

ANNUAL REPORT, 1869.

At the close of another Institute year, and the 39th of its existence, your Directors, in accordance with the requirements of the constitution, beg to present the following Report of their proceedings:—

THE MEMBERSHIP.

Your Directors desire again to urge on the attention of the friends of the Institute, the importance of increasing the membership. Whatever other sources of income the Institute possesses, the subscriptions of its members should be the most satisfactory and the most permanent. The incomes from rents and entertainments are casual and uncertain; but a large membership secures a fixed and reliable income, and is the best evidence that the Institute is fulfilling its work as an educational and literary organization. Your Directors believe that in this department it is open to very great improvement. The subject has in previous reports been brought before the annual meetings, and various suggestions have been made to aid the object in view; but, practically, they have not led to satisfactory results. As the Institute offers in its library and reading-room, and classes, advantages and attractions to all, fully adequate to the subscription paid, you Directors believe that the most effectual method of bringing its claims before the public, and largely increasing its membership, is to canvass the city through its officers. They are of opinion that an intelligent explanation of its advantages, and an earnest representation of its claims as an Educational Institute, necessary to the progress and improvement of the city, and especially to the rising generation, would induce a large number to enrol themselves amongst its members, either to secure its advantages, or, in the generous spirit of a liberal patriotism, to encourage and improve an institution so closely associated with the reputation and well-being of the community. With this view it is proposed not to leave this important business to voluntary efforts, or to casual agents, but to authorize the Secretary-Librarian to undertake this duty; and as that officer might carry on this labour during the whole of the summer months, your Directors look with confidence for successful results.

The number of members at date of last report was..... 576
Subscribers..... 449
Honorary Members..... 17
Dile Members..... 75

Making a total of..... 1,117
From which deduct by death, removals and withdrawals..... 500
Leaving..... 617
New Members and Subscribers admitted during the year..... 433

Total..... 1,050
Classified thus:—
Life Members..... 75
Honorary Members..... 17
Members..... 584
Subscribers..... 374
Total..... 1,050

FINANCES.

There are two principal sources of revenue, on which the prosperity of the Institute depends. The first, that of membership, has been already referred to; the next, that of rents, which is always the largest, shows a considerable decrease from the previous year; and as this is a source of income which your Directors cannot control, the importance of relying more upon the subscriptions of members gains additional force. Another source of income is that of Lectures and Entertainments. The amount derived from these efforts has been very small, and will be more particularly referred to under their distinctive heads.

The Treasurer's audited statement, as given in appendix B shows total receipts for the year \$7,321 75; total expenditure, \$7,196 80; balance in hand, \$124 95.

THE LIBRARY AND READING ROOM.

The Library being of such importance as a means of popular education requires a large amount of attention. Your Directors have, to the extent of their resources, supplied it with the best and most useful books available; but to sustain it in a manner commensurate with its claims, requires a far greater

outlay than the Institute can afford. The constant purchase of books, as well as occasional expenditure of considerable expense on the part of the members of the Institute, at large to consider the value of a really good circulation, and endeavour, by increasing the number of copies, or by any other means, to place at the disposal of the members means for adding to the literary works of the Institute, the value of those practical the engineer and the mechanic, which no Mechanics' Institute could be said to meet its wants.

The READING ROOM is supplied with the latest and literary papers from Britain, the United States, and other countries, which, together with the most valuable privileges of this Institute, at an annual cost.

The list of news regularly received in the Appendix can be found in the Appendix. The number of books at the date of the last report was..... Added during the year..... Bound up from the previous year.....

Total..... Lost and worn-out during the year.....

Present total.....

Vols. 1869
Biography..... 602
History..... 672
Miscellaneous..... 597
Fiction..... 2,209
Poetry and the Drama..... 243
Periodical Literature..... 1,132
Science and Art..... 597
Religious Literature..... 163
Voyages and Travels..... 513
Illustrated Works..... 222
Library of Reference..... 460

7,430

THE EVENING CLASSES.

The CLASSES have a full attendance. In order to increase the number and to establish classes in other branches, the directors have