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A HOME FOR THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

(A Paper read at the meeting of the Ontario Historical Society in Napanee, June, 1912).

THE Ontario Historical Society is now by action of the legislature empowered to receive gifts and bequests of property, real and personal, for the purpose of forwarding the objects for which it was constituted. These objects are, shortly, the collection, preservation, exhibition and publication of materials for the study of history, especially the history of Ontario and Canada, the maintenance of a gallery of historical portraiture, and an ethnological and historical museum, the publication of information relative to the history of the Province and the Dominion, and, in general, the encouragement of the study of history, the formation of local societies and the promotion of friendly intercourse and co-operation between them." This paragraph, taken from annual address of first President of the Society, Dr. James H. Coyne, delivered at the meeting held in Victoria College on June 14th, 1899, expresses in plain English his ideas, at that time, upon the subject in question. Since that time thirteen years have elapsed and we have seen historical societies all over this continent building handsome fireproof structures to hold their valuable collections while ours has been stored in an inaccessible room at the Provincial Museum or in the Educational Department.

There are many reasons why the Ontario Historical Society should have a home of its own. The desirability of having its collections housed in a fire-proof building where they are easily accessible must be apparent to everyone. An historical society depends upon such material as may be deposited with it, or upon such as the local officers of Government furnish, or upon contributions by individuals. As we are to-day, what possible inducement is there for anyone to present us with historical material? In each copy of our Annual Report is given a list of the additions to our collection since the previous report was published, but not one per cent. of our members have seen them. What inducement is there at present for our members to spend their spare hours with them or to add their contribution?