect which God had given him; because he felt that, in doing so, he was depriving himself of the inestimable pleasures and enjoyments provided for him by a gracious and merciful Providence. Among the attractions of these places there are requisites besides a comfortable fire which are essential to a good reading room to make it comfortable. I think the most important is a useful and judicious selection of books, to be placed there for the perusal of those who are invited to frequent them. Now, I don't mean, by a useful and judicious selection of books, that we should very carefully weed our village or our town libraries of everything which the fastidious might think ought not to be there. It is by no means necessary that this should be the mode of dealing with libraries. Let there be books of all kinds in these libraries, but let the selection be a wise and judicious selection, with a view to put in those libraries books, which, while they attract—and there are many of this character—will also deeply interest, and will excite men to higher motives of action, and will supply them with examples to guide them in their course, in whatever sphere of life they may be placed. (Loud cheers.)

Let me for one moment now advert also to lectures. No doubt a very just tribute of commendation has been paid to Mr. Grant, whom I regret is not present now, for the lectures he has de-