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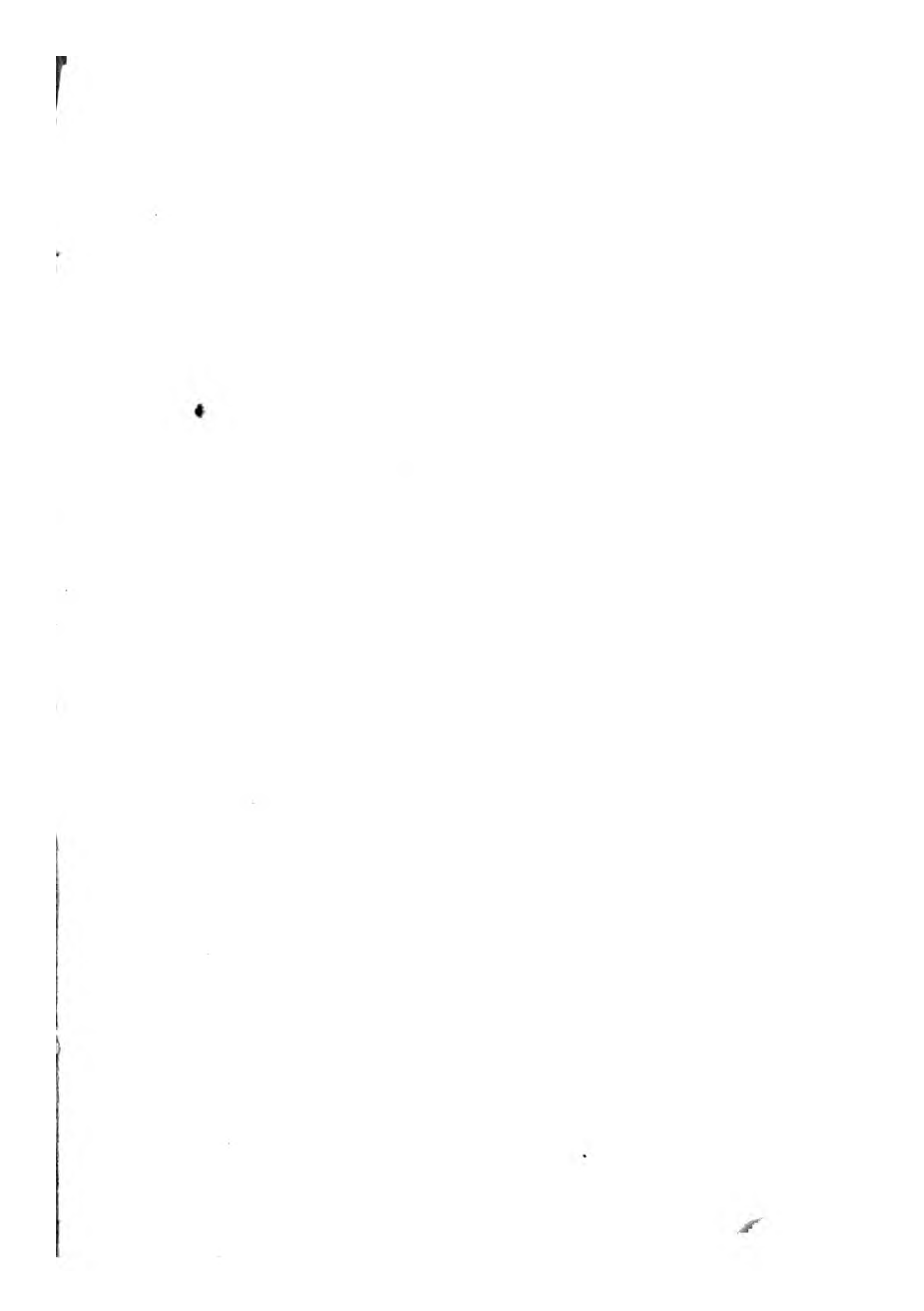
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ROYAL LITERARY FUND.

A SUMMARY OF FACTS,

DRAWN FROM THE RECORDS OF THE SOCIETY, AND
ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE IN ANSWER TO

ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN A PAMPHLET ENTITLED 'THE CASE OF THE
REFORMERS OF THE LITERARY FUND: STATED BY CHARLES W. DILKE,
CHARLES DICKENS, AND JOHN FORSTER.'

TOGETHER WITH

A Report of the Proceedings at the last Annual Meeting,

MARCH 12, 1858,

UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF EARL STANHOPE.



270. a. 48.

The Committee, acting on behalf of the Corporation, have deemed it necessary to make public the following facts, in the confident belief that they will remove from the public mind any doubts which may have been raised as to the proper administration of the Fund, and that they will obviate the mischief which might otherwise ensue to the beneficial powers of the Corporation from misstatements that have been so widely circulated.

General Committee, 1858.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE	.. .. .	1827
THE EARL STANHOPE	.. .. .	1856
THE BISHOP OF OXFORD	.. .. .	1856
BENJAMIN BOND CABELL, ESQ.	.. .. .	1829
HENRY FOSS, ESQ.	.. .. .	1827
JOHN GOUGH NICHOLS, ESQ.	.. .. .	1836
SIR JOHN FORBES, M.D.	.. .. .	1842
JAMES PRIOR, ESQ.	.. .. .	1847
ROBERT BELL, ESQ.	.. .. .	1851
GEORGE GODWIN, ESQ.	.. .. .	1851
PETER LEVESQUE, ESQ.	.. .. .	1853
DR. PETER MARK ROGET, M.D.	.. .. .	1853
WILLIAM FREDERICK POLLOCK, ESQ.	.. .. .	1855
DR. AUGUSTUS GUEST, LL.D.	.. .. .	1856
HENRY REEVE, ESQ.	.. .. .	1856
RIGHT HON. EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P.	.. .. .	1857
THE DEAN OF WESTMINSTER	.. .. .	1857
DR. PATRICK COLQUHOUN, LL.D.	.. .. .	1857
DR. WILLIAM SMITH, LL.D.	.. .. .	1857

AND THE REGISTRARS AND TREASURERS.

Registrars.

JOHN BOWYER NICHOLS, ESQ.	.. .. .	1821
WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON, ESQ.	.. .. .	1833
JOHN DICKINSON, ESQ.	.. .. .	1835

Treasurers.

SIR HENRY ELLIS, K.H.	.. .. .	1816
WILLIAM TOOKE, ESQ.	.. .. .	1824
RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, ESQ., M.P.	.. .. .	1846

The Dates give the year of election as Officers of the Corporation.

LITERARY FUND.

SUMMARY OF FACTS,

IN ANSWER TO ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN A PAMPHLET ENTITLED "THE CASE OF THE REFORMERS OF THE LITERARY FUND: STATED BY CHARLES W. DILKE, CHARLES DICKENS, AND JOHN FORSTER."

THE pamphlet states that the "movement against the management of the Literary Fund" originated in "two great abuses:"—1st. "The cost of administering its affairs;" 2nd. "The constitution of the Managing Committee." The charges brought against the Society under these heads are as follow, stated and answered separately in the order in which they arise in the pamphlet:—

I. p. 3.—"The amount of the cost in the last accounts [1856] very nearly equalled one-half of the whole money distributed; that is to say, the sum distributed in relieving claimants was 1225*l.*, and the expense of the distribution was 532*l.*"

The sum of 532*l.* represents, not "the expense of distribution," but the whole disbursements of the Society. The comparison of the expenditure with the sum distributed is false in principle, because the expenditure is incurred in the creation, and not in the distribution of the Fund; and it is fallacious as a test of management, because the claims are liable to considerable fluctuations, while the outlay for the maintenance of the Society does not very materially vary. Thus in 1855 and 1857, the sums distributed to claimants were respectively 1665*l.* and 1780*l.*, to which the expenditure bore a proportion of, not one-half, but less than one-third.

If this erroneous test be applied to the early period of the Society, when its affairs are asserted to have been managed with the utmost economy, it will be found that the comparison is largely in favour of the present time. As an instance selected by one of the organs of the "Reformers," reference may be made to the cash account of the year ending in April, 1801, which has been adopted, even to a misprint, as the foundation of a purely imaginative calculation by a writer who, in addition to many extraordinary misrepresentations, computes the average annual expenditure of a series of years, including this year, to have been 47*l.* 6*s.* From a careful investigation into the cash-books, it appears that the sum distributed to claimants in the year ending in April, 1801, was 257*l.* 10*s.*, and that the expenditure was 81*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.*, being at the rate of 32 per cent. It is necessary to observe that at that period the Society was at no expense for a house or chambers, and that in four years

afterwards (1805-6) the expenditure was increased by about 195*l.* per annum for a house, which sum, added to the other disbursements, discloses an expenditure of considerably more than cent. per cent. upon the amount distributed to claimants. The following are the items of expenditure, extracted from the cash-book, for the year from April, 1806, to April, 1807, the first complete year in which the rent and charges of a house entered into the disbursements :—

Clerk, "Remuneration" ..	£36	15	0		
Collector ditto ..	31	10	0		
Collector's Bill	7	3	0		
				£75	8 0
Printing	33	11	9		
Stationery	8	17	6		
				42	9 3
					£117 17 3
Rent, Taxes, and Rates	195	0	0		
Gratuity to Servant of House	5	5	0		
				200	5 0
Total Expenditure	£318	2	3		
Amount distributed in relief	245	11	0		
Excess of expenditure over amount distributed ..	£72	11	3		

From this statement it will be seen that the current, unavoidable outlay of the Society, irrespective of the expenditure connected with the house, had risen in 1806 to 117*l.* 17*s.* 3*d.*, an increase of nearly 50 per cent. upon the expenditure of 1800, while the amount distributed in relief had not only not increased in proportion, but had actually in that year diminished. It will be seen also that the expenditure in 1806, exclusive of the house, was equal to 48 per cent. upon the amount distributed, and that the expenditure, including the house, bore a proportion to the amount distributed of 130 per cent., that is to say, that the proportion of the expenditure to the grants was nearly 100 per cent. higher in 1806 than it is now. A comparison between 1806 and 1857 shows that in the latter year there were more than double the number of applicants relieved, and upwards of seven times the amount granted in relief.

	No. of Grants.	Amount Granted.
1806	26	£245 11 0
1857	55	1780 0 0

It would be unnecessary to enter into any explanation respecting the "expense of distribution," but for the frequent and disingenuous use which has been made of the phrase. The expenditure of the Literary Fund is devoted to the machinery by which the income of the Society is sustained and improved, to the active and incessant operations by which the basis of support is extended year after year, and to the means by which the interests of the Institution are upheld and protected in the midst of the numerous claims which solicit the benevolence of the public. The distribution of the resources thus obtained constitutes, in reality, the lightest portion of the labours of the paid officers of the Society.

The practical test of management lies, therefore, in the relations of income and expenditure. The income for 1856, the year referred to in the “Case,” was 2664*l.*, the whole expenditure 532*l.*—one-fifth, or 20 per cent.

The expenditure consists mainly of two items—the Secretary and the house. The following are the details for 1856 :—

Rent and expenses of chambers	£201	12	8
Secretary and Collector	221	3	4
Incidental expenses	106	14	6
Law expenses	2	10	0
	<hr/>		
	£532	0	6

SECRETARY.

The office of Secretary was created on the 13th April, 1836, on the motion of Mr. Dilke. The duties had been previously performed by a clerk. Mr. Blewitt was elected Secretary on the 13th March, 1839, at a salary of 100*l.* a-year, with apartments, and 20*l.* a-year for coals, servants, &c. On the 11th March, 1840, the thanks of the General Committee were voted to Mr. Blewitt for his “great zeal and assiduity, and more particularly for his excellent arrangement of the documents belonging to the Society.” This resolution was moved by Mr. Dilke, and seconded by Dr. Taylor. A similar resolution, thanking him for his “extraordinary exertions” on behalf of the Society, and accompanied by a gratuity of 50*l.*, was passed in the following June. Mr. Dilke was present at this meeting. The sum of 20*l.*, for coals, &c., was raised to 40*l.* in January, 1841, on the motion of Mr. Foss, seconded by Mr. Dilke. Mr. Blewitt’s salary was increased to 150*l.*, on the recommendation of the General Meeting of the Corporation, on the 9th March, 1842. Mr. Dilke was present at this meeting. It was again increased, on a similar recommendation of the General Meeting, on the 11th March, 1846, to 200*l.*, its present amount, the increase being accompanied by the thanks of the General Meeting to Mr. Blewitt for his “valuable services.” Mr. Dickens was present at the meeting of the Committee by which this recommendation was adopted. The general body of the Corporation, by whom this salary was recommended, have continued to sanction it by their votes at the General Meetings annually to the present year.

HOUSE.

The possession of a house was one of the objects strenuously insisted upon by Mr. Williams, the founder of the Literary Fund. He regarded a house as being indispensable to the progress and stability of the Fund; but he was not able to accomplish his purpose till 1805, when he considered it wise to expend 150*l.* a-year on the rent of a house, although the total income of the Society was at that time only 800*l.* 19*s.* 11*d.* From 1805 to 1818 the Society occupied a house in Gerrard Street, the rent, taxes, and rates, during that period, amounting, exclusive of house expenses, to 195*l.* per annum. Mr. Williams lived in the house till his death in 1816.

In 1818 the Society took unfurnished apartments in Great Queen Street, at 105*l.* a-year.

In 1820 the Society removed to unfurnished chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields, at 105*l.* a-year, paying a premium of 210*l.*, which, at 10 per cent., raised the total rent to 126*l.* a-year.

In June, 1840, the General Committee ordered the Secretary to look out for an eligible house, and report thereon to the Committee. The Secretary placed himself in communication with the Sub-Committee, to whom such questions were always referred, and of which Mr. Dilke was a member. After visiting some houses which were not considered eligible, the Sub-Committee, in November, 1840, recommended the General Committee to take the present premises in Great Russell Street. In the following week the General Committee adopted the recommendation, and empowered the Sub-Committee to obtain a lease. The premises were accordingly taken upon lease at 140*l.* per annum, and a sum of 30*l.* was paid down as composition for taxes. In December, 1840, the first meeting of the General Committee was held in these chambers, when the minutes of the preceding meeting were read and confirmed. Mr. Dickens and Mr. Dilke were both present.

These facts, then, are established: that the current expenditure for a house was recommended by a Sub-Committee, of which Mr. Dilke was a member; that it was adopted by the General Committee, of which Mr. Dickens and Mr. Dilke were members; and that it was confirmed at a meeting of the General Committee, at which both Mr. Dickens and Mr. Dilke were present. The amount of responsibility of the present Committee, with reference to this item of expenditure, is shown in the dates of their election. Of the twenty-five members who constitute the present General Committee, including the President and the Registrars and Treasurers, seventeen have been elected since the chambers in Great Russell Street were taken, and they have consequently come in under the conditions laid down by their predecessors, and are bound by the lease to which Mr. Dickens and Mr. Dilke, and not they, were parties.

The objection urged by the authors of the "Case" against the "constitution of the Managing Committee," is, that the Council are no longer permitted to exercise the privilege they formerly enjoyed of being present at the meetings of the Committee, by which alteration of the old system, it is alleged, a salutary check upon abuses has been withdrawn. It appears, however, that the responsibility of this expenditure on a house, one of the principal abuses complained of, rests chiefly with the Council; for the Board by which the chambers in Great Russell Street were taken was composed of eleven members of the Committee and fourteen of the Council.

COMPARATIVE RESULTS OF PRESENT AND FORMER MANAGEMENT.

The following particulars represent a comparison between two periods, the eighteen years preceding the date of Mr. Blewitt's appointment, and the eighteen years that have elapsed since, to the close of the financial year of 1856:—

TOTAL EXPENDITURE.		TOTAL INCOME.	
From 1821 to 1838 . .	£10,043 11 4	From 1821 to 1838 . .	£28,711 3 10
„ 1839 to 1856 . .	13,020 4 11	„ 1839 to 1856 . .	39,063 13 7
<hr/>		<hr/>	
Total Increase of Ex- penditure in the latter period	£2,976 13 7	Total Increase of In- come during the latter period	£10,352 9 9
	Deduct total Increase of Expenditure		2,976 13 7
			<hr/>
	Net Increase of Income from 1839 to 1856 .		£7,375 16 2

The result of this comparison is, that the income was increased during the latter period by an amount equal to 25 per cent. on the whole income of the former period.

The grants have increased in proportion. During the first period they amounted to 17,023*l.* 5*s.*, during the second period to 23,155*l.*; showing an increase on the latter of 6131*l.* 15*s.*

II. p. 3.—“ *The Managing Committee, taking advantage of a mistake in the wording of the Charter, have been able to dispense, at their meetings, with the presence and assistance of the Council.*”

It had long been the practice to admit the members of the Council to the meetings of the Committee, with the right of voting, under a certain bye-law which in general terms gave them that privilege. In June, 1847, Sir Harris Nicolas, a member of the General Committee, gave notice of a motion to the effect that the bye-law was at variance with the provisions of the Charter, which limited to four the number of the members of the Council who should form part of the General Committee. A case upon the whole question was submitted to Mr. Serjeant Merewether, who confirmed the view taken by Sir Harris Nicolas, and declared that the bye-law, as it had been construed in practice, was “absolutely null and void.” This opinion and the original case were submitted for revision to the then Attorney-General, afterwards Chief Justice Jervis, and Mr. Cairns, the present Solicitor-General. They confirmed the opinion of Mr. Serjeant Merewether,—adding that, in their opinion, all the acts of the Committee, during the period it had been constituted according to the Bye-laws, were invalid; that the Committee would be restored to its proper constitution by all persons, except those elected under the Charter, ceasing to attend its meetings; and that, when so constituted, it might render valid all past acts by reciting and confirming them at two successive meetings. The following passage contains their construction of the Charter in reference to the Council:—

“ There are not, as we think, any original or independent powers given to the Council by the Charter, or which can now be given to the Council, consistently with the Charter.”

The Managing Committee, therefore, did not “take advantage of a mistake in the wording of the Charter” to dispense with the presence of the Council; but, under the advice of the highest legal authorities, the Council voluntarily withdrew to enable the Committee to give legal effect to the provisions of the Charter.

Acting strictly according to the advice of counsel, the General Committee, on the 10th of November, 1847, passed a resolution con-

firming all the past acts of the Society ; and on the 24th November, 1847, they confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting, adopting at the same time the following resolution :—

“ That in confirming the minutes of the 10th inst., the Committee are desirous of thus again distinctly recognising their entire acquiescence in the opinion given by Counsel of the constitution, according to the Charter, of the Committee charged with the conduct and management of the affairs of the Society.”

Mr. Dickens was present at this meeting, and voted for this resolution, which was carried unanimously. Mr. Dickens was also present at a meeting of the General Committee on the 12th January, 1848, at which a Report, presented by Sir Robert Harry Inglis as chairman of a Special Committee, recommending the General Committee to abrogate all bye-laws and regulations which “ militated against the proposed arrangements for the management of the Society and the construction of the Charter according to the opinion of counsel,” was adopted.

III. p. 4.—“ *The Council has now no existence but in name, never meets, and never will meet ; the General Committee having decided that it cannot be so much as called together by any human authority. The General Committee itself, in other words, is irresponsible.*”

The Committee had no power to decide that the Council could not be called together, and never did make such a decision. The Council was legally disqualified by the Charter that created it. The Committee never was responsible to the Council, and the cessation of the Council could not render it irresponsible. It is now, as it always has been, responsible to the Corporation.

IV. p. 4.—Corrupt practices are imputed as the consequences of the irresponsibility which the Committee are alleged to have secured by the exclusion of the Council. Three examples are given :—“ *One member of the Committee made out, from the Society’s secret books, a list of persons who had been relieved, and gave this list to a publisher.*” Again : “ *At a time when the Committee were doling out relief in such single donations as five, ten, and twenty—in no instance (it is believed) exceeding forty—pounds, they voted one hundred pounds each to the widows of two of their own members ; and as one of the deceased was a man of fortune, who bequeathed two legacies of a hundred guineas each to friends, and as no application for relief had been made by his widow, it is fair to assume, that but for troublesome inquiry and comment, such self-apportionments of the funds would have become by no means uncommon.*”

The first of these cases occurred nineteen years ago. The delinquent member was expelled.

Of the other two cases, one occurred twenty-nine, and the other thirty years ago. Both had the strongest claims on the Society, from the great services rendered to the Fund by the deceased members, and the statements of distress laid before the Committee. The resolution referring to the situation of the widow of one of these gentlemen, a distinguished critic and biographer, who had for twenty-six years zealously devoted himself to the promotion of the interests of the Fund, fully explains the grounds on which the grant was made :—

“Resolved unanimously, That the meeting has heard with the deepest sorrow the pressing necessities of the widow and family of the late ———, the distinguished author of ——— and other works, and long one of the ——— of the Society, who, from an early period of its commencement to the day of his decease, continued to mark his zealous attachment to its interests, not merely by his pecuniary contributions, but by the application of his fine talents to the promotion of the great objects for which it was instituted.

“Resolved unanimously, That under these circumstances the widow and family of the late ———, whose eminent services in support of this Society will ever be held in grateful remembrance, have a very powerful, and hitherto an unprecedented claim upon its funds; and although the largest sum given in similar cases has never exceeded 50*l.*, the sum of 100*l.* be in this peculiar instance granted to Mrs. ——— for the benefit of herself and family.”— [May 22, 1828.]

The resolution in the second case is equally explanatory, testifying to the “zeal and exertions of the deceased, from which, for a series of years, the Society had derived the most essential benefits;” and adding that the Committee had received the “painful communication that the widow of the deceased was left, with six young children, in circumstances which rendered the aid of the Society desirable.” [November 11, 1829.] Five years after this grant was made, it came to the knowledge of the Committee that the deceased had left some money in the Funds. A memorandum to that effect is preserved amongst the papers relating to the case. It is scarcely necessary to observe that the grant was made upon the faith of the statements of distress communicated to the Committee.

Whether these grants are properly described as “self-apportionments of the funds,” or whether the grounds on which they were voted can be considered adequate or satisfactory, are questions which do not concern the present Committee. The imputation conveyed by the reference to these grants in the pamphlet is answered by the dates of the transactions themselves, which took place many years before the present Committee was in existence.

But this is not the whole charge. These alleged abuses are brought forward as “examples of abuse of trust” committed *after* the Council had ceased to “superintend all the affairs and concerns of the Society;” and when the Committee, left to itself, had become irresponsible. The answer is again found in the dates. The “superintendence” of the Council ceased in 1847; these “examples of abuse of trust” took place in 1828 and 1829, that is to say, upwards of twenty years before. If therefore they were acts of corruption, the discredit of them must be transferred to that system of double government which the present constitution, under the provisions of the Charter, has displaced.

V. p. 6-7.—“*It never could have seemed possible to him [the Founder] that more than half a century after its establishment, it would remain one of the Fund's bye-laws that a man who had written a book, however worthless, might claim the advantages of the Institution; but that a man who had only written in periodicals, however powerfully, must be entirely excluded: which bye-law received actual illustration, not ten years ago, in the deliberate refusal of relief to a man dying of literary exertion, who had contributed to the highest class of periodicals literary matter more than equal to twenty-five octavo volumes.*”

Upon reference to the applicant's own statement, it appears that he estimated his periodical writings at "six or eight volumes *duodecimo*;" magnified by the authors of the pamphlet to more than 25 volumes *octavo*.

The authorship being insufficient under the law then in force, the application could not be entertained. Mr. Dickens was one of the Committee present when the relief in this case was "refused." He did not then, nor at any time during a service of eight years on the Committee, propose an alteration in the law. The law has been abolished by the present Committee.

VI. p. 7.—"*We may imagine also the disbelief and scorn with which any such suggestion would have been met by the Founder of this Fund, as that another of its bye-laws, after all these years had passed, would continue to declare that the man who sought its relief—no matter what his genius or his learning—no matter how manifold his reasons for keeping secret his temporary distress—no matter how direful his need for prompt and immediate aid—must produce to the Committee 'testimonials of two or more respectable persons authenticating the facts' on which his application was grounded, and must lodge such testimonials with the Secretary at least seven days before the Meeting which was to determine their credibility.*"

Previously to 1840, no interval was necessary between the time of sending in letters of application for relief, and the day of the meeting upon which they were to be taken into consideration; nor were testimonials authenticating the facts required by the bye-laws. Previously to 1841, no particular form of application, or statement, was required from persons seeking relief. It being found that this practice led to laxity and irregularity, it was ultimately altered. The following notes from the minutes indicate the dates and circumstances under which the alteration took place.

Several attempts had been made at different times to introduce a regulation requiring applications to be sent in seven days before the meeting of the Committee. In December, 1838, notice of a motion to that effect was given by Mr. Duncan. In March, 1839, a similar motion, requiring all applications to be lodged with the Secretary "a week at least" before the Meeting, was made by Mr. Rosser, and seconded by Mr. Dilke. This motion was resisted, adjourned, and ultimately withdrawn. It was at length introduced by the Bye-law Committee into the new Committee Regulations of 1840, the fifth of which expressly provided that "no application should be entertained" unless it had been sent in writing to the Secretary "at least seven days previous to the Meeting," nor unless "accompanied by the testimonials of two or more respectable persons (not being Members of the Council or General Committee), authenticating the facts therein stated." These Bye-laws and Regulations were adopted on the 10th of June, 1840, on the motion of Mr. Foss, seconded by Mr. Dilke.

The question of "Forms of Application" to be filled up by applicants, and of "Forms of Recommendation" to be filled up by the referees "authenticating the facts," occupied the attention of the Committee in the following year. On the 10th of February, 1841,

a resolution to the effect “that a Form of Letter to be addressed to the referees of applicants for relief be referred for consideration and preparation to the Sub-Committee,” was proposed by Mr. Bruce, and seconded by Mr. Dilke. On the 7th of the following April Mr. Bruce brought forward in the Sub-Committee blank Forms for Applicants and their referees. These Forms, incorporating the Committee Regulations as to the “seven days” and “testimonials” in the same page, were subsequently printed and referred for consideration to the General Committee, by whom they were adopted on the 5th of May, 1841.

It appears, therefore, that Mr. Dilke, who in the pamphlet protests against the notice of seven days, and the testimonials of two or more respectable persons, is himself responsible for the introduction both of the Regulations enforcing these conditions, and of the Forms in which they are embodied.

The authentication by two referees of the particular facts of distress stated by an applicant, as required in these forms, has been repealed by the present Committee; and the applicant is thus relieved from the necessity of exposing the details of his case to his referees. The testimonials now required by the Committee are of a general character, containing nothing more than is indispensable to “authenticate the merits of the case.” This alteration in the testimonials was adopted on the motion of the Bishop of Oxford, seconded by Mr. Harrison.

VII. p. 7.—“*A simple mention of the fact that in 1802 it [the Literary Fund] had 394 Annual Subscribers, whereas in 1857 it has little more than 100 (notwithstanding the astonishing increase in the number of readers which the half-century has seen), gives to the views entertained by Williams their proper significance.*”

The statement that there were 394 Annual Subscribers in 1802 is altogether suppositious. It is founded on a List printed at the end of a book called ‘The Claims of Literature,’ written by Mr. Williams, and published in 1802, for the purpose of explaining to the public the “object, principles, and tendencies” of the Literary Fund. There is no intimation in the heading of the List, or in any part of the book, to justify the assumption that it was intended as the List of Subscribers for 1802; and an analysis of its contents proves that it was not.

This List contains the names of 474 contributors, divided into three classes:—1. Subscribers for life, by a donation of 20*l.* or upwards; 2. Subscribers for life, by a donation of 10*l.* or 10*l.* 10*s.*; 3. Annual Subscribers. The number of the 1st class is 17; of the 2nd, 73; and of the 3rd, 394, including 10 that appear also as Life Subscribers.

The following facts, obtained by a careful investigation of the cash-books, will show how far this list represents the actual state of the Society in 1802:—

1. Of the 17 names contained in this class there is 1 of which the cash-books have no entry whatever, and another which does not

appear till 1814, when it is entered as a donor of 20*l.* Of the 15 remaining names, 1 was a donor in 1792—1 in 1796—1 in 1797—2 in 1799—1 in 1800—and 6 in 1801. Their donations in amount were 1 of 50*l.*—9 of 21*l.*—and 5 of 20*l.*

2. Of the 73 names in this class, 2 are expressly described as “the late”—of 2 others there is no trace in the cash-books—2 are entered as donors of 2*l.* 2*s.* in 1797—1 appears as a donor of 1*l.* 1*s.* in 1802—and 2 are entered as annual subscribers of 1*l.* 1*s.* Of the remaining 64, the cash-books show that 1 was a donor of 1795—3 of 1797—2 of 1798—16 of 1799—30 of 1800—and 12 of 1801. Their donations in amount were 1 of 30*l.*—1 of 10*l.*—and 62 of 10*l.* 10*s.*

3. Of the 394 persons described in the “Case” as Annual Subscribers for 1802—209 do not appear in the cash-book of that year. Of these 209—19 are not to be found in the accounts of any year—10 were donations, or discontinued subscriptions of 1795—1 was a donation of 1796—1 of 1797—27 of 1799—43 of 1800—45 of 1801—and the remaining 63 paid nothing in 1802. Deducting these 209 names from the 394, there remain 185 as the actual number of Annual Subscribers for the year 1802. The subsequent payment of arrears by 10 persons raises this number to 195.

The final result is that in 1802 there were 79 donors, and 185 annual subscribers, augmented subsequently by back payments to 195. In 1857 the number of donors was 108, and of annual subscribers, 119. It should be observed, however, that the mode of subscribing to charities has undergone a great change since 1802, and that not only are the amounts larger, but that Life compositions have, to a considerable extent, superseded the inconvenient usage of paying small annual subscriptions.

Pursuing the comparison farther, some still more remarkable results are obtained.

The List printed in 1802, which contains some names that do not appear in the cash books as having ever paid any subscriptions, others that represent deceased subscribers, and a large majority that belong to former years, going, in one instance, as far back as 1792, amounts altogether to 474. From the analysis already given, it will have been seen that of these 474 contributors only a small number were qualified to vote, even supposing them all to have been living and subscribing, which they evidently were not, in 1802.

The List printed for 1857 contains the names of 647 donors and subscribers, now living and qualified to vote as Members of the Corporation; and also the names of 176 donors and subscribers not qualified to vote. To place the comparison between these two Lists upon an equality, a large deduction should be made from the List printed in 1802; but to avoid opening a new question, it is here taken as it appears in “The Claims of Literature.”

1857	..	Members	..	..	..	..	647	
„	..	Non-members	..	..	..	..	176	
							<hr/>	.. .. 823
1802	..	Total number of names	..	..	..	..	474	
							<hr/>	.. .. 349
		Increase in 1857	..	..	..	..	..	349

An analysis of the amounts placed opposite to the 474 names in the List printed in 1802, yields 1 of 50*l.*—1 of 30*l.*—16 of 20*l.* or 21*l.*—1 of 10*l.*—72 of 10*l.* 10*s.*, and of the remainder 350 are single subscriptions of 1*l.* 1*s.* It will afford a sufficient comparison on this ground with the list of living donors and subscribers for 1857, to state that of the total number of 823, of which it is composed, 577 are donors and subscribers of 10*l.* and upwards in one sum.

VIII. p. 11.—“ *Neither loans nor revocable annuities were possible by the terms of the Charter. The Managing Committee had fortified themselves with an opinion obtained from their consulting counsel, Mr. Serjeant Merewether, and this was of a nature too decisive to leave any doubt upon the point. The thing might, or might not, be praiseworthy; but certainly it was not possible. The Reformers, however, had been careful also to provide themselves with an opinion; and this, being the opinion of Mr. Willes (since Mr. Justice Willes), proved to be of greater weight than that of Mr. Serjeant Merewether.*”

Mr. Willes’ opinion has not had any weight with the Committee, who have continued to act upon the opinion of their Counsel, Mr. Serjeant Merewether, which is to the effect that loans and revocable annuities cannot be granted under the Charter. The Committee never saw either Mr. Willes’ opinion, or the case on which it was given.

IX. p. 12.—“ *So matters stood until a General Meeting of March, 1857, when the Committee, at the close of their Report, announced that they had granted one annuity.*” Again, at p. 14, “ *There is now one annuitant on the Fund.*”

No announcement was ever made that the Committee had granted one annuity. There is no annuitant on the Literary Fund. According to the legal opinions which have been taken on the subject, annuities cannot be granted under the Charter.

The Committee introduced an alteration in their Regulations by which, in certain cases, they will be enabled to renew and continue grants, without requiring fresh applications from the persons so relieved. The form of this alteration was submitted, in the first instance, to the Attorney-General, (now Lord Chief Justice Cockburn) who was of opinion that it could be legally carried out under and “ *in accordance with the Charter;*” and the resolution embodying it was proposed to the Committee by Mr. Robert Bell, seconded by Mr. W. F. Pollock, and carried unanimously on the 9th of January, 1856. This alteration was announced by the Registrars to the General Meeting on the 12th of March, 1856, not 1857 as stated in the “ *Case.*”

X. p. 12.—“ *In the course of the proceedings at this meeting, it was also elicited that the Bye-law had been repealed which restricted the operation of the Charity to those writers only who had at some time or other published a book.*”

The information stated here to have been “ *elicited*” at “ *the*

General Meeting of March, 1857," was printed in the Regulations of 1856, and publicly announced by Mr. Robert Bell, in connexion with a special toast—"The Periodical Literature of England"—and dwelt upon at considerable length in his acknowledgment of the toast by Mr. Henry Reeve, the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, at the Anniversary Dinner of the Society, in May, 1856.

XI. p. 12.—*"At the same time, in noticing such concessions, the observation must be added, that the General Committee, constituted as it is at present, and under no efficient control by a Council or other analogous body (as provided [suggested?] in the recommendations of the Special Committee of 1855), are only grasping at greater powers for abuse as well as for service, in so far yielding, churlishly and reluctantly, to those suggestions made by the Reformers, of which they are careful to suppress all mention."*

If the Committee extend the benefits of the Society for the purpose of "grasping at greater powers of abuse," it should be a matter of congratulation rather than reproach, that they have made so few "concessions." In this state of things it is simply impossible for the Committee to satisfy the "Reformers," since it is the opinion of those gentlemen that the Committee, by adopting the views of the "Reformers," only inflict additional evils on the Institution.

Nor would the restoration of the Council be likely to have the effect of preventing or correcting those abuses, seeing that all the "examples of abuse of trust" alleged against the Society by the "Reformers," took place when the Council exercised the most "efficient control" over the Committee. It may be added, also, that experience rejects, as being fraught with danger, the establishment of two governing bodies endowed with different and conflicting powers.

It is intimated in the above passage, and in another passage at p. 14, that the admission of periodical writers to the benefits of the Literary Fund, was conceded, or yielded, on the suggestion of the "Reformers," and that the Committee have been "careful to suppress all mention" of the fact. The Committee did not mention the fact, because there was no such fact to mention. No such suggestion was ever made by the "Reformers." Having obtained a Special Committee in 1855 for the purpose of enabling them formally to submit their views to the general body of the Corporation, they drew up a Report which embodied the only "suggestions" they have made to the Committee or the Corporation. These suggestions or recommendations are:—1. The granting of revocable annuities. 2. The granting of loans. 3. The granting to the Council certain powers of superintendence and revision over the proceedings of the Committee, with mutual rights of appeal, in case of differences, to general meetings. 4. The establishment of reading and writing rooms, and evening meetings, or conversazioni, in the chambers of the Society. These suggestions were rejected by the General Meeting because they were incompatible with the Charter. The opinion of Mr. Serjeant Merewether was deemed conclusive on that point. The substance of his opinion is contained in the following passage:—

“I have perused the Charter, Bye-laws, and all the documents sent to me, and I am of opinion that the proposals by the Special Committee cannot be carried out by the present Corporation under the present Charter, or by Bye-laws made under it.”

The repeal of the Bye-law limiting the operation of the Charity to the authors of books was not included amongst these proposals.

The exclusion of periodical writers from the benefit of the Fund occupied attention both in the Committee, and out of doors, long before the “movement” of the “Reformers” began. It had frequently been suggested and discussed in Committee, and difficulties, entitled to grave consideration, were found in the way of its adoption. A Resolution, extending relief to “authors of important contributions to Periodical Literature,” was moved by Mr. Robert Bell and seconded by Mr. W. F. Pollock, on the 9th of April, 1856, and carried unanimously. This resolution was embodied in the Regulations printed in the same year.

XII. p. 13.—“*But the most remarkable feature of the Annual Meeting of March, 1857, was that part of the proceedings which referred to the alleged House Fund, amounting in 1821 to 6541l. The reader will bear in mind that at the previous Annual Meeting the Reformers had been told, when they objected to the great expense of maintaining the Society’s present house for nine meetings of the Committee in a year, lasting two or three hours each time, that the expense was justified by this Fund’s having been subscribed expressly to provide and maintain a house. Now, the Reformers knew perfectly well, when they were told this, that no such fund was then in existence, or ever had been in existence. Nevertheless, they also knew that they could not, at that time, refer to the recorded facts, and that the hardy statement against them would stand good for a year. It did so. At the Annual Meeting of March, 1857, it was shown by the Reformers, and was of necessity admitted by the Committee, that this alleged House Fund, in perpetual process of accretion, had been created imaginatively by the process of adding together certain annual grants of 210l. each, once made by the Prince Regent from the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall, for the payment of the Society’s annual rent of a particular house, as it became due from year to year, and which sums had been, year by year, paid away for the rent of that particular house as soon as received!*”

The necessity of obtaining a house was fully and frequently explained by Mr. Williams in his efforts to secure a permanent home for the charity. In a letter to the Earl of Chichester, read at a General Meeting in February, 1805, he pointed out the injury the Society was suffering from the manner in which its business was then carried on for want of a house of its own. “Very few,” he observed, “may slightly attend to the decisions of a quorum obtained with difficulty, but the deliberations do not deserve the name, the business is hurried, and if it were not prepared, might be often improperly conducted. The only remedy for these inconveniences, which may soon become irremediable evils, is a fixed place of resort where Committees may meet whenever they are wanted.” Again, in March, 1806, after a house had been taken, he

says in a report to a committee: "A tradesman, when he sinks a part of his capital to exhibit his merchandise advantageously, and the professional man who lays out his fortune in a mansion and equipage, are scarcely thought to speculate; and we, in acquiring a settlement, acquired a necessary point of existence, to which it might have been the highest prudence to devote a part of our capital, as well as to expend a part of our income." The sanction of the practical opinion of the Founder is not open to controversy on the part of the "Reformers," who defer on all points to his authority. If the transactions of the Society occupy at present, as the "Reformers" do not hesitate to assert, no more time than would be equal to about one or two days in the three hundred and sixty-five, they could not have occupied in 1805, by comparative arithmetic, more than about six hours; and if, under such circumstances, Mr. Williams considered a house indispensable, no further argument would seem requisite to justify its maintenance now. Mr. Williams thought a house imperative, not only to give the Fund "a visible and obvious existence," but to give effect to "sudden recommendations, and the warm but occasional impulses of humanity," to enable the Committee to conduct their deliberations "without distraction," to receive subscriptions daily, and to preserve the records of the Society. All these motives have acquired much additional force since Mr. Williams's time, and with the increase of labour and responsibility, and the wide extension of subscriptions, the necessity of having a permanent house is evidently greater than it was upwards of half a century ago.

But it is urged by the Reformers that Mr. Williams had other objects in view in obtaining or desiring a house, for evidence of which we are referred to the Charter:—

"So vividly had Williams's wish in one respect survived him, that there, in this very Charter, stands still the unmistakable reference to the hope he cherished beyond every other, that there would at some time be established a 'Hall or College' in connection with his charity. So would he finally have connected it with some building in this great city, to which the young author, coming up unfriended to London, might betake himself book in hand, secure of at least a few friends ready to meet him with sympathy and counsel."—
p. 8.

It is a curious commentary on these remarks that Mr. Williams lived in the house of the Society from 1805 to 1816, a period of nearly twelve years, and that with the most favourable opportunities of at least endeavouring to carry out these views, he never took a single step to establish a "Hall or College," or to connect the Fund "with some building in this great city," for the use of "the young author coming up unfriended to London," with his book in his hand.

HOUSE FUND.

The history of the House Fund is this.

On the 17th of January, 1805, at a General Meeting, the expediency of hiring or purchasing a house for the Society was referred

to the Committee. On the 31st of January the Committee resolved, “ That in the judgment of this meeting, to obtain a house as a permanent situation for the meetings and papers of the Society will be a measure calculated to promote the interests of the institution.” On the 21st of February a Sub-Committee, to whom the details had been referred, resolved to recommend to the Committee and Council that a certain number of their members should be authorized to take a house, the rent, rates, and taxes of which should not exceed 150*l.* per annum. The Committee and Council on the same day adopted the recommendation of the Sub-Committee, and resolved to recommend the proposed measure to the next General Meeting of the Society, with the expression of their opinion that “ the money requisite for accomplishing the plan of the Society ought to be raised by a particular and appropriate subscription.” On the 11th of April the Earl of Chichester announced to the Sub-Committee that the Prince of Wales had “ requested him to state that H. R. H. the Prince of Wales had been pleased to make an arrangement for the regular and permanent payment during his life of the annual sum of 200*l.*, which H. R. H. had lately munificently given for the rent of a house for the Society.”

This important aid was communicated to a General Meeting on the 18th of April, on which occasion Mr. Williams submitted a plan he had drawn up for carrying into effect the formation of a permanent “ House Fund;” and it was resolved “ That the proposals then read for establishing a Fund for procuring and furnishing a house be printed and sent to every member of the Society.” The minutes of that General Meeting terminate with a list of “ Subscribers to the House Fund,” including the names of nineteen noblemen and gentlemen, and amongst them that of the Earl of Chichester for 50 guineas, and those of David Williams, the Founder, Sir Robert Peel and others, for lesser amounts. The first printed List of Subscriptions amounted to 229*l.* 10*s.*

The house in Gerrard Street was then taken at a rent of 136*l.* 10*s.*, and the payment of 149*l.* 10*s.* 6*d.* for fixtures. In March, 1806, Mr. Williams announced in a report to a confidential Committee, of which Sir Robert Peel, Bart., was Chairman, that the advertisement making known the possession of a house had produced a proposal by which a considerable property would be conveyed to the Society, provided certain measures would be taken for its “ establishment and permanence.” The Prince of Wales gave the assurance required, and the property, which appears in the accounts as the Newton estate, was legally conveyed to the Society. This legacy was considered by Mr. Williams and the Committee to have been so directly identified with the permanent establishment of the Society in a house, that until July, 1821, it was carried to the account of the “ House Fund,” in which it appears in common with the other subscriptions.

When it was resolved to form a “ House Fund,” a book was regularly opened and a separate account was kept of the subscriptions. Amongst these subscriptions were entered, as contributions to the “ Fund,” the annual payments of the Prince of Wales. This

account was regularly kept at a separate bank in a separate and cumulative form for upwards of sixteen years. The total receipts carried to the account of the House Fund to May 4, 1820, as given in the printed account for 1820, amounted to 4231*l.* 2*s.* The King's donations from that period to the date of his death in 1830 amounted to 2310*l.*, which would have raised the Fund, had it been kept up as an independent account, to 6541*l.* 2*s.* But it was resolved in April, 1821, to combine the lists of subscribers to the Permanent Fund and the House Fund into one list with that of the general contributors to the Society. From that time, therefore, the separate account of the "House Fund" was merged in the general accounts of the Society.

During the years in which the account was kept as that of a separate and accumulating fund, the Committee appear to have drawn upon the contributions to it for the current maintenance of the house. The consequence was that at the time when it was merged in the general accounts, there was only a cash balance of 131*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.* in hand, as stated in the accounts for 1822. It is upon this ground that the "Reformers" assert that no such fund as a "House Fund" had "ever been in existence."

The facts may be succinctly opposed to this assertion. It is clear that certain subscriptions were raised for the avowed purpose of procuring a permanent house for the Society. It is clear also that these subscriptions were intended by the subscribers to be left to accumulate with a view to a given object, or they would not have been entered under the title of a "Fund," nor would a separate account have been opened for them at a separate banker's, and a special ledger kept for them in the Society, representing them from year to year, for sixteen years, as in process of accretion. The fact that the Committee of that day made use of these subscriptions to defray the current charges of a house, does not destroy the other fact that they continued up to 1821 to recognise them as forming a "House Fund" distinct in itself, and apart from the general resources of the Society; or the not less important fact that they were subscribed, not for the general purposes of the Society, but for the special purpose indicated in the title applied to them. In fact, so strongly was this felt in 1808, that at the General Meeting in that year, on the Report of a Special Committee, that "the current expenses of the house from Michaelmas, 1805, to March, 1808, instead of being paid out of the General Fund of the Society, had been paid out of the House Fund, which was raised for a different purpose," the General Meeting ordered the sum which appeared by the Report to have been "diverted from the purposes of the House to those of the General Fund," to be "replaced to the credit of the House Fund." To say that the "House Fund" consisted wholly of the annual grant of the Prince Regent is to ignore all the other subscribers who continued to contribute to it down to 1821, when Lord De Dunstanville subscribed 30*l.* To say that the "House Fund" never had any existence, because it was "paid away, year after year, for the rent of a particular house," is to assume the very point at issue. Nor was the grant of the Prince Regent, as stated in the "Case,"

made for the “annual rent of a particular house,” the rent of no less than three different houses, or chambers, having been paid out of it in succession.

XIII. p. 14.—“*It was on the motion of the Reformers that the representatives of the press were first admitted to the Annual Meetings.*”

The answer to this assertion is that “the representatives of the press were first admitted to the Annual Meetings” by a resolution of the General Committee, passed on the 8th February, 1854, upwards of one year before the General Meeting took place, at which the “Reformers” brought forward, *in the presence of the reporters who had been previously admitted*, a resolution to the same effect, which was seconded by a member of the Committee, and carried unanimously.

XIV. p. 15.—“*They [the Reformers] have said, and must always say, that it is not desirable to obtrude mere rank and station, when unaccompanied by other claims, into the governing body of the Institution.*”

Whether the persons of “rank and station” who belong to the “governing body of the Institution” are “unaccompanied by other claims,” is a question which cannot with propriety be discussed in this place, but upon which the public may form an opinion by referring to the lists of the Vice-Presidents and the General Committee. Even, however, if the persons of “rank and station” who support this Institution by their influence and protection were not distinguished by “other claims,” is there a practical man in England who will say that it would be just or wise to deviate from the universal custom of all similar institutions, by excluding such persons from participation in the government of funds which they have mainly contributed themselves?

XV. pp. 15, 16.—“*The Committee of the Literary Fund have, for some years past, appended to their Annual Report, a stock quotation from the Quarterly Review. The Reformers, if their just and moderate demands be long resisted, would suggest to that body, and to the Corporation in general, the propriety of substituting in its stead the following extract, also from the Quarterly Review:—*

‘The Literary Fund provides no present employment for the hungry and willing labourer, and holds out no hope for the future. . . . There is neither the grace nor the virtue of charity, in distributions of this kind; and were the money, which is thus annually expended, disbursed in well-directed alms, a far greater sum of good would be obtained. He who from his own means relieves a case of individual distress, does good at the same time to his own heart; and that which is wisely and bountifully given, blesses him that takes as well as him that gives. But, in this Joint Stock Patronage Company, a donation is paid and received like a poor-rate—save only that there is rather more humiliation on the part of the receiver, who, in this case, solicits as a charity what, in the other, he would have claimed as a right.’”

With this extract from the Quarterly Review, applied to the Managing Committee of the Literary Fund, the “Case” of the

“ Reformers ” concludes. A quotation condemnatory of the Committee, from so respectable an authority, especially as it is in direct contradiction to the “ stock quotation ” from the same periodical, “ appended to the Annual Report,” is no doubt calculated to damage the Institution, as it was intended to do ; but when the public learn that this condemnatory passage was published in the Quarterly Review forty-six years ago, they will probably be of opinion that the use to which it is here applied is more likely to damage the ‘ Case ’ of the “ Reformers.”

The passage occurs in an article in the Quarterly Review for September, 1812. Reasons might be given for its severity which would considerably diminish the confidence of the reader in its justice ; but that is a matter which need not be alluded to in this place. The passage was published six years before the Society obtained its Charter, at a time when the affairs of the Society, notwithstanding the zeal brought to bear upon them, were not very carefully or systematically conducted. But the most surprising circumstance connected with this quotation is, that it professes, truly or falsely, to be a description of the Literary Fund during the very period when the Institution was under the personal superintendence of the Founder himself, who, in that very month of September, 1812, was living in the Society’s house in Gerrard Street. Now if the description be a true one, the Fund, in Mr. Williams’s time, was no better than “ a Joint-Stock Patronage Company,” and had neither “ the grace nor the virtue of charity.” Yet this is the state of things which the “ Reformers,” on the faith of the evidence they have themselves cited, desire to restore. If, on the other hand, the description be a false one, the importation of it into their “ Case ” suggests a moral which there is no necessity to point. In either case, true or false, the application to the present Committee, and the present circumstances of the Literary Fund, of a criticism published forty-six years ago, carefully suppressing the significant fact of its date, is an artifice which, with the other allegations in the pamphlet, may be safely left to the judgment of the public.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,

1858.

THE Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Corporation of the Royal Literary Fund was held in the Chambers of the Corporation, No. 73, Great Russell Street, on Wednesday, March 10, 1858.

Present.

The EARL STANHOPE, Vice-President, in the Chair.

Dr. ALTSCHÜL.	Mr. FINLAISON.	Mr. J. BOWYER NICHOLS.
Mr. F. PRATT BARLOW.	Sir JOHN FORBES.	Mr. JOHN GOUGH NICHOLS.
Mr. ROBERT BELL.	Mr. MATTHEW FORSTER.	Mr. W. R. O'BYRNE.
Mr. BENTLEY.	Mr. JOHN FORSTER.	Mr. ARTHUR OTWAY.
Mr. BLACKMORE.	Mr. HENRY FOSS.	Professor OWEN.
Mr. HENRY G. BOHN.	Dr. FRASER.	Mr. PEPYS (V.P.).
Mr. BRETTELL.	Mr. GANDY.	Mr. EDMUND PEPYS.
Rev. R. W. BROWNE.	Mr. GARDINER.	Mr. PETTIGREW.
Mr. JOHN BRUCE.	Mr. GASPEY.	Mr. FREDERICK POLLOCK.
Mr. BUTTERWORTH.	Mr. ROBERT GILBERT.	Rev. GEO. B. F. POTTICARY.
Mr. CABBELL (V.P.).	Mr. GEORGE GODWIN.	Mr. T. S. PRIDEAUX.
Rt. Hon. E. CARDWELL, M.P.	Mr. AARON ASHER GOLDSMID.	Mr. PRIOR.
Mr. W. G. CARTER.	Mr. GRISELL.	Mr. HENRY REEVE.
Rev. Professor CHRISTMAS.	Mr. GRUNEISEN.	Mr. LOVELL REEVE.
Mr. CHURCHILL.	Dr. GUEST.	Mr. FRANCIS RIVINGTON.
Mr. GEORGE CLOWES.	Mr. W. H. HARRISON.	Dr. ROGET.
Dr. PATRICK COLQUHOUN.	Mr. JAMES HARTLEY.	Mr. SAMUEL SHARPE.
Mr. ROBERT COOKE.	Mr. GILBERT HENDERSON.	Dr. WILLIAM SMITH.
Mr. PURTON COOPER.	Rev. Dr. HESSEY.	Mr. WILLIAM SMITH, F.S.A.
Mr. BOLTON CORNEY.	Mr. HODGE.	Mr. R. M. SMITH.
Mr. DILLON CROKER.	Mr. JAMES HOLMES.	Mr. ALBERT SMITH.
Rev. Dr. CROLY.	Mr. JENNINGS.	Mr. SPOTTISWOODE (V.P.).
Mr. NEWTON CROSLAND.	Mr. JONES.	Mr. C. J. STEWART.
Mr. PETER CUNNINGHAM.	Mr. LEVESQUE.	Mr. STIRKE.
Rev. Dr. CURETON.	Mr. THOMAS LONGMAN.	Mr. THOMAS THORNTON.
Dr. DANIEL.	Rev. Dr. MAJOR.	Mr. GEO. TADDY TOMLIN.
Mr. CHARLES DICKENS.	Mr. WESTLAND MARSTON.	Mr. WILLIAM TOOKE.
Mr. DILKE.	Mr. MATTHEWS.	Mr. E. OWEN TUDOR.
Mr. WENTWORTH DILKE.	Mr. MAUGHAM.	Mr. EDMUND WALLER.
Mr. HEPWORTH DIXON.	Mr. MONCKTON MILNES, M.P.	Mr. WASHBOURNE.
The Earl of ELLESMERE.	Mr. C. E. MUDIE.	Mr. WATSON.
Sir HENRY ELLIS (V.P.).	Mr. JOHN MURRAY.	The DEAN of WESTMINSTER.
Mr. G. E. EYRE.	Mr. NEWBY.	Rev. Dr. WHEWELL.
Mr. FAIRHOLT.	Mr. GEORGE NICOL.	Mr. WHISHAW.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting having been read and confirmed, THE CHAIRMAN said he thought the most convenient course would be for the Meeting first to receive three Reports—the Registrars' Report, the Treasurers' Report, and the Auditors' Report—after which it would be open to every member to propose any motion or amendment, or to raise any discussion, that he might think desirable. It would be his own object to obtain for every speaker an attentive and impartial hearing. He hoped that the discussion would be carried on with as much good humour and courtesy as possible, and, as many persons might be desirous of addressing the Meeting, he trusted every speaker would adhere to the question, and, as far as possible, avoid all extraneous matter.

MR. HARRISON, one of the Registrars, then read the Reports referred to. From the Registrars' Report it appeared that the number of grants made during the last year was 55, and the amount distributed 1780*l.*, in the following classes:—History and Biography, 7 grants, 400*l.*; Biblical Literature, 3 grants, 100*l.*; Science and Art, 3 grants, 95*l.*; Periodical Literature, 8 grants, 250*l.*; Topography and Travels, 5 grants, 140*l.*; Classical Literature and Education, 5 grants, 150*l.*; Poetry, 10 grants, 270*l.*; Essays and Tales, 8 grants, 235*l.*; Law, 1 grant, 30*l.*; Medicine, 2 grants, 50*l.*; Miscellaneous, 3 grants, 60*l.* In amount there were 9 grants of 10*l.* each, 3 of 15*l.*, 5 of 20*l.*, 12 of 25*l.*, 9 of 30*l.*; 2 of 35*l.*; 3 of 40*l.*; 5 of 50*l.*; 1 of 60*l.*; 1 of 65*l.*; 2 of 75*l.*; 2 of 80*l.*; and 1 of 100*l.* The Treasurers' Report stated that the sum of 300*l.* Stock has been added to the Permanent Fund during the year. The Auditors' Report stated that the total income from all sources, including a balance of 632*l.* 4*s.* 11*d.* from the previous year, was 3180*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.*; and the total expenditure 2798*l.* 7*s.* 4*d.*, including grants for Relief 1780*l.*; Rent and Expenses of Chambers, 223*l.* 7*s.* 5*d.*; Secretary and Collector, 222*l.* 0*s.* 1*d.*; Printing, Stationery, Postages, and other incidental expenses, 108*l.* 9*s.* 10*d.*; Anniversary Expenses, 193*l.* 15*s.*; Purchase of Stock, 270*l.* 15*s.*; leaving a balance of 382*l.* 11*s.* 7*d.*

THE CHAIRMAN then moved a vote of thanks to the Registrars, the Treasurers, and the Auditors.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS said, in response to the graceful appeal which had been made from the Chair, he had the pleasure of stating that not only was he not going to make a speech, but he believed the course which he was about to take would be equally satisfactory to both the parties in that room. This might appear at first sight a rather romantic trustfulness on his part, but he would show the Meeting, in a few words, what a practical expectation it really was. On former occasions the majority who had supported the Committee and the continuance of the present state of things—of which majority the Committee themselves formed so influential, so satisfied, so laudatory, and so very large a part—strongly objected to the drawing of any comparison between that institution and any like institution in the known world. Now, no such comparison should be heard from him that day. At previous meetings he had observed that details and figures were extremely unpopular, and were certain to excite a considerable amount of resentment. He hoped that the abstinence which he had resolved upon exhibiting himself on that occasion would be observed by both parties. He should not on any account venture to enter into the details of the last published accounts—so sensible was he that to any member of the Literary Fund attending there that day for the first time it must seem like the wanderings of a lunatic, to show in detail how 41 charitable drafts on the Society's bankers had cost, on the average, 13*l.* each, that being absolutely more in three cases than the sum granted, and how upon those 41 cases there was a cost of more than 45 per cent., though only 15 of the cases were new ones, all the others being those of persons who had been relieved from one to eight times. (Hear, hear.) For these reasons, and with a view to the promotion of general good-will among them, he should confine himself that day to the assertion of a principle. In the face of the public, who, as he had remarked on previous occasions, must in the end be the real judges in this matter, he wished to fasten upon himself and those who acted with him in this matter, the distinct assertion of a plain principle; and he wished to fasten upon the Committee, and those who supported them, the distinct assertion of a principle equally plain. The very moderate amendment which he had to propose was this:—"That the accounts of the Literary Fund, showing a systematic expenditure of from 40*l.* to 45*l.* in the giving away of every 100*l.* of grants, are not quite satisfactory; that such an appropriation of money, subscribed with a clearly-defined charitable object, is not quite right; that its continuance as a distinctive feature of the Literary Fund is not so consistent with the professions of the Literary Fund as to tend to uphold that Institution in general confidence; that such continuance, therefore, ought not to be sanctioned from year to year, and is now protested against." This resolution would, no doubt, be duly put from the Chair, and duly negatived. (Laughter.) Those who negatived it would be contented, he and his friends who proposed it would be contented, and all parties would be satisfied with the result. It would then have been distinctly proclaimed "that the accounts of the Literary Fund, showing a systematic expenditure of from 40*l.* to 45*l.* in the giving away of every 100*l.* of grants," were

"quite satisfactory;" and, farther, that the continuance of such an appropriation of money subscribed with a clearly-defined charitable object was quite right; that its continuance as a distinctive feature of the Literary Fund was consistent with its professions, and tended to uphold the Institution in the general confidence; that its continuance should be sanctioned from year to year, and that it was not protested against. To the acceptance of his own responsibility, and to the throwing their responsibility on the Committee, he had steadily resolved to confine himself that day. He was there wholly and solely for that purpose, and no consideration whatever should induce him to swerve from it. In conjunction with two friends who were near him (Mr. Dilke and Mr. John Forster), he had written, and caused to be circulated among all the members of the Society, without any distinction of opinion, a printed paper, in which they had set forth what appeared to them to be very grave, self-evident objections to its administration and its expenditure. If any champion of that administration and that expenditure should impugn any one of their statements in writing as they had done, upon his own personal honour, upon his personal responsibility, and with the fixed association of answer to an assertion which belongs to productions in print, they would immediately answer him, and prove their case, whatever it might be. But he wished it to be distinctly understood that to skirmishing escapes from the one unqualified declaration that the present system was right, and did not require alteration, he would not in any way contribute by his conduct. They would not permit themselves, under any circumstances whatever, to be led away from that, and therefore he could communicate to the Chairman the comforting assurance that, after the resolution which he had read had been put and disposed of, not one word would be heard from his lips or from those of Mr. Dilke, or from those of Mr. Forster, until that time next year. (Laughter.) They assumed, as they were bound in courtesy to do, that their opponents had no more desire to shrink from the broad, open, and manly acceptance of their responsibility, than they had to shrink from theirs. Here in this resolution, read affirmatively and read negatively, were the two responsibilities, for and against. Let each side accept its own, and let both sides then go on their way rejoicing. (Laughter.)

MR. J. FORSTER seconded the resolution without making any remark.

MR. M. MILNES, M.P., said:—Had Mr. Dickens's arguments been confined to the oral ones which he had just delivered, he should not have felt it necessary to reply; but, as he had circulated a pamphlet among all the members who were living, and many who were dead—(laughter)—he could not help taking some notice, as a member of the Committee, of a production which had emanated from such high authority. He must first observe, with reference to the resolution, that on a question of principle there was no room for the use of the expression "not quite." Either Mr. Dickens was right, or the Committee were right, and in either case such a qualifying term as "quite" was out of place. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Dickens had placed his position on that occasion, as indeed he always did, in the wittiest and most attractive form. He had told them, in effect, that the question was whether they should go on paying 40 or 45 per cent. for collection. Of course if that were the sole question it would be "the wanderings of a lunatic" to argue it; but he contended that that summary mode of putting the question was not only unfair but untrue. It was only by entering into some details that the matter could be properly understood. It appeared to him that the gentlemen who came forward as reformers of the Literary Fund were reformers in the same sense that the insurgent Sepoys were reformers of the garrison at Lucknow. The Sepoys might say, perhaps, that they only wished to appropriate the property which they coveted to better purposes than it had been employed in hitherto, and to destroy what ought to be destroyed. Now the daily injury of this literary siege was being inflicted not on the distributors but on the recipients of the Fund. (Hear, hear.) If the subscriptions to this Fund had diminished, let it be clearly understood by the public that the so-called Reformers were the cause of that diminution; and if, after the Committee had administered the Fund with unimpeached honour, they were almost accused of personal corruption, and if the public became dissatisfied in consequence, and persons who had been disposed to make bequests to the Society were diverted from their purpose by these attacks—and he begged to say that he had heard of such cases—then surely he had a right to say that these gentlemen were not the reformers, but the destroyers, of the Society. (Hear, hear.) The Committee

had never wished for a moment to place themselves in an antagonistic position towards those gentlemen; on the contrary, they had sought their counsel and assistance, and had asked them to allow themselves to be placed among the governing body, in order that they might share in the administration of the Fund. As to the expenses of collection, it should be recollected that that amount would be scarcely any larger if the Fund were double what it was; and he believed that had Mr. Dickens, Mr. Forster, and Mr. Dilke spent half the time and labour in advancing the interests of the Society that they had done in injuring them, the proportion of the expenses to the grants would not be one-half what it now was and must be. The principal objection on the ground of expense had reference to the salary of the Secretary, Mr. Dickens contending that they ought not to give 200*l.*, while other Societies gave only 50*l.* To that he replied, that Mr. Blewitt was peculiarly adapted for the duties of the office, and that his services in such a position were, in fact, invaluable. The maintenance of the house was a fair subject of consideration. Their opponents had not, however, confined themselves to such objections. The Committee feel something like indignation—he really must use that word—at finding imputations thrown upon the general honesty and fairness of their conduct. Let it be observed where the opponents had to go for materials for their assertions against the Committee. In the pamphlet to which he had referred mention was made of two cases in which the members of the Committee granted 100*l.* each to the widows of two gentlemen who had belonged to their body. Those cases occurred thirty years ago. (Hear, hear.) There was nothing in the pamphlet to prevent people from believing that they occurred within the last year; and no allusion was made to the changes in the constitution of the Society which had occurred since, or to the fact that the husbands of the ladies had rendered such service to the fund that the money was voted without objection at the time. (Hear, hear.) He would not then enter into the difficult question how assistance might be best afforded to literary men in misfortune; but, having pondered the subject, he really did not see how the thing was to be done better than it was by that Society. His friend Mr. Dickens had tried another way. The thing was no secret.

MR. DICKENS hoped Mr. Milnes would pardon one moment's interruption. He must remind his hon. friend that in a correspondence between them on that subject he told him that the thing had never been tried, because the Act of Parliament would not allow it to be tried for seven years.

MR. MILNES said that at all events the comparatively small amount obtained, considering the high aristocratic auspices under which the project was launched at Devonshire House, showed how difficult it was to collect funds. He would say, however, that the aid rendered to the cause by the late Duke of Devonshire, far from having produced anything like ill-will in the minds of the Committee, enhanced their regard for him as a benefactor of literature. (Hear, hear.) His only object in making this allusion was to illustrate the difficulties which attended the pursuit of such an object. He trusted that this meeting would tend, like that of last year, to show that this was not a case in which one literary clique was opposing another, but a case in which some half-dozen of the most distinguished literary men in the country had, somehow or other—he would not speak of the wanderings of lunacy—(laughter)—got it into their heads that they could administer the funds far better than they were administered at present, and were in consequence year after year pursuing a course which tended to the dissolution of the Society. (Hear, hear.) Let him remind those gentlemen that they possessed great powers for evil as well as good; and he must say that, if they were acquainted, as he was, with cases which had recently been relieved, and had read the letters which had been written by those concerned, the thought of having done anything to injure this Society in public estimation would not, he believed, conduce to their peace of mind.

DR. WILLIAM SMITH said:—If I had consulted my own feelings I should have given a silent vote upon this occasion. It is with deep regret that I feel myself compelled by a sense of public duty to oppose gentlemen whom I respect so highly as Mr. Dilke, Mr. Dickens, and Mr. Forster. It is with still deeper regret that I see their names prefixed to the pamphlet that has been circulated among us, and that a gentleman who has gained such an honourable position in the literature of his country as Mr. Dickens should be employing his influence

to damage a Society the only object of which is to relieve the necessities and wants of his literary brethren. (Hear, hear.) I do not complain of these gentlemen pointing out what they deem to be defects in the constitution of the Literary Fund, and suggesting improvements in its administration. I should be the last person to resist any well-advised and beneficial measure of reform; and I am sure the Committee as a body are quite ready to take into their consideration any reforms that may be proposed, and to carry them into effect if they commend themselves to their judgment, as indeed they have already done in several instances, according to the ungracious acknowledgments of the Reformers themselves. (Hear, hear.) But what I complain of is the tone and the temper of their remonstrance, and their threats, unless their views are adopted, to do everything in their power to oppose what I verily believe to be one of the most useful and beneficent charities in this city. (Hear, hear.) It is only within the last few months, since I have been a member of the Committee, that I have become aware of the vast amount of good which the Society accomplishes. My main object in addressing the Meeting at present is to bear an independent testimony to the excellence of the Charity; and I do this with the less hesitation because, having served so short a time upon the Committee, I can take neither credit nor blame to myself for its management. In fact, such strong charges had been raised against the Society by some of my own personal friends, that I felt at one time some misgivings respecting its usefulness. I had heard it said again and again that the Literary Fund doled out its pittances with a grudging and parsimonious hand, and that the applicants for these scanty gifts were exposed to the most humiliating and degrading conditions. Now I am able to state, from my own personal knowledge, that those charges are unfounded and untrue. I can conscientiously declare that the Committee have shown the greatest anxiety not only to spare the feelings of all those who have been compelled to seek its assistance, but also to vote the largest sums in their power to every one of approved literary merit, so as to afford permanent and substantial relief. (Hear, hear.) And, while upon this subject, I may perhaps be permitted to state that I have been surprised to find in how many instances during the past year the Committee have been called upon to relieve men of real learning and no mean reputation in the literature of the country. I have gone away from every meeting of the Committee sorrowing, and yet rejoicing—sorrowing to find so many of my literary brethren reduced to penury and want, and yet rejoicing that I have been the means of dispensing your liberality, of wiping away the tears of the orphan and the widow, of saving the hard-working literary man from the debtor's gaol, and of pouring a ray of light and hope into many a house where everything before was gloom, and darkness, and despair. (Cheers.) I therefore think it quite unjustifiable that a Society which confers these blessings upon men of learning and genius should be called a Society of abuse! If the Committee had been guilty of a gross dereliction of their duties, if they had acted in violation of the terms of their Charter, if they had misappropriated the moneys committed to their charge, their conduct could hardly have been denounced in stronger language. (Hear, hear.)

I admit that some of the questions raised by the Reformers are fair subjects for discussion, but surely they are not reasons for stigmatizing the Committee as the patrons of abuse. (Hear, hear.) The Reformers maintain that the expenses of the Society are too heavy. These expenses are occasioned by the salary of the Secretary and the maintenance of a house. The Committee think that a Secretary is necessary, and that their present Secretary is very efficient; but if the Reformers think that we ought to have no Secretary, or that his salary should be reduced, let them bring forward a motion to this effect, let the whole subject be fully and fairly discussed, and a vote taken upon it. So also with respect to a house. If the Reformers think we ought not to have a house, let them raise the subject by a specific motion; but I beseech them not to ruin the Charity itself on account of differences of opinion between them and the Committee. (Hear, hear.)

Again, the Reformers state that the Committee is irresponsible, because it is not placed under the superintendence of a Council. But I know of no analogous institution in which there are two governing bodies such as the Reformers wish to see established; and the Committee of the Literary Fund are no more irresponsible than the Committee of a hospital or any other charity, inasmuch as

they have to render an account and to be elected every year by the subscribers. (Hear, hear.) In order to prove the necessity of a Council to keep the Committee in order, the Reformers quote two instances of alleged misappropriation of money, which happened in 1828 and 1829, at a time when the Council was still in existence; but they cannot mention any similar case since the Council ceased to act in 1847. Their illustration, therefore, is in direct opposition to their argument. It has been found by experience that, if you wish to increase responsibility, you must centre it; and I have not the slightest doubt that a single Committee is in reality much more responsible than when this responsibility is divided between two governing bodies. (Hear, hear.)

It has been frequently asserted by the Reformers as a self-evident proposition that the management of the Literary Fund should be placed exclusively in the hands of literary men. Against this doctrine I, as a literary man, and in the interests of literary men, enter my most decided protest. I believe it to be as false in principle as I am sure it would be prejudicial in practice. If it be true, as it undoubtedly is, that a clerical charity administered solely by the clergy is seldom well administered, and that a medical charity administered solely by medical men is seldom well administered, it is equally true that a literary society administered solely by literary men would not be well administered. Long experience has taught us that a lay element, as distinguished from a professional element, is of the greatest importance in preserving the purity and promoting the efficiency of every charitable institution. (Hear, hear.) There is no reason why a literary charity should be made an exception to this general rule. Literature has in all ages been unhappily divided into cliques and parties; and in the administration of charitable funds even the most honest men might be unintentionally warped by their predilections and friendships, while the less scrupulous would not hesitate to give the lion's share to their needy partisans. Supposing that the Literary Fund had existed in the reign of Queen Anne, and that it had been administered by Pope and his friends, it needs no stretch of imagination to conceive into what channel its funds would have flowed, and what answer Tickell or Theobald would have received if they had applied to it for relief. (Hear, hear.) And even in the present day, without meaning the slightest disrespect, or imputing even the shadow of a corrupt motive, it is just possible to imagine that the contributors to our excellent contemporary 'Punch' might unconsciously regard the claims of one of their brethren in distress with a little more favour than the claims of the author of a classical or a theological work. (Hear, hear.) But even if these objections could be removed, it would be a suicidal policy to exclude every one but literary men from the management of this charity. It is a principle not only in the British Constitution, but in all our charitable societies, that representation and taxation go together. (Hear, hear.) It is not by authors that the Literary Fund is supported; their contributions must, as a general rule, be limited in amount; it is from men of wealth and station, who have derived instruction and pleasure from the productions of learning and genius, and from gentlemen connected with the publishing trade, that this Society derives the far greater part of its income. Would it be fair, would it be just to deprive these persons of all share in the distribution of the money which they have contributed with such liberality? And if it were fair, would it be politic to do so? Does any one suppose that they would continue their contributions to a Society from the management of which they were systematically excluded? (Hear, hear.) I therefore object most strongly to the doctrine that the management of the Society should be intrusted exclusively to literary men, first, because I believe that they would not administer it so well as it is at present, and, secondly, because I am sure they would soon have very little to administer. (Cheers.)

A cry has been raised in several quarters, that the present movement is an attempt on the part of the representatives of literature to rescue the Literary Fund from the domination of aristocrats and booksellers. I am no worshipper of mere rank and station, but I cannot see any reason why the historian of one of the most important epochs of English history, and the biographer of Belisarius and Condé, should be excluded from the management of the Society, simply because he is a peer of the realm. On the contrary, I am weak and foolish enough to believe that when an accomplished nobleman, like my Lord Stanhope, is willing to devote his time and services to the benefit of the Charity, he adds fresh lustre to his coronet, and confers great benefit upon our cause.

(Cheers.) It is one of the characteristic features of the English aristocracy that they are ready to meet their fellow-citizens upon equal terms in the administration of the learned and charitable societies of the kingdom; and I deprecate most strongly this attempt to array class against class, and to excite a clamour against some of the oldest, stanchest, and warmest friends of the Literary Fund. (Cheers.)

As to the second cry—not easily compatible with the first—that the Literary Fund is in the hands of booksellers, it is sufficient to reply that there is not at present a single publisher or bookseller upon the Managing Committee. (Cheers.) I would not, however, maintain that such gentlemen should be systematically excluded from the management of a Society to which they have contributed so largely; and if it is to be laid down as a principle that persons are to be excluded on the simple ground that they stand to authors in the relation of employers, the same principle would deprive the Society of the services of Mr. Dilke and Mr. Dickens. (Hear, hear.) But, notwithstanding the fact that there is not a single publisher or bookseller on the Committee of the Literary Fund, a partisan of the Reformers has put forth the following statement in the last number of the 'Illustrated London News':—"Next Wednesday the annual war of booksellers against authors is to be renewed in the rooms of the Royal Literary Fund. The representatives of Tonson, Lintot, and Baskerville, assemble on that day in council, in full phalanx, and in possession, to oppose the representatives of Shakspeare, Fielding, &c." (Laughter.) I feel sure that Mr. Dilke, Mr. Dickens, and Mr. Forster would be the first to disavow the invidious distinction of being the representatives of the literature of Great Britain. Even a Tennyson, a Macaulay, and a Thackeray would shrink from such a responsibility. Moreover, as a matter of fact, it can be proved that the majority of literary men, who are subscribers to the Society, are opposed to the proceedings of the Reformers. (Hear, hear.)

I would only observe in conclusion that, if in the course of my remarks I have said a single word that could give pain to any one present, I exceedingly regret it, and can assure the Meeting that nothing has been further from my intention than to wound the feelings of any one. I trust that the vote of to-day may be accepted by all parties as a final decision of the question; and that henceforth our only contention will be, which can do most to promote the interests and extend the usefulness of this noble Charity. (Cheers.)

MR. ROBERT BLACKMORE reminded the Meeting that the year before last an overwhelming majority had decided against the resolutions proposed by Mr. Dickens and his friends, and that it was unseemly to carry on a contest the object of which had been unmistakeably condemned. (Hear, hear.) The question had been as familiar as "household words." He attributed some of the opposition that had been shown to the fact that there had been an attempt made to get a slice of their funds appropriated to another Society.

MR. DICKENS said he must rise to order, when a gentleman stated something with regard to him that was not true, and for which there was not the slightest foundation.

MR. BLACKMORE said then he would not again refer to that subject; but that such an application was made by some one was certain. It was not true that 40*l.* and upwards was spent in the distribution of every 100*l.* of their funds, for there was the expense of collection.

MR. DICKENS said the expense of collection had been carefully excluded from his calculation.

MR. BLACKMORE said the officers of the Society would explain the matter more satisfactorily than he could. It was the duty of the press to see that that pamphlet did not do any injury to the Society, and he hoped, when Christmas came again, the good cheer of the season would make the authors of it think better of the whole subject. (Laughter.)

MR. PURTON COOPER asked if it was true that the expense of distributing the funds of the Society cost over 40*l.* in the 100*l.*, as had been stated?

MR. ROBERT BELL said,—Before I address myself, my Lord, to the general question, I feel it incumbent upon me to say that I have no knowledge whatever of any such application having been made to the Committee as that alluded to by Mr. Blackmore, nor am I aware of any such object having been contemplated by any persons. (Hear, hear.) Let me add, that whatever differences of opinion

there may be between the Committee of the Literary Fund and those gentlemen who think it their duty to take an attitude of hostility at these annual meetings, I do not believe that any improper motive is attributable to them. On the contrary I am satisfied that they are doing only what they think to be right, and all I ask of them is, that they will give us credit for doing only what we think to be right. As a literary man, and as one who has the interests of literary men and of literature at heart, I can honestly declare that the course which I have pursued in reference to these most painful discussions, is a course which I adopted deliberately, after a most anxious investigation into the history, management, and working of the Fund; and it is my solemn conviction that the gentlemen who bring forward yearly these adverse resolutions are wrong in principle, and that the Committee are right in principle. (Hear, hear.) In the "Case" circulated by those three gentlemen, certain allegations are made with regard to the conduct of the Committee in the discharge of their administrative functions. I will not apply any hard words to this document, but I will prove that it richly deserves them. Its allegations, from first to last, are erroneous, either in substance or by implication; an assertion I will establish before I sit down by a statement of facts, for the strict accuracy of every detail of which I unreservedly pledge myself. The "Case" opens by charging the management of the Fund with "two great abuses." The first of these is the cost of administering its affairs, which the Reformers declare to bear no comparison with that of any other like fund or charity in existence; although on a former occasion I brought under their notice several other like funds or charities now in existence in London, the cost of which much exceeds that of the Literary Fund. The expenditure is stated to be "very nearly equal to one-half of the whole money distributed; that is to say, the sum distributed in relieving claimants was 1225*l.*, and the expense of its distribution was 532*l.*" Let me here observe, that Mr. Dickens is in error in stating, as he has just done, that this sum of 532*l.* represents only the cost of distribution, and that the expense of collection has been carefully excluded. The fact is that the cost of collection has been carefully included. The sum of 532*l.* represents the whole disbursements of the Fund under every head. Here are the items:—

Rent and expenses of chambers	£201	12	8
Secretary and Collector	221	3	4
Incidental expenses	106	14	6
Law expenses	2	10	0
	<hr/>		
Total	£532	0	6

It is therefore an error to say that the expense of distribution was 532*l.* But a still more serious injustice is committed by contrasting the cost with the sum distributed in relief. Common sense and usage point out that the practical test to be applied to expenditure is to contrast it with income. It is between these two heads only that a legitimate comparison can be drawn. If we apply this test to the accounts of the Literary Fund, we shall obtain a result which, I think, must be satisfactory to all practical men. The total expenditure for the year was 532*l.*; the income, excluding the balance in hand from the previous year, was 2664*l.*—more than double the amount distributed to claimants—a fact which did not suit the argument of the Reformers, and which is therefore suppressed. We find then that the cost is about one-fifth of the income, or 20 per cent.; yet in the next page but one the Committee are charged with deducting 40 per cent. "from money received in trust for distressed literary men [that is from the whole income] for the mere cost of applying that money to their relief"—that is, that the Committee expend 40 per cent. upon the mere cost of distribution. Of course I do not impute intentional misrepresentation to these gentlemen, but the effect upon the public mind is exactly the same. (Hear, hear.) If, instead of proposing vague and general censures, Mr. Dickens, and those who act with him, would bring forward a specific resolution, pointing out what portion of the expenses they think might be safely curtailed, it would be frankly received and fairly discussed. The Committee have no desire to incur, nor are they in the slightest degree disposed to defend, any unnecessary expenditure. On a former occasion I stated that the expenditure was chiefly comprised in two items—the House and the Secretary. I will not now enter into the question of the house further

than to say that the possession and maintenance of a house was one of the paramount objects of the founder. He laboured assiduously till he secured it, and all our experience has shown us how essential it is to our success. With respect to the other item I must go into some detail. The office of Secretary dates from 1836. In that year a secretary was substituted for a clerk, by whom the duties had been previously discharged. This change was made on the motion of Mr. Dilke. In 1839 Mr. Blewitt was elected at a salary of 100*l.* per annum, with apartments, and 20*l.* per annum for coals, servants, &c., which sum was raised in 1841 to 40*l.*—also on the motion of Mr. Dilke. The responsibility of the subsequent increase in Mr. Blewitt's salary has all throughout these discussions been most unjustly cast upon the Committee, but it is right the public should know that the Committee are in no way responsible for that increase. Mr. Blewitt's salary was raised in 1842 to 150*l.* by a recommendation proposed and passed at a general meeting of the Corporation, and in 1846 it was further increased to 200*l.* by a similar vote. The Committee, therefore, in this item of expenditure, simply carry out the expressed wishes of the whole body of the members. (Hear, hear.) In saying this, however, I wish it to be understood that the Committee cordially concur with the general body on this vote, which, with the other expenses of management, I am prepared fully to justify by reference to materials, which will enable the Meeting to decide conclusively upon the whole question of expenditure at issue. I will take two periods—the dear period that has elapsed since Mr. Blewitt's appointment, and the cheap period, of a like duration, which preceded his appointment. The comparison is obvious, and the results must be decisive one way or the other. In the 18 years prior to Mr. Blewitt's appointment the expenditure was 10,043*l.* and the income 28,711*l.*; in the 18 years subsequent to his appointment the expenditure was 13,020*l.* and the income 39,063*l.* The latter period, therefore, exhibits an increase in the expenditure over the former of no less than 2976*l.* That is a heavy burthen to heap upon a charity in 18 years. But now turn to the income, which presents in this same latter period an increase of 10,352*l.* How then stands the charge against the Committee? That they have profligately expended 2976*l.* to increase the Fund by 10,352*l.* (Cheers.) Expenditure is altogether a relative question. There may be circumstances in which a large expenditure is the truest economy. If for an outlay of 500*l.* you get 1000*l.*, you surely manage matters more wisely than if, for the sake of restricting your outlay to 100*l.*, you get only 200*l.* (Hear, hear.) It is on this ground that I rest my vindication of Mr. Blewitt's salary, and of every other item of expenditure sanctioned by the Committee. But it has been said that other charities are more prudently managed, and the Artists' General Benevolent Institution has been specially selected as the example we ought to follow. It has been stated that during the 13 years, from 1844 to 1856, the expenses of the Literary Fund exceeded those of the Artists' General Benevolent Institution by 5487*l.* 8*s.* 2*d.*, while the number of applicants relieved was 194 less. This statement is true as far as it goes, but not going far enough, it makes an utterly false impression by implication. The deception is accomplished by the suppression of the following facts: first, that the grants of the Literary Fund to this smaller number of applicants exceeded those of the Artists' Institution by 7177*l.* 7*s.*; second, that the amount raised by the Literary Fund in subscriptions and donations alone exceeded that raised by the Artists' Benevolent by 4895*l.* 15*s.* 8*d.*; third, that the total income of the Literary Fund exceeded that of the Artists' Institution by 10,909*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.*; fourth, that the funded property of the Literary Fund at the end of 1856, the last year of the comparison, exceeded that of the Artists by 12,608*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.* (Hear, hear.) Now, without going into minuter passages of the comparison, such as the fact that nearly two-thirds of the Artists' grants are in small pittances continued from year to year, while of the Literary grants none were under 10*l.*, and about one-third of the whole ranged from 40*l.* to 100*l.*, or, without dwelling on the fact that, in addition to the number of cases actually relieved by the Literary Fund, there were 235 investigated and rejected, I ask this Meeting whether, with such results before us, it would be wise to imitate the economy of the Artists' General Benevolent Institution? (Hear, hear.)

The second "abuse" charged against us in the "Case" of the three Reformers is that the Managing Committee, "taking advantage of a mistake in the wording of the Charter," have dispensed with the "presence and assistance of the Council" at their meetings; that "according to the old law which prevailed in

the government of the Fund," the Council superintended all the affairs and concerns of the Society; but that the Council "has now no existence but in name, never meets, and never will meet, the General Committee having decided that it cannot be so much as called together by any human authority." The whole of this statement is delusive. The Managing Committee did not dispense with the presence of the Council. The presence of the Council at the meetings of the Committee was prohibited by the discovery that it was illegal. Sir Harris Nicolas, a barrister, and a member of the Committee, having discovered that the old by-law, under which the Council were admitted to the meetings of the Committee, was at variance with the Charter, brought the question under consideration, and it appearing that such variance did exist, a case was made out and submitted to counsel. Mr. Serjeant Merewether gave an elaborate opinion to the effect, not only that it was illegal under the Charter for the Council to be present at the meetings of the Committee, but that every act performed by the Committee in the presence of the Council was invalid. In order to fortify themselves with the highest legal opinion in the country, the case and the opinion of Mr. Serjeant Merewether were submitted to the Attorney-General, Sir John Jervis, who, with Mr. Cairns, the present Solicitor-General, supported in the strongest terms the opinion of Mr. Serjeant Merewether. (Hear, hear.) It was not, therefore, the General Committee that rejected the presence of the Council, or that "decided that it could not be called together," but the highest legal authorities interpreting the provisions of the Charter. (Hear, hear.) Having, however, asserted that the Committee had got rid of the Council, and that they had thus rendered themselves irresponsible—although the same, and the only, responsibility it ever owed, that which it owes to the General Meetings of the Corporation, still continued, and continues to this hour, undiminished, the Reformers lay down the maxim that "honest men on an irresponsible Committee are not a sufficient security against misconduct. That has been shown in this very case," they assert, "by several examples of abuse of trust." They then proceed to furnish three examples of the abuses of trust committed by the Committee after it had become irresponsible. The first is the case of a member of the Committee who is alleged to have "made out from the Society's secret books, a list of persons who had been relieved, and given it to a publisher," for his guidance, as the Reformers suppose, in driving his bargains with the poor authors. This supposition appears to me a grave imputation, so far as the publisher is concerned, and one which ought not to be permitted to go abroad without inquiry; but that is a matter with which the Committee have nothing to do. For the act of the delinquent member it might be enough to say that the Committee are in no way answerable. The misconduct of an individual can never be sustained as a charge against a public body. Is the banking system of England to be condemned because Sir John Dean Paul violated his trust? (Hear, hear.) But be that as it may, the answer of the present Committee to this imputation upon them is this, that the person who was supposed to have committed the delinquency was expelled, and that the circumstance took place nineteen years ago. (Hear, hear.) The next cases are those of two widows of two members of the Committee, who received 100*l.* each, notwithstanding that one of the deceased was "a man of fortune, who bequeathed two legacies of a hundred guineas each to friends." Now what are the facts? These ladies were the widows of gentlemen who throughout many years had rendered most important services to the Society, both by subscriptions and active exertions. One of them was a distinguished man of letters, and both cases were represented to the Committee as cases of distress. Five years afterwards it was discovered that one of these gentlemen left some stock behind him, but the records of the Society prove that irresistible representations of distress were made to the Committee. At all events we disclaim all responsibility in the grants, which took place thirty years ago. (Hear, hear.) It would be just as logical for a member of the House of Commons to move a vote of censure upon Lord Derby, because Sir Robert Peel brought in an act for emancipating the Catholics in 1829, as it is for these gentlemen to censure the present Committee of the Literary Fund for acts which were done by their predecessors thirty years ago. (Hear, hear.) But this is not the worst. These cases are given as examples of abuses of trust on the part of the Committee, after it had rendered itself irresponsible by throwing off the check and control of the Council. We shall judge of the character of these assertions from the fact that the suspension of the illegal

action of the Council took place only about ten years ago, and that these very cases occurred while the Council was yet in full operation, and under that very system of administration which these gentlemen are clamorous to restore. (Hear, hear.) Again; it is averred that it could never have been contemplated by the Founder of the Society "that more than half a century after its establishment, it would remain one of the Fund's bye-laws that a man who had written a book, however worthless, might claim the advantages of the Institution, but that a man who had only written in periodicals, however powerfully, must be entirely excluded." On this point I must observe that this condition was insisted upon by the Founder himself; and it is remarkable that the very first case that came before the Fund was that of an applicant who had not written a book; and whose application was consequently rejected. The objection of the Reformers to this rule, which now no longer exists, is illustrated by the "refusal of relief to a man dying of literary exertion who had contributed to the highest class of periodicals literary matter more than equal to twenty-five octavo volumes." The answer is, that the Committee acted under the law which was then in force, and which it would have been an abuse of trust in them to deviate from. But the case is slightly exaggerated. If the applicant's own statement, on record in the Society, is to be believed, his periodical contributions might have amounted, not to twenty-five volumes, but to six or eight. The pamphlet then goes on to describe the "disbelief and scorn" with which the Founder would have regarded another of the bye-laws, by which applicants are required to produce testimonials from two or more respectable persons, and to send in their applications at least seven days before the meeting. This reproach is a very singular one, for several reasons. In the early period of the Society there was nothing more strenuously insisted upon by Mr. Williams, to whose practice we are always referred by the Reformers, than the necessity of stringent investigation into every case, and the early Minutes show that the strictest tests were applied to the character and circumstances of applicants. But concerning this form of application against which these gentlemen protest, I have rather a curious statement to make. Previously to 1841 there was no form of application for literary men in distress, the applications being all made by letter or by personal recommendation, and cases were adjudicated in a very loose and irregular manner. It was felt, and I think very properly felt, that this was an unsatisfactory mode of proceeding, and several efforts were made to introduce stricter regulations. Amongst them I find that in March, 1839, a motion requiring all applications to be lodged with the Secretary "a week at least" before the meeting, was made by Mr. Rosser, a member of Council, and seconded by Mr. Dilke. (Hear, hear.) This regulation was finally introduced into the bye-laws of 1840 on the motion of Mr. Foss, seconded by Mr. Dilke. (Hear, hear.) It appears also that at a meeting of the General Committee on the 10th of February, 1841, a form of letter to be addressed to the referees of applicants was referred to the Sub-Committee, on the motion of Mr. Bruce, seconded by Mr. Dilke. In those days the Sub-Committee was a standing body, and Mr. Dilke was a member of it. On the 7th of April the Sub-Committee agreed to a series of blank forms to be filled up by applicants and the persons recommending them; and these forms were adopted by the General Committee on the 5th of May, 1841. I hold in my hand the original form, dated May, 1841, recommended by Mr. Dilke, containing the two stipulations of seven days' notice and two testimonials, which form has been in use ever since, until recently when it underwent an alteration for the better. (Hear, hear.) I will not trouble you with any defence of the form against which these gentlemen protest, but I think I have a clear right to say, and I am sure you will agree with me, that whoever else may object to it, Mr. Dilke at least is not entitled to make it a ground of attack upon the Committee. (Cheers.)

"Is it surprising," continues the document, "that, with such features prominent in its mode of administration, the Literary Fund should in no respect have grown with the growth of literature? A simple mention of the fact that in 1802 it had 394 annual subscribers, whereas in 1857 it has little more than a hundred (notwithstanding the astonishing increase in the number of readers which that half century has seen), gives to the views entertained by Williams their proper significance." The obvious inference to be drawn from this statement is that the Society is in a rapid decline. Indeed so completely has it produced that effect on some minds, that a daily paper in a leading article pronounces the following alarming prophecy:—

“ The Council has nothing to do with the disposal of the funds, that function having been arrogated to itself by an irresponsible Committee”—[the Council, be it observed, never had anything to do with the funds, the Committee having always exercised full control over them]—“ which Committee has availed itself of a flaw in the Charter to exercise an arbitrary jurisdiction over an exchequer replenished by the public benevolence, but principally by the contributions of those who have followed the profession of letters with more success than the recipients of the bounties doled forth from Russell Square. Under these circumstances we do not wonder that the list of subscribers has rapidly diminished from nearly four hundred to scarcely one-fourth of that number; and we warn the patrons of literature that the institution will die out unless some practical remedy is applied.”

Now, what are the facts? In the year 1802 the actual number of subscribers was, not 394, but 185.

MR. DILKE.—Allow me to ask Mr. Bell whether he has any better authority for what he is saying than the printed statements of the Society? It is from those statements that the account given in the pamphlet was drawn up, with the assistance of the Secretary. If the figures are false, I am not responsible for that.

MR. BELL.—The statements appear in a book written by Mr. David Williams, called ‘The Claims of Literature.’ The figures are not false, but the mode in which they have been taken out is erroneous. What Mr. Dilke supposed to be the number of subscribers for 1802 includes in fact many subscribers for a long previous period, going as far back as 1795. (Laughter.)

MR. DILKE.—They are stated in the printed book as annual subscribers.

MR. BELL.—But they are not stated as annual subscribers for 1802. The actual number of annual subscribers for 1802 is 185, traced through the cash-book of that year. Lest, however, I should do any injustice to the statement in the pamphlet, considerable trouble has been taken to ascertain whether any persons, who might have omitted to pay their subscriptions within the year, paid such subscriptions afterwards. The result is that we have found ten persons who subsequently paid up their subscriptions for 1802. Giving the Reformers the benefit of that discovery, I assume that there were 195 annual subscribers in 1802. In the same year the number of donors was 79. The amount of subscriptions was 281*l.* 8*s.*, of donations 455*l.* 4*s.*, making a total of 736*l.* 12*s.*, exclusive of a donation from India which arrived after the accounts were closed. I now turn to the state of the Fund in 1857, which brings us close upon that disastrous period when, unless some miraculous assistance comes to our aid, we are doomed to perish. (Laughter.) In the year 1857 the number of annual subscribers was 119, of donors 108; the amount of subscriptions was 320*l.* 6*s.*, of donations 817*l.* 7*s.*; making a total of 1137*l.* 13*s.* In 1802 the subscriptions and donations combined amounted to 736*l.* 12*s.*; in 1857 they amounted to 1137*l.* 13*s.*! (Cheers.) The income from all sources in 1802 was 974*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.*, in 1857 it was 3180*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.* The list printed in 1802 contains the names of 474 persons who had been, or were then, donors and subscribers, many of them extending back to 1795 and the intervening years; the printed list for 1857 contains the names of 647 donors and subscribers now living and qualified to vote as members of the Corporation, besides 176 donors and subscribers not qualified to vote. The summary of 1857 presents the following results:—Members 647, non-members 176, total 823; the summary of 1802 exhibits a total of 474; showing an increase in favour of 1857 of no less than 349. (Cheers.) Nor should it be forgotten in estimating the value of this increase that the mode of subscribing to public charities has undergone a considerable change since 1802, that the subscriptions are now so much larger than they were formerly, and that even if the number were considerably less the institution would still be in a much better financial position. Of the contributors in the list of 1802, there was only 1 donor of 50*l.*, out of the whole 474—1 of 30*l.*—16 of 20*l.*—and 72 of 10*l.* 10*s.*—while there were 350 of 1*l.* 1*s.* A comparison of that analysis with the present year’s list, where we find few single guineas, and nearly 600 donors and subscribers of 10*l.* and upwards in one sum, shows a remarkable difference in favour of the latter. (Cheers.)

Another point dwelt upon in the pamphlet is that the Reformers, at the meeting at Willis’s Rooms, urged in vain on the Committee the propriety of granting “revocable annuities to the extent of a certain limited proportion of the income,” and also “assistance by way of loan.” The invariable answer was that neither was

possible by the terms of the Charter. "The Managing Committee," continues the pamphlet, "had fortified themselves with an opinion obtained from their consulting counsel, Mr. Serjeant Merewether, and this was of a nature too decisive to leave any doubt upon the point. The thing might, or might not, be praiseworthy; but certainly it was not possible. The Reformers, however, had been careful also to provide themselves with an opinion; and this, being the opinion of Mr. Willes (since Mr. Justice Willes), proved to be of greater weight than that of Mr. Serjeant Merewether." That is to say, that the opinion of Mr. Willes ultimately prevailed with the Committee over that of Mr. Serjeant Merewether. This statement is incorrect. The opinion of Mr. Willes was referred to, but never read at the meeting, and I believe that up to this moment not a single member of the Committee has ever seen that opinion.

MR. JOHN FORSTER.—That opinion exists, and I should be happy to submit it to the Committee at any time they please.

MR. BELL.—I have not the slightest intention of casting any imputation on Mr. Forster.

MR. FORSTER.—It appears to me that the manner in which Mr. Bell has put the thing is calculated to produce an impression that I represented to the meeting on that occasion that I held in my hand an opinion when, in fact, that was not the case; (no, no) or, that I held in my hand an opinion which was not to the effect that I stated.

THE CHAIRMAN.—There appears to be a feeling in the mind of Mr. Forster for which I think there is no sufficient ground. He seems to think that there has been an imputation cast upon his veracity. I understand Mr. Bell to disclaim anything of that kind. However Mr. Bell may impugn the arguments of Mr. Forster, that gentleman's integrity and good faith have not been called into question. (Hear, hear.)

MR. BELL.—I have neither implied nor expressed any doubt of the existence of Mr. Willes' opinion: it would have been inconsistent with my own purpose to have done so; for my whole argument rests on the fact of its existence (laughter). I must recall attention to the statement that the opinion of Mr. Willes had greater weight with the Committee than that of Mr. Serjeant Merewether. "So matters stood," proceeds the pamphlet, "until the General Meeting of March, 1857, when the Committee, at the close of their Report, announced that they had granted one annuity—making no mention whatever of this change having been forced upon them by the Reformers." And in a subsequent page it is affirmatively stated that, in consequence of the perseverance of the Reformers, "there is now one annuitant on the Literary Fund." If this were the case, it would certainly appear that the Committee had renounced the opinion of Mr. Serjeant Merewether, by which they were advised that annuities are illegal under the Charter, and that they had adopted the opinion of Mr. Willes, which they had never seen. But, gentlemen, this is not the case. The Committee did not announce in March, 1857, that they had granted one annuity—for this simple reason, that they had done no such thing. (Laughter.)

MR. DILKE, Junr.—Did you not tell me, Mr. Bell, that an annuity had been granted?

MR. BELL.—No; I could not have told you so, because I knew that we had not granted one, and could not grant one under the Charter. A resolution was moved and passed unanimously in January, 1856, by which power was given to the Committee to renew grants, under certain circumstances and conditions, without requiring any fresh applications from the persons thus relieved. This measure gave a continuous power to the Committee, to be exercised only in particular cases, but it is a very different thing from an annuity, revocable or otherwise. As yet no instance of the kind has occurred. (Hear, hear.)

Another topic is the admission of periodical writers to the benefits of the Fund. The way in which the Reformers refer to this deserves attention. "In noticing such concessions," they observe, "the observation must be added that the General Committee, constituted as it is at present, and under no efficient control by a Council or other analogous body (as provided in the recommendations of the Special Committee of 1855), are only grasping at greater powers for abuse as well as for service, in so far yielding, churlishly and reluctantly, to those suggestions made by the Reformers of which they are careful to suppress

all mention." It seems, then, that even when we do what our opponents consider to be right, we are as much to blame as when we do what they consider to be wrong. If we adopt an improvement of which they themselves approve, we do so, not for the sake of improvement, but only that we may grasp at greater powers of abuse. And this accusation of corrupt motives proceeds from those very gentlemen who, in the Report of their own Special Committee, here alluded to, spoke in the following terms of the administrative body:—"They [the Reformers] are agreed in nothing more completely than in attaching no reproach or blame to any of your officers."

MR. DICKENS.—What is the date of that Report?

MR. BELL.—1855.

MR. DICKENS.—Just so.

MR. BELL.—Returning to this matter of admitting periodical writers to the advantages of the Fund, I cannot accord to these gentlemen the credit they claim for having originated it and forced it upon us. I have a right to speak upon this subject, as I had the honour of proposing the resolution myself, having discussed and urged the change long before any movement took place on their part; and I can confidently state that, in proposing it to the Committee, I was influenced solely by a conviction of its propriety, and not by any pressure from without. I now come to what may be considered on the whole, perhaps, one of the most remarkable passages in the pamphlet. The members of the Literary Fund are familiar with a quotation from the Quarterly Review, testifying to the benefits of this Institution, which is printed on the cover of our annual Lists and Reports. Referring to this quotation, the Reformers suggest to us the propriety of substituting the following extract, also from the Quarterly Review, in its place, should we still continue to resist their "just and moderate demands." I will read this quotation, that you may the better appreciate the candour and equity by which the pamphlet is characterised:—

"The Literary Fund provides no present employment for the hungry and willing labourer, and holds out no hope for the future. . . . There is neither the grace nor the virtue of charity, in distributions of this kind; and were the money, which is thus annually expended, disbursed in well-directed alms, a far greater sum of good would be obtained. He who from his own means relieves a case of individual distress, does good at the same time to his own heart; and that which is wisely and bountifully given, blesses him that takes, as well as him that gives. But, in this Joint-Stock Patronage Company, a donation is paid and received like a poor-rate—save only that there is rather more humiliation on the part of the receiver, who, in this case, solicits as a charity what, in the other, he would have claimed as a right."

It will be observed that this passage is extracted and applied as a just review of the management of this Institution, and as containing the opinion of the 'Quarterly' upon our conduct. But what will be your amazement, gentlemen, when I tell you that this passage, thus applied to the existing Committee of the Literary Fund, was published forty-six years ago! (Cheers and laughter.) Here is the number for September, 1812, containing this identical passage. (Cheers.) And it is a still more astounding fact that this passage was published before the Fund had obtained its Charter, at a time when its bounties were small and its affairs irregularly managed, and, above all, when it was carried on under the personal superintendence of Mr. Williams, the founder, who lived in the house of the Fund in Gerrard Street, whose example the Reformers are never tired of appealing to, and whose system—the system described in this passage—we are accused of deviating from. (Cheers.) I need not ask whether you consider it a legitimate mode of attack to adopt a criticism written nearly fifty years ago, and addressed to a wholly different state of things, and apply it to the present Committee. (Hear, hear.) I will now dismiss the pamphlet, and close by mentioning a few of the illustrious names in literature by which the Fund and its Committee are supported—names which cannot fail to have weight with the public in the consideration of these differences. Amongst them are the Editor of the 'Edinburgh Review,' M. Van de Weyer, Baron Bunsen, Lord Stanhope, Lord Macaulay, Lord Stanley, Lord Brougham, Lord Campbell, the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Bishop of Oxford, the Bishop of St. David's, Dr. Roget, Sir Henry Ellis, Mr. Bolton Corney, Mr. Kaye, Mr. S. C. Hall, Mr. Theodore Martin, Mr. Helps, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Hallam, Mr. Thackeray, Mr. Thomas

Bell, Professor Whewell, Mr. Monckton Milnes, the Dean of Canterbury, the Dean of Westminster, Archbishop Whately, the Rev. Dr. Hawtrey, Mr. Panizzi, Mr. G. P. R. James, Sir Archibald Alison, Mr. Haliburton, Professor Christmas, Mr. Ruskin, Professor Owen. There are many more, but these are sufficient to indicate the confidence reposed in the labours of the Committee by the highest names in the rolls of literature and science. (Hear, hear.) It has been suggested to me that, as there are, probably, some gentlemen who have attended to-day for the first time, it may be desirable to state that the only paid officers of the Society are the Secretary and the Collector. (Cheers.)

MR. REEVE stated that a careful analysis of the expenditure showed that it amounted to less than 17 per cent., and not 40, on the entire available income of the last year, an account of which had just been laid on the table. The total income from all sources amounted to 3180*l.*, while the entire expenditure, under every head, was 553*l.*

EARL STANHOPE said, he presumed that Mr. Dickens did not object to the votes of thanks to the Registrars, Treasurers, and Auditors.

MR. DICKENS said he did not.

EARL STANHOPE suggested he should put the resolution containing those votes first, and Mr. Dickens's amendment as a substantive motion, which course was agreed to.

The motion of thanks was then put, and carried unanimously.

A show of hands was then taken on Mr. Dickens's resolution, which was negatived by a majority of 70 to 14.

MR. PURTON COOPER was of opinion that it would conduce to the interest of the Society if he now moved a resolution for inquiry with regard to the expenses. Though the statements of Mr. Bell were on the whole satisfactory, he thought there should be an investigation, and that Mr. Dickens and his friends should take part in it. He would, therefore, move—"That a Sub-Committee be appointed to inquire, before the next General Meeting, whether it be possible to diminish the annual expenses of the Society in any, and what respect, without injury to its efficiency."

MR. TOOKE thought there could be no objection to a recommendation to the Committee to consider the matter, and report upon it to the next Meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN thought that Mr. Cooper's views would be met by the appointment of a Sub-Committee of Inquiry by the General Committee.

MR. COOPER observed that a great deal would depend upon the persons appointed. (Laughter.)

MR. POLLOCK regarded Mr. Cooper's proposal as an attempt to reverse the vote already agreed to, by passing a vote of no confidence. The Committee, if they were supposed to do their duty, must have that very question of expenditure constantly before them. If the question went to a division, the result would be a repetition of the same numbers. (Hear, hear.)

MR. DICKENS hoped that Mr. Cooper would press his motion to a division. The result would, no doubt, be a repetition of the same numbers, but it was important to get that result.

MR. MILNES opposed the motion. He considered that the question raised by it had been settled for twelve months. The chief expenses were those of the House and the salary of the Secretary. That was the very question at issue. The Committee thought it best to continue the House and the Secretary. It would be better to bring forward these two questions distinctly, and settle the question once for all. (Hear, hear.)

MR. J. FORSTER supported the motion, remarking that its adoption would, in his opinion, afford a good chance of the termination of these painful discussions. He entreated the Meeting not hastily or inconsiderately to reject this proposal.

The motion, after being seconded, was submitted to a show of hands, when it was negatived by 66 to 18. The Officers and General Committee were then re-elected.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS moved, and MR. FORSTER seconded, a vote of thanks to the noble Earl for his courtesy and impartial conduct in the chair.

The motion was carried with acclamation.

CHAIRMEN OF THE ANNIVERSARIES

OF THE

Royal Literary Fund.

1793. Sir Joseph Andrews, Bart.
1794. Sir Joseph Andrews, Bart.
1795. Sir Joseph Andrews, Bart.
1796. Thomas Williams, Esq., M.P.
1797. Thomas Williams, Esq., M.P.
1798. Thomas Williams, Esq., M.P.
1799. Sir James Bland Burges, Bart.
1800. Thomas Williams, Esq., M.P.
1801. Sir James Bland Burges, Bart.
1802. The Duke of Somerset.
1803. The Earl of Chichester.
1804. The Earl of Chichester.
1805. The Earl of Chichester.
1806. The Duke of Somerset.
1807. The Duke of Somerset.
1808. The Earl of Chichester.
1809. The Duke of Somerset.
1810. The Duke of Somerset.
1811. The Earl of Chichester.
1812. The Earl of Chichester.
1813. The Duke of Somerset.
1814. The Duke of Somerset.
1815. H. R. H. THE DUKE OF KENT.
1816. H. R. H. THE DUKE OF KENT.
1817. H. R. H. THE DUKE OF SUSSEX.
1818. The Duke of Somerset.
1819. Sir Benjamin Hobhouse, Bart.
1820. The Earl of Blessington.
1821. The Earl of Chichester.
1822. H. R. H. THE DUKE OF YORK.
1823. The Duke of Somerset.
1824. The Marquess of Lansdowne.
1825. Charles Savill Onley, Esq.
1826. The Duke of Somerset.
1827. The Lord John Russell, M.P.
1828. The Duke of Somerset.
1829. The Duke of Somerset.
1830. The Duke of Somerset.
1831. The Lord Chancellor Brougham.
1832. The Duke of Somerset.
1833. The Duke of Somerset.
1834. The Duke of Somerset.
1835. The Duke of Somerset.
1836. The Duke of Somerset.
1837. The Duke of Somerset.
1838. The Marquess of Lansdowne.
1839. H. R. H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE
(50th Year).
1840. Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Bart.
1841. The Earl of Ripon.
1842. H. R. H. THE PRINCE CONSORT.
1843. The Duke of Sutherland.
1844. The Marquess of Northampton.
1845. The Earl of Ellenborough.
1846. The Bishop of Lincoln (Dr. Kaye).
1847. Chevalier Bunsen, Prussian Minister.
1848. The Duke of Northumberland.
1849. Field Marshal Viscount Hardinge.
1850. Mr. Justice Talfourd.
1851. M. Van de Weyer, Belgian Minister.
1852. The Lord Chief Justice Campbell.
1853. Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli.
1854. The Lord Mahon (now Earl Stanhope)
1855. The Lord Bishop of Oxford.
1856. H. R. H. THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.
1857. Right Hon. William Cowper.

Since the institution of the Literary Fund in 1790 to the present time, a period of 68 years, 2702 grants have been made, and a total sum of £49,505 9s. has been distributed to claimants.

The following Table exhibits the number of grants made, and the amounts distributed yearly during the last 19 years, since 1839, showing a total of 892 grants, and a total sum of £24,935 distributed to claimants, being more than half the amount distributed throughout the whole 68 years.

1839	88 Grants	£1,590	Brought	}	510 Grants	£13,295
1840	49 ditto	883	forward			
1841	38 ditto	785	1850	38 ditto	1,035	
1842	46 ditto	1,255	1851	51 ditto	1,635	
1843	45 ditto	1,145	1852	49 ditto	1,340	
1844	31 ditto	955	1853	47 ditto	1,490	
1845	38 ditto	1,240	1854	48 ditto	1,470	
1846	46 ditto	1,407	1855	53 ditto	1,665	
1847	38 ditto	1,230	1856	41 ditto	1,225	
1848	50 ditto	1,480	1857	55 ditto	1,780	
1849	41 ditto	1,325				
	—	—	Total	892 Grants	£24,935	
Carried on,	510 Grants,	£13,295				









