

Victoria Institute

10 Adelphi Terrace, Strand, W.C.

23 December 1875.

Dear Sir,

Circumstances rendering it desirable, permit me to lay before the Council a statement of the present position of the Institute;—

During this year 115 (111 last year) members and associates joined, the losses by death and retirement have been about 25, the total number of members on the 1st proximo will be 326; associates and life subscribers bring this number up to 647, but inasmuch as the increasing expenses are principally borne by the members subscriptions, the numerical strength of the Institute requires to be greater, especially if its ^{present} progress is to be maintained.

The contributions to the library fund have been £5 in three years, and this fund is now £24 in debt, the propriety of asking the members for fresh contributions to this, as well as to the Peoples Edition Fund, (which also requires support) needs consideration.

Of late an extra number of a select few of the papers in each part have been struck off separately; for the sale of these, and the Peoples Edition of our papers, a scheme of book-seller agents in the leading towns of the United Kingdom, having been matured, has been in full operation in 15 of the largest towns for four months, & the results have in some cases exceeded anticipation, nearly half the Institutes accumulated stock of single papers has been issued from time to time to these agents, some of whom are pushing the sale actively. At the commencement it has been found necessary to fix the prices of the single papers at a comparatively low rate, hence although the net profit has been small, yet the advantage in publicity gained by the

Circular
Police

Institute is to be by no means overlooked, the booksellers have also begun to include the Institutes publications in their circulated lists of books.

The smallness of the Peoples Edition Fund has not allowed of compliance with more than a portion of the applications from Clergymen, Missionaries, Scripture readers &c, for grants of the papers for circulation amongst some of the less educated classes, notably working men in manufacturing, mining & other districts where scepticism (especially that arising from erroneous ideas as to the true results of scientific discovery) is on the increase, but, a fund of £200 would at once place the Institute in a satisfactory position, as regards any proper applications of the kind. In connection with the foregoing the Council will be gratified to know, that a member of the Institute, in a North of England town (noted for the prevalence of scepticism therein) has been lecturing for some time from the Institutes journals (the whole of which he has purchased for the purpose) to audiences of from 1500 to 2000, once and sometimes twice a week. This member has stated that he has found in the journal, exactly that which he needed for his work, and which he had looked for in vain elsewhere. (This member has sent a considerable addition to the library) it is to be regretted that circumstances already noticed have not permitted the Institute to meet this gentlemen's applications for grants of papers for distribution in special cases.

Some applications for private copies of the transactions have also been received from Clergymen & others residing in the United Kingdom or abroad, in all cases where peculiar circumstances warranted, these applications have been partially complied with.

In conclusion it may be added that the good understanding existing between this and other scientific societies continues to increase, as does the number of its literary and scientific supporters and friends

I am

Yours very faithfully

F. Petree

Honorary Secretary