

the papers before it, of offering a Report on the steps most advisable to be taken in relation to the Prizes to be offered for that Class. The Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Classes who may be appointed for the ensuing year, are most respectfully referred to the 40th and 44th bye-laws, and to the Resolution of the Council on this subject, dated the 14th of January, 1836.

No part of the Society's attempts has been so unsuccessful, as the endeavour to call forth the intellectual energies of the country by the offer of Prizes. The Council regrets to state, that, from first to last, this attempt has been a failure. Is it because the public in general have not confidence in the judgment of the Society and its Officers, so as to lead to the expectation of an impartial decision on the merits of their productions? Or is it, what we could hardly expect,—the want of taste for such pursuits? Or is it, as we might more reasonably suppose, so complete a devotedness to business and the ordinary occupations of life, as precludes all attention to objects of a more elevated cast? Or, finally, are the public so impressed with the purity of the motives from which knowledge and taste ought to be cultivated, that they will not acknowledge themselves capable of being roused to exertion by the prospect of a Prize or a Medal?—The probable cause is the want of the stimulus of example, joined to the want of taste for literary occupations. If a few adventurers could once be induced to offer themselves competitors for our Prizes, the rarity of the proceeding would then be worn off, and example and emulation might thus be expected to produce their usual effects. There is reason to apprehend, that the fear of failure, and the mortification that would thence ensue, is the greatest bar to our receiving Prize Essays. It cannot be too much impressed upon the minds of those that might wish to become candi-