

Sir - "Since my arrival in the colony I have remarked with sincere regret the absence of those means for social intercourse which bind man to man, and of those amusements which tend to make the individual cheerful and virtuous, and society happy, ... In a settlement so young as ours the existence of a theatre is not to be expected, but are there not a sufficient number of young men who could form an Amateur Dramatic Club; or, what would be much better, could we not get up a Working Men's Literary and Scientific Institution, where working men and their wives, and their families might meet to enjoy

"The feast of reason  
And the flow of soul."

Lord Chesterfield has declared that, "a well regulated stage is an ornament to society, a school for morals and good manners, and an encourager of wit and learning," but I think, Sir, that a Mechanics' Institute far exceeds the stage in usefulness and morality; I shall, therefore, be happy to join with any of your readers in forming one, having had some experience in those matters. I have a few books which I shall be happy to lend or give as the commencement of a Library.

Being a stranger here I have no private circle of friends to whom I could communicate my ideas, I shall therefore feel obliged if you can afford me a space in your columns, and beg to subscribe myself, Sir yours most respectfully," (2)

Charles J. Rae.

Many letters to the editor are insufficiently provocative to arouse any further correspondence and, although in some instances a spate of letters serves to excite or amuse for a short time the correspondents in such cases are all too frequently merely airing theoretical views with no thoughts of practical action. It is indeed seldom that a newspaper correspondent has the satisfaction of sufficiently arousing public opinion to produce concrete results. Mr. Rae, however, was one of that select few. The "Lyttelton Times" of July 3 contained an advertisement calling a meeting in the Christchurch Grammar School on July

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2. The "Lyttelton Times", Christchurch. March 20, 1852.