

The Society will continue to need, as we trust it will cheerfully receive, the fostering care of the Legislature, and the people.— May we not venture to express the hope, that many of our liberal and wealthy citizens may be induced to bestow a portion of their surplus wealth upon our Society, that it may, like several similar societies, have an endowment to place it beyond the reach of capricious favor, and thus never be suffered to languish for want of means to carry into effect its laudable purposes.

Our collections are already becoming so large and valuable, as to impress the minds of the Committee with the importance of a fire-proof building for their safety and preservation. We should be admonished by the destruction, in whole or in part, of public archives by fire on many occasions—in New Hampshire in 1736; in Massachusetts in 1747, besides having been damaged by three previous fires; in New York in 1740–41, and 1773; in New Jersey in 1686; in North Carolina in 1831; in South Carolina in 1698; and in Canada in 1854—all which were accidental; and in Virginia in 1781, by the fratricide Arnold. Five times have the national archives suffered by conflagration—in 1800, when the buildings of the War Department were destroyed; in 1814, when the British troops burned the public buildings; in 1833, when the Treasury buildings were destroyed; and again in 1836, and lastly in 1851, when the Congressional Library was burned. Until our Society secures a fire-proof building for the custody of its inestimable treasures, its friends cannot entirely repress their fears and anxieties. Several public-spirited citizens of our State, justly appreciating the importance of preserving the Society's collections, have each pledged fifty dollars towards a fire-proof building fund; others stand ready to contribute liberally when it shall be deemed a proper time to make an efficient movement.

The American Antiquarian Society has a fire-proof building which cost about \$18,000, of which its President, Hon. Stephen Salisbury, contributed \$5,000 and the ground on which the building stands; the New York Historical Society has a commodious building nearly ready for occupancy, the foundation fund for