

Speeches by the Prince Consort: 'The Royal Literary Fund'

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<https://albert.rct.uk/collections/royal-archives/prince-alberts-official-papers/the-royal-literary-fund>

edited by Andrew Cusworth

I propose the health
of the Queen, who
highly appreciates
the tendency of this
Institution & sincere-
ly interests herself
in its welfare

The Queen
our munificent Patron.

[Page break]

I return you my
warmest thanks
for the great kind-
ness with which
you have received
this toast. It will
always be most grati-
fying to my feelings
to contribute in the
smallest degree to-
wards the welfare
of any of the excellent

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Institutions which
so prominently distin-
guish this Country.

[Page break]

The toast which I
have now to propose
to you is the Prosperity
of this Institution.
It stands unrivalled
in any Country & ought
to command our war-
mest sympathies,
as providing for
the exigences of those
who following the
call of Genius &

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forgetting every other consideration, pursue merely the Cultivation of the human mind & Science. What can then be more proper for us, than gratefully to remember the benefits derived from their disinterested exertions, & cheerfully to contribute to their wants.

[Page break]

I conclude with the ardent wish, that the object for which we have this day met will be answered in the most ample & generous way.

Prosperity to this Institution!

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I am sure you will all gladly join me in drinking the health of our worthy President the Marquis of Lansdowne. He would not wish¹ me to enumerate his merits as a Patron of the Arts & Science, so well known to this Assembly, but it is

¹ 'Misspelling: 'whish', misplaced 'h' struck through.

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a satisfaction to
me to have an oppor-
tunity of expressing
how much I esteem
them.

Our President.

The Literary Fund was established in 1790 as a benevolent fund for British writers experiencing financial difficulties. It was granted a royal charter in 1819 and added 'Royal' to its title in 1845.² The Society held an annual fund-raising dinner, at which Prince Albert gave this speech in 1842. The dinner was held that year on the 11th of May in the Freemasons' Tavern, Great Queen Street, London,³ and a contemporary report suggests that it was attended by nearly four hundred guests.⁴

² 'Royal Literary Fund', *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Literary_Fund, accessed 6.6.2020

³ 'Freemasons' Tavern', *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freemasons%27_Tavern, accessed 6.6.2020

⁴ 'Literary Fund Society', *Morning Chronicle*, Issue 22614, p.6, 12 May 1842. British Library Newspapers, <https://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2608/apps/doc/BA3207201591/BNCN?u=oxford&sid=BNCN&xid=de925dba> accessed 6.6.2020.