

archival agencies cannot function. In practice such divisions are possible because the searcher who needs an entire series is quite rare, most research problems having *termini a quo* and *ad quem*.

The second reason against centralization is that it discourages the writing of local history by local historians. This is at best a guess. In Maryland the writing of local history by local historians took place for the most part between 1860 and 1914. It does not seem likely that the contemporary lawyer or preacher will return to this kind of work and if he should, it is questionable whether modern history ought to be written—as local history once was—by drawing on local records exclusively. At best such histories were full local chronicles and need to be done again. In the meantime, many centers of learning, the Johns Hopkins University for example, have encouraged graduate students in the social sciences to interest themselves in local subjects. The future local histories, if written at all, will it now seems be written by this younger generation of trained historians, and for them the centralization of records is nothing short of a Godsend.

The third reason is that the retention of the records in the local depository encourages pride in the antiquities of the locality, which is a sentiment highly desirable on all counts. This pride ultimately finds expression in the providing of better care for the records, the establishment of innumerable miniature halls of records. The answer is that while in some cases this local patriotism exists and may be symbolized on occasion by special reverence for some of the records, it has never yet to my knowledge provided for better care of the records. It is at least worth mentioning in passing that this sort of program providing new buildings and vaults, expensive equipment and trained personnel would be certainly expensive and probably uneconomical. Moreover, waiting for these developments may postpone record care for a very long time, thereby providing leisure for the normal hazards to continue their work of destruction. Fires and floods may strike at any time; insects, damp, dry heat are on the job at all times.

Finally, it is said that centralization of records causes resentment in county seats and this resentment is sometimes expressed in the Legislature by attacks on the archival agency and by painful cuts in the budget. Certainly there are people who