

PROCEEDINGS.  
NINTH SESSION, 1856-57.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

*St. George's Hall, 18th October, 1856.*

SAMUEL GATH, Esq., in the Chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were regarded as read, and were confirmed and signed.

The Honorary Secretary read the following

REPORT:

At the close of the eighth year of the operations of this Society, the retiring Council have the gratification to report its continued progress; in internal resources, in external usefulness, and also, as they believe, in public esteem. It has already adapted itself so well to the new constitution of 1854, and its mode of procedure is so well known, that they believe their successors in office will be called upon rather to strengthen and complete the framework which exists, than to originate anything new.

Experience enables them to suggest two points on which greater completeness might be given to the present system. One is the Intellectual Inquiries of the Society, which might be reduced to order in some detail as well as in the general principles, so as to secure the best papers on subjects of interest, without any important division being too long overlooked. The other is a more specific arrangement of Finances, so that each class of receipts shall in general be applied to a distinct purpose, and each class of payments be regulated by the general income, so as to make the Society at once more efficient, and perpetually self-supporting.

In the month of August, the annual volume was issued to the members. It contains more than 300 printed pages, and is illustrated by sixteen plates, four of them being of unusually large size. It may be regarded as a fair sample of what the members may expect to be furnished with during the future years of their connexion with the Society. Each of the previous volumes is enriched by special donations of illustrations, and the present constitutes no exception to this interesting rule. Besides three plates contributed by members, five of the most costly in production together with tabular printed matter, had been prepared for the annual volume of a sister society, whose officers generously placed them at our disposal.

At the close of the seventh session, the number of members of all kinds was 444; at the close of the eighth it is 458. The following is a detailed analysis of them:—Life Members, 86; Resident Annual, 240; Non-resident do., 147; Ex-officio, 3; Lady Associates, 4; Honorary Members, 28. At the commencement of the first session the number of ordinary members was 217; there has therefore been, during eight years, an average increase of 27 per session.

During the past session a room has been rented, and suitably furnished, at No. 57, Ranelagh Street, and the Society's Library, Museum, and miscellaneous property, have been deposited in it. A Catalogue of the whole is in type; and the Council have the

gratification of announcing that the collection will be available to the members from the commencement of the ordinary meetings. As the extent and character of the collection change rapidly—partly from purchase and exchange, but chiefly from donations—only a limited number of copies of the catalogue will be printed, to be forwarded to those members who formally ask for it. With the view of adding to its present usefulness, the donations which have been received since the close of the meetings in May will be added, though they have not yet been formally laid before the Society.

It appears from the Treasurer's balance sheet, that the entire expenditure for the purposes of the past session (including the publication and issue of the volume) has amounted to £286 15s. By means of the annual subscriptions alone, the whole of this sum has been discharged, and a balance left of £25 1s. 6d. If to this we add entrance fees, compositions for life-membership, and the price of volumes sold, the receipts during the session exceed the mere sessional expenditure by £96 18s. 8d. Part of this sum has been employed in increasing the furniture and stock, and part in discharging both sessional and permanent liabilities incurred last session; yet a balance still remains in the hands of the Treasurer of £39 11s.

During the past session, one of the miscellaneous evenings was made more generally interesting by the Society procuring a larger meeting room than usual, and inviting the attendance of lady visitors. The order of business was followed as usual, but the paper selected for the occasion was one of great interest, either for a learned or a popular audience. The general result was so satisfactory that the Council recommend to their successors the practice of holding one such extended general meeting in the course of each session.

On the 24th of June, an excursion to Preston was undertaken, a brief account of which is given in an appendix to the volume. The kind and hospitable reception which the Society received from its members and other friends in that locality, including the Mayor, deserves a special and grateful mention. This, and the general results of the day's investigation, suggest that a similar excursion might be made annually, to some point of interest within the two counties, after the close of the sessional meetings. Opportunities for local investigation will also be afforded by the Congress of the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, which will meet in Chester in the summer of next year. The members of this Society will rejoice to co-operate with fellow-labourers within their local limits; and to offer to them, when they visit Liverpool, such cordial welcome as they have gladly shown to other and similar societies.

The gentleman who was appointed Assistant Secretary at the commencement of last session, has felt it necessary to retire from the duties, owing chiefly to the state of his health; and the Council, after giving great attention to the subject, have appointed Mr. W. W. Rundell as his successor. Mr. Rundell occupied a similar position for ten years in Cornwall, with great credit to himself, and advantage to the society with which he was connected; and more recently he has become known to the public of Liverpool as the able and earnest secretary of the Compass Committee.

During the present year the Society has lost the usual per centage of members, by death, resignation, and change of residence. Among these was one of the members of Council, the late Thomas Moore, Esq., an original member of the Society. His family had been connected with Liverpool for several centuries, and he was himself deeply interested in historical and antiquarian pursuits. The Council have resolved to diminish the apparent number of members still farther, by putting into force law xii, for the formal ejection of two or three gentlemen who are largely in arrear to the Society.

The gentlemen who have been selected as suitable successors to those who retire, have all had experience either in the Council or on Committees; and they are all prepared to discharge the duties, the performance of which you may entrust to them.

It was then moved by Dr. MACINTYRE, seconded by PETER R. M'QUIE, Esq., and resolved unanimously:—

That the Report now read be adopted, and printed and circulated with the Proceedings of the Society.