Selection of newspaper accounts related to the opening of the Institute Building on Tuesday 29 January 1861:

- **Inspection of the building** six months before the opening
  *South Australian Observer* 28 July 1860
- **Notice about the forthcoming opening soiree**
  *South Australian Advertiser* Tuesday 29 January 1861
- **Notice about the forthcoming opening soiree**
  *South Australian Register* Tuesday 29 January 1861
- **Account of the opening soiree**
  *South Australian Advertiser* Wednesday 30 January 1861
- **Account of the opening soiree and official speech**
  *South Australian Register* 30 January 1861
- **Account of the opening with detailed description** of museum objects such as birds and shells
  *South Australian Advertiser* Wednesday 30 January 1861

**South Australian Observer 28 July 1860**

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE.
A few days ago we inspected the building on North-terrace henceforward to be the home of the South Australian Institute, and were in no ordinary degree pleased with what we saw.

The edifice is in style a combination of the Venetian and Grecian orders of architecture—for instance it has a portico supported by Doric columns, the arches over the lower windows are supported by Doric, and those over the upper windows by Ionic fluted pilasters. Its cornice is rich, handsome, and bold without being heavy. Indeed, the building in this respect is decidedly in advance of any other building, public or private, in the colony. There is a harmony of proportion and a classical stamp about the whole structure which entitle it to be regarded as an architectural gem, and which render it a great ornament to the city. The highest credit is reflected upon the late Colonial Architect (Mr. Hamilton), from whose plans it has been erected.

On entering the building it was evident that, if the design was the product of an architect of no mean order, the execution of it had fallen into very able hands. The doors which slide into the wall are of the most beautiful cedar that could possibly be selected, and the screen behind them is of the same material, glazed with ample panes of first rate plate-glass.

The first thing which strikes the eye on entering the body of the building is a capacious hall with a magnificent staircase ascending from the lower to the upper floor. The steps are 6¾ inches in height, so that the ascent is easily made, and their sides are protected by a banister and balustrade of most solid and substantial character, so as to prevent any persons by a rush being thrown over. They are of turned and polished cedar, with here and there one of cast iron to impart additional strength.

Turning to the right the room devoted to the library is entered. Its walls are yet unplastered, and the shelf arrangements are not yet complete. Indeed the room is unfinished. But the room on the left of the entrance hall is nearly completed, and the fitting up of it as far as yet accomplished is of a very superior order. The skirting is broad and bold, the window panelling rich and handsome without being heavy, both consisting of beautifully wrought and grained cedar. The mantelpieces to the two fireplaces are of Ransome’s patent siliceous stone, and are so exquisite in taste and design that they must have cost the builders a very large sum. There is a raised floor at one end of the room, ascended by steps running...
quite across the apartment, which it is presumed is intended to serve as a platform occasionally. This is the reading room.

These rooms, with a room in the rear of them (the coffee-room), and another opposite to it (the Secretary's room and Board room), cover the whole the ground floor.

On ascending the stairs one is struck with their width and with the roominess which characterize the landing at the top of them. On the floor thus gained and over the library is a very fine room, which we were informed will be used as a Committee-room and for the meetings of the Philosophical Society.

Over the reading-room are two good-sized rooms, which will probably be used as rooms for classes. At the back of the building, and running the whole length of it, is what might be a picture gallery, or a museum, or a room for a school of design. This apartment is lighted entirely from the roof, and is furnished with slides, which move over the skylight by means of pulleys and without being visible, by which the light may be reduced at pleasure. The building is ventilated by means of shafts in the walls. It is to be lighted by gas, the conducting-pipes for which were all laid into the walls when their erection was going on. The fittings—generally triple chandelier burners—are already on the spot, and will be speedily fixed.

There are rooms of a temporary character in the rear of the Institute for the doorkeeper, and cellars beneath, where anything stored will be certain to be delightfully cool, even in the hottest weather.

The building is at present unfinished, as will have been understood by some portions of this description; but so far as it is complete no pains appear to have been spared by the contractors (Messrs. English & Brown) in their desire to do justice to themselves and to the public. The building, when completed in all its details, will reflect as great credit upon those gentlemen for the manner in which they have carried out their contract as it does upon the architect under whose instructions they have acted.

_South Australian Advertiser_ Tuesday 29 January 1861 page 1 notice correct

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE**
The inaugural soiree will be held on Tuesday, January 29, when the New Building will be formally Opened by His Honor Sir Charles Cooper. In the course of the evening the following Entertainments will be provided: Exhibition of Dissolving Views, by J. Martin, Esq. Display of the Electric Light, by Charles Todd, Esq. Eloquence Entertainments, by T. P. Hill, Esq. Various Models, Specimens of Statuary, and other objects of interest will be arranged in the different rooms.

The Musical Arrangements will be under the direction of Herr Kohler. Tea and Coffee will be served in the Library. A limited number of tickets will be issued, to members only, on the following terms

To admit member, 1s. ; to admit member and one lady, 2s. ; to admit member and two ladies, 5s. The Librarian will be in attendance at the Institute each day until the 29th instant, from 12 to 2 p.m., to issue tickets, for which early application is necessary. All arrears of subscriptions must be paid up when tickets are taken. The room on the ground floor, opposite the entrance, will be fitted up as a Ladies' Cloak-room. The doors will be opened at 7, and the proceedings commence at half-past 7 p.m. precisely.

By order of the Board of Governors, Robert Kay, Secretary.
The Inaugural Soiree of the South Australian Institute takes places this evening, commencing at half-past 7, and bids fair to rank as one of the most attractive entertainments ever presented to the public of South Australia. The programme includes so much variety that we scarcely know how, in few words, to describe it. First of all the National Anthem will be performed by the band, under the leadership of Mr. E. W. Kohler. This will take place at half-past 7 precisely, when the various rooms will be thrown open to the visitors; after which Sir Charles Cooper, from the platform of the reading-room, will declare the Institute formally open. The band will then play the ‘Song of Australia.’ After this an overture (Tancredii) will be performed, and Mr. T. P. Hill will give his ‘Half-hour in the House of Commons,’ with illustrations of Parliamentary oratory, including a specimen of the oratory of the late Right Hon. Richard Lalor Sheil. Following this, Mr. J. Martin will present an exhibition of dissolving views and likewise exhibit the lucernal microscope in the museum rooms; this portion of the entertainment to be concluded by the performance of the Isabella Polka and Bird of Paradise Waltz by the full band.

At 9 p.m. Mr. Todd will exhibit in the reading-room the electric light, after which the band will perform the Massanniello Quadrilles, Mont Blanc Polka with Echoes by Herr Kohler, and the Il Trovatore Waltz. At 9.45 pm there will be another exhibition of dissolving views in the museum rooms, followed by the Eclipse Polka by the band; the programme being terminated with the usual loyal finale ‘God Save the Queen.’ Throughout the evening tea and coffee will be served in the library.

We now come to perhaps the most interesting portion of the entertainment, namely, the exhibitions; and these will take place in the rooms on the first floor. In the small room at the south-west corner will be exhibited a collection of prize statuary—the Crystal Palace Art Union prize ‘Sunshine’ also a collection of articles of vertu in Parian and other ware, presented by Mr. John Hart. In the same room there will also be exhibited the microscope and microscopic studies by the Rev. F. W. Cox, and stereoscopes and stereographs by Professor Hall and others.

In the small room on the west side there will be exhibited a collection of Fijian, Chinese, and other curiosities, partly lent and partly presented by Mr. Owen, M.P., and comprising chiefs’ dresses, screens, sails, women’s dresses (heathen and Christian), spears and arms in endless variety, wigs, lines, sinnett, shells, etc, etc.; also models of Chinese pagodas, Chinese boxes and garments, and numerous, other articles. There will also be exhibited in this department some capital models of vessels, principally piratical. In the large room, on the east side, there will be exhibited a collection forwarded by Mr. A. H. Gouge, of stuffed birds, English and colonial, shells, weapons, and other curiosities, principally from New Caledonia. Of the stuffed birds we can only say that we have seldom seen a better collection, and we would more especially direct the attention of those interested in ornithology to the cases of European birds, likewise to the case containing the solitary bittern, a relic of one of Mr. Sturt’s expeditions.

The specimens from New Caledonia are well worthy of attention, more especially the shells, which comprise, in the marine department, some perfect gems. There are a pair of shells of the mutton fish, which are very beautiful, and also some of the nautilus, unsurpassed by anything we have ever previously seen: the leopard shell, and many others equally curious also abound in the collection. Besides these, Mr. Gouge will exhibit a small tray of land shells of singular delicacy and great beauty, which are also from New Caledonia. The same gentleman has also some splendid specimens of coral.
from Torres Straits; insects, mosses, etc. from Kangaroo Island; a magnificent specimen of an amphibious snake, found in New Caledonia; also war weapons of the New Caledonian natives in endless variety.

Besides the above collection there will be exhibited in this department some American sewing machines, lent by Mr. Eymer; and a collection of paintings, models, etc. Such is a brief outline of the entertainments which will be presented to the public at the Inaugural Soiree of the Institute. In looking over the collections of curiosities and specimens the only feeling which we experience is one of regret that such interesting collections are not public property. We hope, under any circumstances, that the owners of them will allow them to be exhibited for a few weeks at the Institute, in order that the public may become acquainted with them. Certainly, finer collections we have never seen in the colony.

Having now given a faint idea of the nature of the entertainments with which the South Australian Institute is to be formally opened, we need scarcely say that we anticipate the affair will be a complete success.

South Australian Advertiser Wednesday 30 January 30 1861.

Last night South Australia attempted what might be not inappropriately termed-a polytechnic soiree. Most of our readers know that delightfully amusing and no less instructive place of resort in London - the Polytechnic Institution; and when we say that the inaugural soiree of the South Australian Institute was based upon that model, we feel that but little more in the way of description is necessary. An entertainment of this sort is at once a lecture, a concert, a conversazione, and an exhibition; nor is it possible to get up anything more thoroughly and deservedly popular. For young and old, for learned and illiterate, for grave and gay, for persons in every walk of life, and through the entire circle of taste and inclination, something is provided. Of course, as tastes differ opinions will differ as to the merits of this or that portion of the entertainment; but the peculiar value of a treat of this kind is, that whilst all the public are invited there is at least something for every one.

It is, however, essential to the success of a polytechnic soiree that the arrangements should be perfect. But perfection is not usually attained at a stride, and no one will, or ought to feel surprised, if a few hitches occurred in the carrying out of last night’s programme. In the first place, the new Institute Building, though quite adequate to its ordinary purposes, is by no means sufficient for such a demonstration as we have just had. There is no room in the building capable of containing one half of the company that the whole edifice will hold, and the result is uncomfortable crowding, and considerable exclusion, when any particular item in the programme draws the whole company to one spot. The fact is, there ought to be a theatre added to the handsome pile of building now erected on North-terrace. A large, lofty, well-ventilated room, fitted with galleries and an orchestra, would at all times relieve the pressure from the other portions of the building; and if capable of accommodating 2,500 persons, would be a real boon to the public. For want of such a room as this hundreds of persons went away last night disappointed; -disappointed not with the arrangements of the evening, but because they so frequently found themselves shut out from participation in them, purely through want of room.

Several little failures occurred during the evening. Sir Charles Cooper failed to make himself heard, except to those who were fortunate enough to secure the first six or eight benches; and we are sorry to say that His Honor appeared to be a little angry with the company because they were not exactly attentive to his gesticulations. We can assure Sir Charles that every one was most desirous of hearing him, and would have been satisfied could they only have caught a word now and then; but as to a majority of those who filled the reading-room His Honor’s address was perfect dumb show, he ought not to feel angry if a little impatience was manifested.
Mr. T. P. Hill’s illustrations of Parliamentary oratory were cut woefully short by an unexpected burst of ’musical cheers,’ - Holder’s band striking up in full force precisely as Mr. Hill was touching the climax: of one of Richard Lalor Shiel’s perorations. Music proved too much for oratory, so the band went on and the orator sat down. It appeared that Mr. Hill had exceeded his allotted time, and as the several parts of the entertainment were all arranged as per programme, Herr Kohler struck up when his time came. No one can, however, blame the musician for being a good timeist; indeed, such was the beauty of Kohler’s music, and such the efficiency of the band he led, that if he had monopolized the whole evening few would have complained. On behalf of Mr. Hill, we may say that he exceeded his time because, for some reason or other, he could not begin at the commencement of his term; and being late to begin, he was late to conclude. After the music, however, he gave Shiel again—the audience demanding its repetition—and when he sat down, Sir Charles Cooper rose to express regret at the musical interruption. His Honor’s speech was not, however, on the card, and as the fates would have it, no sooner had the Chief Justice risen to scold the band for extinguishing Mr. Hill, than he himself was suddenly extinguished by a second outburst of the same divine melody!

The Institute had been well furnished with curiosities, statuary, specimens of natural history, and a good variety of works of art and vertu. The Rev. Mr. Cox attended with his microscopes, Mr. Todd exhibited the electric light and various colored fires, and there were dissolving views, which, however, the majority of the visitors never saw at all. Tea and coffee were provided in the library, but the supply was by no means equal to the demand, and a very large number of persons were unable to get any refreshment whatever.

It is not, however, by any means our desire to find fault. Allowances must be made, and the public are not unreasonable. The soiree of last night sufficiently proved that with a little more attention to matters of detail an entertainment of the sort can be made to go off very pleasantly, although as we cannot put a quart of wine in a pint bottle, so neither can we find perfect accommodation for 1,000 people in a room that will not hold 500. In all entertainments of the kind there are certain portions that distribute the company, and others that concentrate them, to meet which contingencies a large lecture room or theatre is indispensable. This conceded, and profiting by the experience of a few little failures last night, there can be no doubt as to the resources of Adelaide being fully equal to the production of a polytechnic soiree in first rate style. And we look upon it as something to boast of, if this is proved.

South Australian Register 30 January 1861 Page 3 correct

The formal opening of the new and elegant building erected for the purposes of the South Australian Institute took place on the evening of Tuesday January 29. Never, perhaps, in the history of our many and happy public reunions did the people of Adelaide assemble under more auspicious circumstances than upon this memorable occasion. The absence of the Governor-in-Chief and his amiable lady, both well known to be warm supporters of the Institute and promoters and patrons of all intellectual amusements, was perhaps the only drawback that exerted more than a temporary interruption to the enjoyment of the varied amusements so liberally provided for the entertainment of the public by the indefatigable Governors of the Institute. It would be difficult, indeed, to imagine how a greater variety of amusements could be presented than those which the programme embraced, and it was impossible for any individual to see and examine the various works of art and natural curiosities laid out so tastefully in the various rooms in the course of one evening, even if he neglected, which nobody did, the interesting addresses that were delivered.

To the wonders of art, the efforts of intellect, and the curiosities of nature were added the charms of music, and the company evidently brought with them a disposition to enjoy as much as possible of
everything they could see and hear around them. The reading-room was the scene of the more serious business of the evening—there His Honor Sir Charles Cooper delivered the inaugural address; there Mr. T. P. Hill gave an animated and impressive lecture on Parliamentary Oratory, and recited that delicious piece of sarcastic waggery, ‘The Jackdaw of Rheims,’ from the Ingoldsby Legends; and there Mr. Todd exhibited in a countless number of dazzling experiments the wonders of the electric light. In the small room in the south-west corner there was a perfect Art-Union, consisting of exquisite statuary, rare articles of vertu, photographs, and with objects arranged ready for the inspection of all who were curious to see miracles of minute animal structure or the wondrous power with which photography can produce a perfect picture in a space that could be covered with a pin’s head.

The statuary in this room were kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. John Hart, and excited more attention and admiration than perhaps any other part of the exhibition. The prize statue of the Crystal Palace Art-Union, ‘Sunshine,’ is a perfect gem, which we hope will never be allowed to leave the colony. The Dying Gladiator, in Parian marble, was another exquisite specimen of high art. This room was crowded throughout the evening, having, in addition to the attractions in sculpture, an immense assortment of stereographs, which, with the nearly as numerous collection of superior photographs, lent by Professor Hall, afforded amusement to successive groups of spectators.

In the small room, west side, was a splendid collection of Fejeean, Malayan, Chinese, and other curiosities, partly lent and partly presented by Mr. Owen, M.P. There were war implements, including every variety of spear and club; models of vessels, temples, and pagodas; pictures of Chinese domestic scenes; and various, textile fabrics from the South Sea Islands. There were curiosities enough in this room to have occupied all the time allowed for the soiree in their examination, and great credit is due to the persons who arranged them. In the large room on the east side of the building there was a vast collection of interesting and very dissimilar matters—among other things, cases of stuffed birds and a sewing-machine, lent by Mr. Eymer; collections of shells, weapons, &c, lent by Mr. Gouge; cases of insects; and some splendid photographic copies from the Cartoons.

The museum rooms were crowded on three several occasions during the evening to witness Mr. J. Martin’s interesting exhibition of dissolving views; and Mr. R. W. Kohler, at the instance of the Governors of the Institute, added some delicious music to that announced in the programme. The reading-room was crowded very soon after the doors were opened, and at half-past 7 o’clock the band struck up the National Anthem. Sir Charles Cooper presided. He was surrounded, on taking his place on the platform, by the Lord Bishop of Adelaide, Dean Farrell, several Governors of the Institute, and a number of influential gentlemen. Lady Cooper and several other ladies of distinction also occupied seats upon the platform.

Sir Charles Cooper (Chief Justice) delivered, amidst some interruption from the company flocking in, the following Inaugural Address.

‘In the absence of His Excellency Sir Richard MacDonnell, the honour has been assigned to me of declaring the South Australian Institute to be open to the public. I regret the absence of His Excellency, who would so much enjoy the pleasure of presiding at the opening of an institution in which he has taken so warm an interest, but it will be in some degree compensated by his promise to deliver a lecture at a soiree to be held about the latter end of March. His absence being unavoidable, I feel gratified by the request made to me to supply his place, and the more so as the South Australian Institute arises out of an older Society, of which I was for a considerable number of years the President. As the Institute, growing with the growth of the colony, may be expected in progress of time to become a great institution, it may not be uninteresting to state in a few words the history of its origin.
Many years ago, in the early days of the colony, a Society was formed, called the South Australian Library. To this library the Government presented some books on the condition that, if the Society should be dissolved, all the books should go to the Government for the public benefit. Subsequently, a Mechanics’ Institute was formed, and in a short time, neither of the two Societies being in a very nourishing state, they coalesced, with the hope of becoming stronger by union. The Library being in its books and subscriptions richer than the Mechanics’ Institute, it was agreed that the Institute should collect a sum equal to the difference, which sum should be brought into the common stock. I must not omit to mention that, in order to make up this difference, Mr. F. Dutton and Mr. Ridley—who, as you all know, has in a more important matter been a great benefactor to our colony—each liberally, contributed the sum of £100. So the South Australian Library and Mechanics’ Institute became established. It existed for a considerable time, till, on an auspicious day, the 18th of June, 1856, an Act was passed to establish and incorporate an institution to be called ‘The South Australian Institute.’

This Act made it lawful for any Society, and particularly for the South Australian Library and Mechanics’ Institute, to give up its library, books, maps, prints, &c., to the incorporated Society.

The South Australian Library and Mechanics Institute availed itself of this permission, gave up its library, and became merged in the South Australian Institute. The books given up by the old institution form part of the library of the South Australian Institute, of which I now hold a catalogue in my hand. It is, as you see, of considerable size, and it contains 167 pages. The books are of various kinds, treating of philosophy, the arts and sciences, jurisprudence, political economy, statistics, commerce, history, chronology, antiquities, biography, &c. It contains a collection of our poets, and much general literature of modern days, both English and foreign—in short, very many books which one could scarcely expect to find in an institution so young as the present one. It is said that it contains too many novels. Believe it does. But as to novels, if they, are fit to be read they must form a part of every public library on a considerable scale; and although if young people are tempted to spend too much time in reading them it is to be regretted, it is better that they should be so employed than be altogether unoccupied, and thus led into other pursuits not so innocent, which young people frequently indulge in. Moreover, let it not be forgotten that various plants require various modes of cultivation, and that taste for reading is a plant of delicate growth, which will not admit of being forced. I think you will agree with me that the beautiful building in which the operations of the Society, will be carried on is a credit to the architect by whom it was designed, and under whose superintendence it has been completed.

New comers will be surprised at its beauty and elegance, and those who like myself, remember the old Government hut and the wooden and canvas dwellings of former days, will look up to it with pride. It has been built by the liberality of the South Australian Parliament—in other words, by the liberality of the South Australian people; and supported in part, I trust, by the same liberality, its treasury of knowledge will be made useful to the public at large; and never can liberality be better bestowed, for it is not a question now whether knowledge is worth—pursuing—that has been settled long ago. Knowledge is power, and the means of obtaining it and the eagerness of its pursuit have greatly increased in our native country; and if it is thought important there, can it be considered less so here? We sometimes hear that in England a man by the force of genius climbs from a low to the highest station in society, and that it is the happy privilege of every Englishman to have the highest station open to him; and this is true but a man born in poverty must climb a weary height before he reaches the gate of entrance to political life; whereas in South Australia every man of ordinary energy on attaining his full manhood has privileges which he can and which it is his duty to exercise. He becomes of political importance, and in proportion to his reputation amongst his fellow-colonists will be the standing and influence he may obtain. Of how much importance then is it that sound knowledge should be increased amongst us! And how much may we not expect this building and all it contains to contribute towards the obtaining it! Long may South Australia take pleasure in promoting the growth
of knowledge amongst her people, not forgetting the knowledge of Him from whom all good things are derived.

Then in after times, now hidden from our sight, when the numbers of her inhabitants and her riches shall lie multiplied manifold, and she shall have become great, she may hope to take her place with dignity and honour amongst the nations, of the world.”

At the conclusion of the address Sir Charles declared the Institute formally open. During his address, Sir Charles Cooper complained of the noise and remarked on the impropriety of indulging in conversation while a speaker was in pursuance of the programme, addressing the assemblage. Dean Farrell, with equal tact and good taste, declared that he had always been a friend and admirer of His Honor, and his belief that the same sentiments animated every one present, notwithstanding an interruption that was perhaps in that case unavoidable. This apology was endorsed by the applause of the auditory. The band performed in fine style the Song of Australia and the Overture to Tancredi; after which Mr. T. P. Hill gave his lecture on Parliamentary Oratory, introducing and concluding with the peroration of Sheil’s celebrated speech in reply to Lord Lyndhurst's declaration that “the Irish were aliens in blood, language, and religion.” Through mistake as to time the hand struck up before Mr. Hill had concluded, but when a pause occurred he was loudly called for, and completed his impressive delivery of the impassioned passage selected amid continued applause.

We have indicated briefly the other amusements of the evening, and while repeating the opinion that the soiree has been the most successful yet given by this, popular Institution, we may add that it deserved to be so. The thanks of the 850 persons who enjoyed that varied entertainment are due to the Governors of the Institute for the industry, zeal, and talent manifested by them in collecting so carefully and exhibiting so tastefully so many matters capable of interesting and improving the wind. One disagreeable subject we must refer to, and that, we regret to say, affects the character of some young gentlemen in a manner scarcely consistent with the gallantry manifested by them upon other occasions. We refer to the manner in which they besieged the dispensers of refreshments, exhibiting, in too many instances, a disregard to the wants of others, and a most unchivalrous neglect of the ladies.

South Australian Advertiser Wednesday 30 January 1861 page 3 correct

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE THE INAUGURAL SOIREE

The inaugural Soiree in connection with the South Australian Institute came off last evening at the new building, North-terrace. There was a large number of persons present, and the entertainments were varied and interesting. The doors were thrown open at half-past 7 o’clock precisely when the band, under the leadership of Mr. H. W. Kohler, struck up the ‘National Anthem’. The company then proceeded to the Reading-room, where His Honor Sir C. Cooper addressed them as follows:

[The text of the speech has been deleted as it duplicates the text in the account of the South Australian Register above.]

At the conclusion of the address Sir Charles declared the Institute formally open.

Great inconvenience was felt by those present from the trampling caused by the movements of the visitors from room to room, and during His Honor’s address he was considerably interrupted by a number of persons at the further end of the room, who in the most unseemly manner kept up a loud conversation; the noise made by them was continuous and loud, so much as to induce His Honor to remind them that it was the courtesy of all public assemblies, when they were addressed by any
person, to listen to what the speaker had to say with attention. He expressed his sorrow to see that some portion of the assembly he was then addressing had not that common courtesy. His Honor, also, in allusion to a promise he had made that he would not occupy their time more than ten minutes, said he should have been able to embrace his remarks within that period if he had been listened to as he expected with courtesy. His Honor was cheered at the conclusion of his address, which was interrupted by the band playing up, completely drowning his further remarks, except to the few who were standing immediately around him.

When His Honor resumed his seat, the Very Rev. Dean Farrell addressed a few remarks to the meeting in reference to the interruption His Honor had received from the talkers, and said that there was no person in the colony who had a higher respect for His Honor than he (the Dean) bad, and he believed there was no one in that room who did not have the same respect as he had, the greatest proof of which was the large assembly present; and he knew there was not one there who would knowingly show His Honor any disrespect. [This little speech of the Dean’s was well received, and rewarded by unanimous plaudits.]

The band performed in fine style the Song of Australia and the Overture to Tancredi; after which Mr. T. P. Hill gave his lecture on Parliamentary Oratory, introducing and concluding with the peroration of Sheil’s celebrated speech in reply to Lord Lyndhurst’s declaration that ‘the Irish were aliens in blood, language, and religion’. Through mistake as to time the lecture having been commenced after the stated time, and Herr Kohler’s instructions being to follow the programme, these unfortunate interruptions are fully accounted for. When the Band had finished, in compliance with the unanimous request of those present, Mr. Hill repeated his illustrations of the oratory of Shiel. After this there was an exhibition of Dissolving Views and the Lucernal Microscope in the Museum rooms, which was extremely interesting, and was well received.

Following this there was another performance by the Band - the Isabella Polka and Bird of Paradise waltz; and at 9 o’clock Mr. Charles Todd exhibited, in the reading room, the Electric Light. This exhibition was unaccompanied by any remarks, but the effect of the illumination was admirable, the whole room being filled by a brilliant lurid glare of extreme power, the source of which reflected by a circular plate, looked extremely pretty. Another interval now took place, during which the band performed the Massaniello Quadrilles, Echoes of Mount Blanc Polka, and the Il Trovatore Waltz. After which Mr. Hill again appeared in the reading-room, and gave a short lecture, ‘Characteristics of the author of the Ingoldsby Legends’ in the course of which he recited with much effect that celebrated poem –‘the Jackdaw of Rheims’. Following this was another exhibition of dissolving views by Mr. J. Martin, in the Museum room; after which the Eclipse Polka was performed by the band, under the leadership of Herr Kohler, with admirable spirit; and the entertainment was brought to a close by the performance of the National Anthem.

We have thus given a brief description of the entertainment comprised in the programme. Of the arrangements as a whole, we can only say that they were tolerably well carried out; but the
entertainments were too much varied for the capacity of the building, and the continual promenade of the visitors from room to room was a source of great annoyance, both to the lecturers and their hearers. With this exception, everything passed off smoothly, and those present seemed to enjoy themselves to the utmost. It now becomes our pleasing duty to describe the various exhibitions which were comprised in the programme; and first we must conduct the reader to the small room at the south-west corner of the building, which was devoted to an exhibition of articles of vertu and mechanical art: in fact, to an exhibition of the fine arts.

THE FINE ARTS
The principal subject of interest in this room was the prize statue of the Crystal Palace Art Union, 'Sunshine,' which was much admired. It is a very pretty little thing, the design being a female seated, and shading her eyes from the glare of the sun with her hand, as she attempts to view some distant object. Next to this was a little statuette, representing the Dying Gladiator, which attracted much notice. There was, likewise a good collection of vases, bottles, tazzas, and other articles of vertu, in parian and other ware, of considerable value and extreme chastity of design. These articles were exhibited by Mr. John Hart. In this room there was also exhibited a good bust, of Sir J. IT. Fisher, and some very beautiful stereoscopic slides were exhibited by Professor Hall. This gentleman also sent a few copies of the Art Union photographic engravings, which were greatly admired. We understand that there were also some microscopic studies exhibited by the Rev. F. W. Cox, but we were so unfortunate as to be unable to obtain a sight of them. Having thus briefly described the Fine Arts Exhibition, we must conduct our readers to the adjoining room, where was exhibited ..

THE COLLECTION OF W. OWEN, ESQ., M.P.
And before commencing a description of this curious collection, we must preface our remarks by stating that very many of the curiosities have been liberally presented by this gentleman, and are therefore the property of the public. The room was completely furnished, and almost reminded the visitor of one of the rooms in the British Museum, so tastefully were the numerous specimens displayed. These chiefly consisted of Fijian, Chinese and other curiosities, some of them of great merit. The walls were covered completely by immense Fijian screens made of tapa or mulberry paper, and above these were grouped spears of various kinds, and bows and arrows, all from Fiji.

MR. A. H. GOUGE'S COLLECTION.
Mr Gouge's collection of stuffed birds, English and colonial, shells, corals, weapons, and other curiosities, attracted considerable attention. The collection is a most valuable one comprising specimens of the greatest variety more especially in the departments of Ornithology and Conchology. We shall endeavour to give a short description of a few of the cases although, as the specimens were not classed, it is somewhat difficult to give a perfect description of them. First, then, as to the Ornithological collection, the case which most accorded with our fancy was that containing the large pheasant surrounded by specimens of Old England's field birds. These were all well preserved and attracted much notice. In the case were several varieties of quail, a beautiful specimen of the English magpie, a squirrel, and one or two beautifully preserved woodcocks and partridges. Near to this was a small case containing a cuckoo, and several varieties of the land and water rail, thrush &c.

The next of the cases of English specimens deserving particular notice, was a small glass shade, under which were exhibited, in a most natural manner, a small collection of singing birds, comprising the humming bird, blue wren, several species of the honey eaters, redbreast &c., &c. There was a large case, in which was exhibited a fine specimen of the wading species namely the spoonbill, and this fellow was surrounded by numerous specimens, which we can scarcely describe; they, however, comprised birds of the families of Psittacinae, Passerinae, Scansores, and Gallinacae.
Another case contained a very beautiful specimen of the Nankeen crane, well set, and gazing upwards. The next case which attracted attention was that containing a specimen of the glossy ibis and solitary bittern, the latter bird having been caught by Captain Sturt, and mentioned by him in the diary of his last expedition. Adjoining this was a case containing a great variety of the Citasinae, [ie Psittacinae] in the centre of which was a very magnificent specimen of the pink-crested cockatoo. Among this collection there were also specimens of the shrike or butcher bird, kingfisher, honey-eater, &c., and a remarkably fine regent bird, the beautiful black and golden plumage of which was shown to the fullest advantage.

The next case contained a specimen of the Passerinae Columbidae, surrounded by numerous specimens of the thrush, goldfinch, titmouse, kingfisher, chaffinch, bulfinch, golden-crested wren, and many other English singing birds. In the case next to this was a Recervirostra [ie Recurvirostra, an Avocet], an owl and one of those singular birds termed the goatsucker; there was also a large case which contained a somewhat anomalous collection, among which was a white cockatoo, a white falcon, a mopoke, a bird of paradise, a laughing jackass, an owl, an English pheasant, and one or two different species of dove. A good specimen of the emeu [ie emu] wren, a number of specimens of the Passerinae class, and various others.

Besides these there were numerous small cases containing owls, longshanks, laughing jackasses, parrots, and others, all set in different positions, and forming a very beautiful collection. We noticed one of those cases in particular, which contained a magnificent specimen of the English sea-gull, and another case of very fine parrots, in the centre of which was a remarkably rare specimen of the Pezoporus Formosis, or ground parrot; there was also in this case a good specimen of the bee-eater and a very fine specimen of the blue mountain [parrot]. This is decidedly one of the best cases of parrots in the collection.

Among the water birds may be mentioned a superb case of colonial specimens, comprising principally mountain and shovel ducks. In this case there was also a good specimen of the white heron, some coots and goatsuckers and a fine bittern, also a tern. We have now given a short description of the ornithological collection; and we shall endeavour to give a faint idea of some of the conchological and other specimens, all from New Caledonia, which islands have gained a particular reputation for the production of such specimens. As in the case of the birds, these have not been classified; we shall, however, endeavour to give a short description of them, pointing out the genera to which some of the rarer specimens belong.

The collection is arranged in two cases, and their value to the naturalist is considerably enhanced by the fact that they are all in their original state, having undergone no sort of preparation or embellishments to render them fit for the showcase. Notwithstanding this, many of them present a most beautiful appearance, and are great novelties. Among the first deserving of especial notice is a fine series of the Olivia Erythrostoma or Red-mouthed Olives which vary in size, and in almost every shade of color, from a beautiful buff banded with purple lake to a deep brown almost approaching to black. Next to the olives is a small but good series of specimens of the Tellina, commonly known as the setting sun shells, from the fact of their being marked with pink rays over a milk-white ground, which amalgamation of colour imparts to them a very delicate and beautiful appearance. These shells belong to the Bioales tribe, the order Acephala of Lamarck. The animals belonging to these shells are related to those of the mussel and oyster.

The next which we would particularly mention are a pair of perfect gems, or rather two, for there is too much difference in their size to allow of their constituting a pair. They are of the large species of Haliotis Iris, or Venus’s ear. These shells being polished display all manner of iridescent colours, and
attract very considerable attention. Then there was a very beautiful collection of harp shells (Harpa Ventricosa) a pair of those singular shells commonly called the woodcock's head, by some snipe beaked Murex (Murex Haustellam). In reality these shells bear a singular resemblance in formation to the head and beak of the woodcock, and we think the former name is decidedly the most appropriate. We have now to mention a little lot which may be looked upon as almost the most valuable in the collection namely a large number of specimens of a very chaste, delicate, and beautiful land shell, from the Island of San Christoval.

These shells are found in the trees of the dense forests of that island, and they are singularly beautiful. Their color is a delicate straw, with a brilliant orange or vermilion line round the outer lip. The scientific name of these shells is Bulimus Miltocheilus, and they were first discovered by the French Missionaries at Makeira Bay. Several very excellent specimens of them were also collected there by the late Mr. Benjamin Boyd, and brought to Sydney in his yacht the Wanderer, after he had been murdered by the natives of the neighbouring island of Guadalcanar. The next lot which we have to notice is a very beautiful series of the Argus cowries (Cyprae Argus), so named probably from the peculiar manner in which they are mottled. Each spot resembling much, an eye may have suggested the title under which they are now figured. Next is a specimen of the Bulimus Strangei so called after Strange, the naturalist. We now come to a very nice little collection of the white porcelain shell (Ovulum Ovum), which in appearance resembles the finest white porcelain. These are the shells with which the islanders usually ornament their canoes and images.

There is likewise in this collection a very fine specimen of the genus Psammobium, a bivalve shell, somewhat resembling the Tellina, but extremely rare; indeed this species is not described at all in any works that we are aware of, nor in Lovell Reeve's Monograph of the genus Psammobium, lately published in London; and it is not figured in Chenu's work, published recently in Paris where many new shells from New Caledonia are reported as being described and figured, it is looked upon by Mr. G. French Angas (late manager of the Sydney Museum, and the possessor of perhaps the finest conchological collection in the Southern Hemisphere, as being undoubtedly a new species. Mr. Angas informs us that it is his intention to figure and describe it in the published proceedings of the Zoological Society shortly, if he does not find it in Chenu's new work which he expected to receive per next mail from Europe.

Besides those mentioned there are in this collection some fine large specimens of the Cypra Tigris, a well known shell, which perhaps attains in New Caledonia a larger size and a richer coloring than in most other countries. This shell ranges throughout all the Indo-Pacific provinces of the Mollusca.

Hidden in the corner of the largest of the two cases, was a poor specimen of that glorious shell, the Cypra Aurora, the orange cowrie or morning dawn of the amateur conchologist. We mention the specimen as a poor one, because it was considerably chipped and knocked about; it was also somewhat small, but decidedly a rarity. The same case also contains some specimens of the triton shell, or Neptune's trumpet, of considerable value. These curious shells when full grown are used by the natives of the New Hebrides, and other islands, as war trumpets.

Besides these, in the back of the case were three good specimens of the Nautilus Macromphalus, one of which is unfortunately polished, showing the mace, or pearl structure of the under coating of the shell. These shells belong to the first order of the Mollusca, the Cephalopoda, and are the nearest living approach to the fossil Ammonites. In the centre row of this case, and prominent from their singular protruding claws, is a curious form of the spider shell (Ptersceras Chirungra), very beautifully coloured and deserving of attention. Besides these which we have particularly enumerated we observed numerous other shells in the collection principally of the Cyprae class. Among them were
specimens of the following species, viz. - C'Testudinaria, C'Arabica, C'Lynx, C'Isabella, C'Errones, C'Erosa, C'Caput Ser- pentis, C'Aurora, C'Tigris, C'Talpa, C'Carnaehola, C'Vitallus, C'Argus, C'Scruor, C'Mauretiana, and C'Mappa.

Besides the above catalogue, the cases were set off with numerous specimens of red and white coralline, and a few native curiosities, among which were shell bracelets, discs, and ornaments, grass bracelets, and fishing lines of the same, and last though not least, a fine specimen of gum resin obtained from the New Caledonian teatree. Mr. Gouge also exhibited a small model of a New Caledonian canoe, some weapons and combs, a set of bows and arrows, and a magnificent specimen of a water snake from New Caledonia, Platyuria Faciatus, which was preserved in spirits, and which was greatly admired on account of its beautiful colour - a deep black belted with pure white. The species abounds in the Island of New Caledonia, and are very poisonous. Besides these specimens, Mr. Gouge's collection comprised several good cases of insecta, principally collected at Kangaroo Island. These cases comprised specimens of nearly every class, many of them extremely rare. It would, however, be quite impracticable to describe them in the present notice.

Independent of Mr. Gouge's collection, there was exhibited in the same room some sewing machines by Mr. Eymer. The model of a bridge, which has for so long a period graced the lobby of the Institute, and which is the work of the late Mr. Southam; a fleece of wool of three years' growth weighing 24 lbs., exhibited by Capt. Bishop of Louth Island. A good case of South Australian ores and corals sent in by Mr. Pettinger of Kent Town, and a very fine collection of photographic studies from the celebrated cartoons of Raphael; these exhibited by Mr. John Howard Clark. There was also a good collection of photographs of the Crystal Palace interiors, which were sent in by Professor Hall and others; and a little French clock, which stood on the mantleshelf, gained considerable notice. This was a very ingenious piece of mechanism, representing a tree, on which were various singing birds, the movements of the machinery causing these to jump about from branch to branch, and even to sing. We do not know by whom this piece was exhibited.

In addition to all these articles, there was a very good collection of stuffed animals and birds exhibited by Mr. Stutely, of Gouger-Street. These specimens were remarkably fine; the principal feature, however, connected with them was the excellent stuffing, and the very correct manner in which they were set generally.

One case in particular was much admired. It contains a small terrier dog in the act of destroying a wild cat; there was also a good specimen of the native companion, and numerous other birds. We had almost forgotten to mention a magnificent specimen of white coral, which was exhibited by Mr. A.H. George, and which attracted a good deal of attention. This specimen is from Torres Strait. We must now close this notice, and we can only say that everything exhibited on the occasion was much admired, and great surprise was expressed by many that such magnificent collections should exist in the colony, and be lost in oblivion so far as the public are concerned. We can only reiterate the desire which we expressed yesterday, that these collections may be allowed to remain at the Institute for some time longer in order that subscribers and friends who were disappointed in not obtaining tickets may have an opportunity of inspecting them. We can assure our readers if such arrangements can be made the collections will well repay a visit.