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various alcoves will be turned out to make room for other things, and perhaps like the Exploring Expedition collections passed over to the Smithsonian Institution."

According to A. Hunter Dupree, scientists such as Josiah Dwight Whitney of the California Geological Survey were wary of involvement with the "politics-ridden" Government Land Office. F. V. Hayden's biographer points out that Hayden chafed under Wilson and the Gen-

eral Land Office while working on the Geological Survey of Nebraska. As Brush and Henry predicted, specimens were transferred from the General Land Office to the Smithsonian in 1872. A. Hunter Dupree, *Science in the Federal Government* (1957; New York, 1980), pp. 197-198; Mike Foster, *Strange Genius: The Life of Ferdinand Vandever Hayden* (Niwot, Colorado, 1994), pp. 154-157; *Smithsonian Report for 1872*, p. 78; Rhees, *Documents* (1901), 1:693-694.

88. FROM SALMON PORTLAND CHASE AND JOSEPH HENRY TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

[May 1, 1868]^A

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled:

In behalf of the board of regents of the Smithsonian Institution, the undersigned beg leave respectfully to submit to your honorable body the following statement,¹ and to solicit such action in regard to it as may be deemed just and proper:

The act of Congress organizing the institution ordered the erection of a building which should accommodate, on a liberal scale, besides a library and a gallery of art, a museum consisting of all the specimens of natural history, geology and art, which then belonged to the government, or which might thereafter come into its possession by exchange or otherwise.² Although the majority of the regents did not consider the maintenance of these objects to be in accordance with the intention of Smithson, as inferred from a strict interpretation of the terms of his will, yet in obedience to the commands of Congress they proceeded to erect a building of the necessary dimensions, and to take charge of the government collections.

The erection and maintenance of so large and expensive an edifice, involving an outlay of \$450,000, and the charge of the government museum, have proved a grievous burden on the Institution, increasing from year to year, which, had not its effects been counteracted by a judicious management of the funds, would have paralyzed the legitimate operations of the establishment, and frustrated the evident intention of Smithson.

It is true that Congress, at the time the specimens were transferred to the Institution,³ granted an appropriation of \$4,000 for their care and preservation, that being the equivalent of the estimated cost of the main-

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tenance of these collections in the Patent Office, where they had previously been exhibited. But this sum, from the rise in prices and the expansion of the museum by the specimens obtained from about fifty exploring expeditions ordered by Congress, scarcely more than defrays, at the present time, one-third of the annual expense. In this estimate no account is taken of the rent of the part of the building devoted to the museum of the government, which, at a moderate estimate, would be \$20,000 per annum.

Besides the large expenditure which has already been made on the building, at least \$50,000 more will be required to finish the large hall in the second story necessary for the full display of the specimens of the government. But the regents do not think it judicious further to embarrass the active operations for several years to come, by devoting a large part of the income to this object, and have, therefore, concluded to allow this room to remain unfinished until other means are provided for completing it.

It is not by its castellated building nor the exhibition of the museum of the government that the Institution has achieved its present reputation, nor by the collection and display of material objects of any kind that it has vindicated the intelligence and good faith of the government in the administration of the trust; it is by its explorations, its researches, its publications, its distribution of specimens, and its exchanges, constituting it an active, living organization, that it has rendered itself favorably known in every part of the civilized world, has made contributions to almost every branch of science, and brought more than ever before into intimate and friendly relations the old and the new worlds.

A central museum for a complete representation of the natural products of America, with such foreign specimens as may be required for comparison and generalization, is of great importance, particularly as a means of developing and illustrating our industrial resources, as well as of facilitating the study of the relations of our geology, mineralogy, *flora* and *fauna*, to those of the old world. But the benefit of such an establishment is principally confined to this country, and does not partake of the cosmopolitan character of an institution such as Smithson intended to found, and therefore ought not to be supported from his bequest.

The board of regents are confident that upon a full consideration of the case, your honorable body will grant an adequate support for the collections of the government, and also an appropriation for finishing the repairs of the building, and eventually, when the financial condition of the country will permit, for the independent maintenance of a national museum.

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It may not be improper in addition to what has been said to recall the fact that the Smithsonian Institution has transferred, without cost, to the library of Congress, one of the most valuable and complete collections of the transactions of scientific and learned societies and serial publications in existence, consisting of at least 50,000 works, which, with the annual continuations of the same series, must render Washington a centre of scientific knowledge, and the library itself worthy of the nation; and that it has also presented to government its valuable collection of specimens of art, illustrating the history of engraving from the earliest periods.⁴ It is prepared to render a similar service to a national museum, by the exchanges from foreign museums to which it has been a liberal contributor, and which may be obtained as soon as means are provided for their transportation and accommodation.

It may also be mentioned that the Institution has rendered important service to the government, through the scientific investigations it has made in connection with the operations of the different departments, and it is not too much to say that, through the labors of its officers, it has been the means of saving millions of dollars to the national treasury.

In conclusion your memorialists beg leave to represent, on behalf of the board of regents, that the usual annual appropriation of \$4,000 is wholly inadequate to the cost of preparing, preserving and exhibiting the specimens, the actual expenditure for that purpose in 1867 having been over \$12,000; and they take the liberty of respectfully urging on your honorable body the expediency of increasing it to \$10,000, and that a further sum of \$25,000 be appropriated at this session of Congress towards the completion of the hall required for the government collections.⁵

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c., &c.

S. P. CHASE,
Chancellor Smithsonian Institution.
JOSEPH HENRY,
Secretary Smithsonian Institution.

U.S. House, 40th Congress, 2d Session, House Miscellaneous Documents, No. 122 (1868).

Draft: Folder 2, Box 14, Subject File, William Jones Rhees Collection, Smithsonian Archives. Previously published in Rhees, *Documents* (1901), 1:672-674; Rhees, *Journals*, pp. 322-323; *Smithsonian Report for 1867*, pp. 114-115.

1. The regents approved the memorial at their May 1 meeting, and it was referred on that day to the House Committee on Appropriations. Rhees, *Journals*, pp. 322-323.

2. The provisions are in sections 5 and 6. Rhees, *Documents* (1901), 1:432-433.

3. Although the Smithsonian had housed var-

ious collections belonging to the government for many years, the government collections that had been in the Patent Office Building were not transferred to the Smithsonian until 1858. *Henry Papers*, 9:447n-448n; 10:16-17.

4. The Smithsonian had purchased George P. Marsh's collection of European prints in

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1849. Shortly after the 1865 fire, it transferred much of the collection to the Library of Congress as a temporary deposit; additional transfers to the Library of Congress and the Corcoran Gallery of Art followed in the 1870s. In 1896, pending moves by the two organizations, a substantial amount of material was returned to the Smithsonian. The Library of Congress, however, still retains hundreds of prints from the Marsh collection in its Prints and Photographs Division. *Henry Papers*, 7:557n; Helena E. Wright, *Prints at the Smithsonian: The Origins of a National Collection* (Washington, 1996), pp. 22, 33, 36, 54-56; Richard Rathbun, *The National Gallery of Art*, Bulletin of the National Museum, No. 70 (Washington, 1909), pp. 70-75.

5. Two months earlier, the House Appropriations Committee had requested only \$1,000 for the national collections instead of the usual \$4,000 appropriation. Luke P. Poland, a Smithsonian regent, proposed an amendment raising

the figure to \$6,000. During the ensuing debate, E. B. Washburne of Illinois reported that the committee "thought that \$1,000 a year was about as much as the people of this country desire to pay to preserve the collections of the exploring and surveying expeditions of the Government" (p. 671). J. V. S. L. Pruyn, also a Smithsonian regent, argued that the collections could not be taken care of for less than \$5,000 or \$6,000. Lewis Selye of New York opposed any increase, saying, "I would like to know of what this Institution consists." He continued, "It is enough to make any man or woman sick to visit that Institution. No one can expect to get any benefit from it" (p. 672). An amendment proposed by Ginery Twichell of Massachusetts raising the appropriation to \$4,000 was agreed to. Despite this memorial, the amount of funding in the appropriations bill that became law on July 20, 1868, remained \$4,000. Rhees, *Documents* (1901), 1:670-672, 674.

89. TO JAMES DENHAM¹

Smithsonian Inst^{on}

May 25th 1868^A

My Dear Sir,

My friend Mr. Patterson sails tomorrow, with his two daughters, for Europe, and I embrace this opportunity to [inform]^B you that we are just now making up an invoice of packages for Europe and shall send one to the Magee College containing a complete set of the Smithsonian publications with the exception of the annual reports, the duplicates of which were destroyed in the fire.²

You have probably learned ere this, that Dr McCosh has been called to the presidency of Princeton College,³ one of the oldest and most respectable institutions of learning in this country [...]^C received. The duties of the office are of an onerous character and to a person unacquainted with the peculiarities of education in this country they may present many difficulties. The reputation however which Dr McCosh has acquired will be of much service to him in the way of power and influence both with the Trustees and the students, besides this the infusion of a foreign element into an institution may have a good effect in correcting errors sanctioned by time and introducing new principles tending to improve the present curriculum.⁴

Mr Patterson will give you an account of the changes in our political condition since you left our country. We are still far from a settled policy.