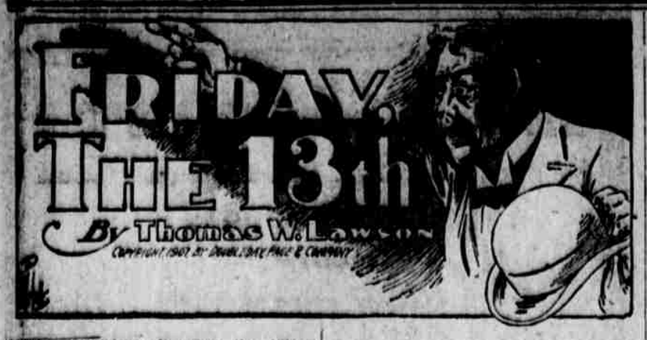

The following afternoon the letter came. It showed Judge Sands in a very nervous, uneasy state. He said he had been living a life of daily terror, as some of his friends, for whose estates he was trustee, had been receiving anonymous letters, advising them to look into the judge's trust affairs; that the Reinhart crowd had been using renewed pressure to make him let go all his Seaboard stock, which they wanted to secure at the low prices to which they had depressed it, in order that they might reorganize and carry out the scheme they had been so long planning. Judge Sands went on to say that the day he was compelled to sell his Seaboard stock he would have to make public an announcement of his condition, as there could be no sale without the court's consent. His closing was:

My dear daughter, no one knows better than I the almost hopelessness of expecting any relief from your operations. But so hopeless have I become of late, so much am I reliant upon you, my dear child, and eternal hope so springs in all of us when confronted with great necessities, that I have hoped and still hope that you are to be the savior of your family; that you, only a frail child, are through God's marvellous workings to be the one to save the honor of that name we both love more than life; the one to keep the wolf of poverty from that door through which so far has come nothing but the sunshine of prosperity and happiness; the one, my dear Beulah, who is to save your old father from a dishonored grave. Dear child, forgive me for placing upon your weak shoulders the additional burden of knowing I am now helpless and compelled to rely absolutely upon you. After you have read my letter, if there is no hope, I command you to tell me so at once, for although I am now financially and almost mentally helpless, I am still a Sands, and there has never yet been one of the name who shirked his duty, however stern and painful it might be.

When I handed the letter back to Miss Sands, she said:

"Mr. Randolph, let me tell you and Mr. Brownley a little about my father and our home, that you may see our situation as it is. My father is one of the noblest men that ever lived. I am not the only one who says that—if you were to ask the people of our state to name the one man who had done most for the state as a state, most for her progressive betterment, most for her people high and low, white and black, they would answer, 'Judge Lee Sands.' He has been, and is, the idol of our people. After he was graduated from Harvard, he entered the law office of my grandfather, Senator Robert Lee Sands. Before he was 30 he was in congress and was even then reputed the greatest orator of our state, where orators are so plentiful. He married my mother, his second cousin, Julia Lee, of Richmond, at 25, and from then until the attack of that ruthless money shark, led a life such as a true man would map out for himself if his Maker granted him the privilege. You would have to visit at our home to appreciate my father's character and to understand how terrible this sorrow is to him. Every morning of his life he spends an hour after breakfast with my dear mother, who is a cripple from hip disease. He takes her in his arms and brings her down from her room to the library as if she were a child. He then reads to her—and he knows good books as well as he knows his friends. After he takes mother back to her room, he gives an hour to our people, the blacks of the plantation and his white tenants throughout the county. He is a father to them all. He settles all their troubles, big and little. Then for hours he and I go over his business affairs. Every afternoon from four to five he devotes to his estates and the men and women for whom he acts as trustees. He has often said to me: 'We have a clear million of money and property, and that is all any man should have in America. It is all he is entitled to under our form of government. Any more than that an honest man should in one way or another return to the people from whom he has taken it. I never want my family to have more than a million dollars.' When he went into the Seaboard affair, he explained to me that it was to assist the Wilsons—they were old friends, and he acted as their solicitor for years—in building up the south. He discussed with me the right and advisability of putting in the trust funds. He said he considered it his duty to employ them as he did his own in enterprises that would aid the whole people of the south, instead of sending them to the north to be used in Wall street as belting for the 'System' grinder. These fortunes were made in the south by men who loved their section of the country more than they did wealth, and why should they not be employed to benefit that part of the country which their makers and owners loved? I remember vividly how perplexed he was when, at the beginning, the Wilsons would show him that the investments were returning unusually large profits.

"'It is not right, Beulah,' he said to me one morning after receiving a letter from Baltimore to the effect that Seaboard stock and bonds had advanced until his investment showed over 50 per cent. profit, 'it is not right for us to make this money. No man in America should make over legal rates of interest and a fair profit on an investment, that is, an investment of capital pure and simple, particularly in a transportation company, where every dollar of profit comes from the people who patronize the lines. I have worked it out on every side, and it is not right; it would not be legal if the people, who make the laws for their own betterment, understood their affairs as they should.'

"He was always writing to the Wilsons to conduct the affairs of the Seaboard so that there would be remaining each day only profits enough to keep the road up and the wharves in good condition and to pay the annual interest and a fair dividend. And when the Wilsons came to our house to lay before him the offer of Reinhardt and his fellow plunderers to pay enormous profits for the control of the seaboard, he was indignant and argued with them that the offer was an insult to honest men. It was he who advised the trusteeship control of the Seaboard stock to prevent Reinhart from securing control. I sat in the library when he talked to the elder Wilson and the directors.

"He appealed directly to John Wilson to make an effort to stop the growing tendency to use the people as pawns to enslave themselves and their children. He said some man of undoubted probity, standing, and wealth, some one whom the people trusted, must start the fight against these New York fiends, whose only thought is to roll up wealth. And he told John Wilson he was the man, since he had great wealth, honestly got by his father and grandfather; no one would accuse him of being a hypocrite, seeking notoriety, and his standing in the financial world was so old and solid that it would have to listen to him. I remember how emphatically father said: 'I tell you, John, even the discussion of such a proposition as that scoundrel Reinhart makes is degrading to an American's honor.' He said it didn't make the least difference if Reinhart counted his millions by the score, and was director in 30 or 40 great institutions, and gave a fortune every year for charity to the church—that he was a blackleg just the same. And so is any man, he said, who dares to say he will take the stock of a transportation company, which represents a certain amount of money invested and double or multiply it by five and ten, simply because he can compel people to pay exorbitant fares and freight rates and so get profits on this fraudulently increased capital.

"It was the decision arrived at by father and the Wilsons at this meeting, a decision to refuse in any circumstances to allow our southern people to be bled by the Wall street 'system,' that started Reinhart and his dollar-fiends on the war-path. You can see from what I tell you of my father the terrible condition he is in now. At night, when I get to thinking of him, hoping against hope, with no one to help him, no one with whom he can talk over his affairs, when I think of his nobleness in devoting his time to mother and by sheer will-power concealing from her his awful suffering, it nearly drives me mad."

"Miss Sands, why will you not let me lend you the money necessary to tide your father over for awhile?" I asked.

"You are so good," Mr. Randolph, "but you don't quite understand my father in spite of what I have said. He would not relieve his suffering at the expense of another, not if it were a hundred times more acute. You cannot understand the old-fashioned, deep-rooted pride of the Sands."

"But can you not, at least temporarily disguise from him just how you have arranged the relief?"

Her big blue eyes stared at me in bewilderment.

"Mr. Randolph, I could not deceive father. I could not tell him a lie even to save his life. It would be impossible. My father abhors a lie. He believes a man or woman who would lie the lowest of the low things on earth. When I go back to my father he will say: 'Tell me what you have done.' I can just see him now, standing between the big white pillars at the end of the driveway. I can hear him saying calmly: 'Beulah, my daughter, welcome. Your mother is waiting for you in her room. Do not lose a moment getting to her.' Afterward he'll take me over the plantation to show me all the familiar things, and not one word will he allow me to say about our affairs until dinner is over, until the neighbors have left, for no Sands returns from long absence without a fitting home welcome. When I have said good night to mother and sister and he has drawn up my rocker in front of his big chair in the library alcove and I've lighted his cigar for him, he will look me in the eye and say: 'Daughter, tell me what you have done.' I would no more think of holding anything back than I would of stabbing him to the heart. No, Mr. Randolph, there is no possibility of relief except in fairly using that $30,000 and fairly winning back what Wall street has stolen from father. Even that will cause both of us many twinges of conscience, and anything more is impossible. If this cannot be done, father must, all of us must, pay the penalty of Reinhart's ruthless act."

Bob had listened, but made no comment until she was through; then he said: "It looks to me as though the market is shaping up so that we may be able to do something soon." It was evident to both of us that he had some plan in mind.

Later we learned that that night Beulah wrote her father a long letter, telling him what she had done; that she had made almost two millions profit from her operations; that they had been lost, and that the outlook was not reassuring. She begged him to prepare himself for the final calamity; promising that if there were no change for the better by December 1, she would come home to be with him when the blow fell. She begged him to prepare to meet it like a Sands, and assure him that if worse came to worst she would earn enough to keep poverty away. Judge Sands would receive this letter the second day following, Friday, the 13th day of November. My God! how well I know the date. It is seared into my brain as though with a white-hot iron.

After our talk with Beulah Sands I begged Bob to dine with me and go over matters at length to see if we could not find a way out to relief.

"No, Jim, I have work to do tonight, work that won't wait. That tariff bill was buttoned up to-day, and it has just been announced that the Sugar directors have declared a big extra dividend. Things have come out just about as I told you they would, and the stock is climbing to-day. They say it will touch 200 to-morrow, and 'the street' is predicting 250 for it in ten days. Barry Conant has been a steady buyer all day and the news bureaus announced that Camemeyer and the 'Standard Oil' are twenty millions winners. They say the Washington gamblers, the congressmen, senators and cabinet members with their heelers and lobbyists have made a killing. About every one seems to have fattened up, Jim, but you and me and Beulah Sands and the public. The public gets the ax both ways, as usual. They have been shaken out of their stock, and they will be compelled to pay millions more each year for their sugar than they would if this law had not been made for their benefit. Jim, there is no disguising the fact that the American people are as helpless in the hands of these thugs of the 'system' as though they lived in the realm of the sultan, where a few cutthroat brigands are licensed to rob and oppress to their heart's content. Jim Randolph, you know this game of finance. You know how it is worked, and the men who work it. Tell me if there is any consideration due Wall street and its heart-and-soul butchers at the hands of honest men."

"I do not know what you mean, Bob. What are you driving at?"

"Never mind what I am driving at. I ask you whether, if an honest man knew how to beat Wall street at its own game, he should hesitate to beat it—hesitate because of anything connected with conscience or morals? You saw what Barry Conant was able to do to us that day simply by standing on the floor of the stock exchange and outstaying me in opening and closing his mouth. You saw he was able to sell Sugar to a point so low that I was obliged to let go of our 150,000 shares at $8,000,000 to $10,000,000 less than we could have got for them if we could have held them until to-day. Because of this trick his clients, the 'system,' instead of us, make five to seven millions."

"I don't follow you, Bob. I know that Barry Conant was able to do this because he had more money behind him than you."

"You think so, do you, Jim? That is the way it looks to you, but I tell you money had nothing to do with it. Nothing had to do with it but the fiendish system of fraud and trickery upon which the whole stock-gambling structure is reared. Nothing entered into the whole business but the trickery of stock-gambling as conducted today. It was only a question, Jim, of a man's opening and closing his mouth and spitting out words. From the minute Barry Conant came into that crowd until he left and we were ruined, he showed no money, no anything that I did not show. From the very nature of the business he could not. He simply said: 'Sold' oftener and longer than I said 'Buy.' He may have had money back of him, or he may only have had nerve. God Almighty is the only one who can tell, for when Conant was through he was able to buy back at 90 the 50,000 shares he sold me at 175, the 50,000 that broke my back. Jim, if I had known as much that day as I do now I would have stood in that crowd and bought all the stock he sold at 180, and I would have stood there buying until hell froze over or he quit; then I would have made him rebuy it at 280 or 2,080, and I would have broken him and all his Camemeyer and 'Standard Oil' backers; broken them to their last crime-covered dollar."

"Bob, what are you talking about? It is all Chinese to me. I cannot get head or tail of what you are driving at."

"I know you can't, Jim, neither could Wall street if it were listening to me. But you will, and Wall street will, too, before many days go by. Now I must be off. I have work to do."

He put on his hat and left me trying to puzzle out just what he meant.

Next day the Sugar bulls had the center of the stock exchange stage. All day long they tossed Sugar from one to another, as though each thousand shares had been a wisp of hay instead of $200,000—for soon after the opening it soared to 200. The "system's" cohorts were in absolute control, with Barry Conant never a minute away from the Sugar-pole, always on the alert to steer the course of price when they threatened to run away on the up or the down side. It was evident to the expert readers of the tape that the "system" was carrying its steed for an exceptionally brilliant run. Ike Bloomenstein, the Avenger Fiend, who for 40 years had kept close track of every movement on the floor, and who would bet anything, from his Fifth avenue mansion to his overripe boardroom straw hat, that all stocks and movements were as strictly subject to the law of averages as are the tides to the moon and sun, remarked to Joe Barnes, the loan expert:

"'Cam' unt de Kroseners are pudding up egstra dop rails to dot woolpen deh haf ben pilding since deh took Pop Prownlee and deh Rantolphs into gamp. Unless my topesheet goes pack on me, for deh first dime in 40 years, dere vill pe a record clip pefore a veek from to-tay."

"I am with you there, Ike," answered Joe. "If Barry Conant's knife-edged teeth ever spelt a killin', they do to-day. I just got orders from somewhere to drop call money from four to two and a half per cent., and they have given me ten millions to drop it with and the order is to favor Sugar as 'collat.' Some one is anxious to make it easy for the bleaters to get the coin to buy all the Sugar they want. Ike, you and I might make turkey money for Thanksgiving, if we only knew whether Barry and his bunch were going to shoot her up 30 or 40 points before they turned the bag upside down, or whether they will bury them from 200 to 150. What do you think?"

"I gant make out, aldo I haf vatched dem sharp all day. Dey certainly haf deh lambs lined up right now for any vey dey vont to twist id. I nefer see a petter market for a deluge. For Barry's movements all day I should say dey vould keep hoistin' her until apout noon to-morrow, unt dat deh might get her up to two-tirty og even to deh two-fifty. Put dere are von or two topes on deh sheet vhat run deh uder vay. First der is dat fact you gant run out, dat dere is already on deh Sugar vagon deh piggest load of chuley suckers dat efer came in from deh suppurbs. Sharley pates says if any von hat tapped his Vashington vire or any utter capital vire dis veek he vould haf tought dere vas a senate, house, unt kabinet roll-gall on. Deh tores say 'Cam' vill nefer led dat punch off grafters slite out mit real mooney if he gan help id' unt deh game iss endirely in his hands."

"I agree with you, Ike. If I had the steering of this killing, I don't think I would take any chance of tempting them to dump and grab the profits by carrying it much over 200. But you can't tell what 'Cam' and those four-eyed dentists at 26 Broadway will do."

"Yes, put der iss anudder t'ing, Cho, dat makes me sit up unt plink about her goin' ofer two hundred. To-morrow's Friday der t'irteenth."

"Of course, Ike, that is something to be reckoned with, and every man on the floor and in the street as well has his eye on it. Friday, the 13th, would break the best bull market ever under way. You and I know that, Ike, and the dope shows it, too, but you have got to stack this up against it on this trip: No man on the floor knows what Friday, the 13th, means better than Barry Conant. He has worked it to the queen's taste many a time. Why, Barry would not eat to-day for fear the food would get stuck in his windpipe. He's never left the pole for a minute; but suppose, Ike, Barry had tipped off 'Cam' that all the boys will let go their fliers, and most of them will take one on the short side over to-night for a superstitious drop at the opening; and suppose 'Cam' has told him to take them all into camp and give her a rafter-scraper at the opening, where would old Friday, 13th, land on to-morrow's dope-sheets? Bring up the average, wouldn't it, for five years to some? I tell you, Ike, she's too deep for me this run, and I'm goin' to let her alone and pay for the turkey out of loan commissions or stick to plain work-day food."

"Zame here, Cho. Say, Cho, haf you noticed Pop Prownlee to-tay? He has frozen to deh fringe off dat Sugar crowd ess t'ough some von hat nipped 'is scarf-pin unt he vos layin' for him as he game out. He hasn't made a trade to-tay unt yet he sticks like a stamp-tax. I ben keeping my eyes on him for I t'ought he hat someding up his sleeve dat might raise tust ven he tropt id. I dink Parry has hat deh same itear. He never loses sight of him, yet Pop hasn't made a trade to-tay, unt here id iss 20 minutes of der glose unt dere is Parry in deh center again whooping her up ofer two hundred unt four."

"Mr. Randolph, I Could Not Tell My Father a Lie Even to Save His Life."

"To-morrow's Friday der T'irteenth."

CHAPTER V.

Thursday, November 12, was a memorable day in Wall street. As the gong peeled its the-game's-closed-till-another-day, the myriad of tortured souls that are supposed to haunt the treacherous bogs and quicksands of the great exchange, where lie their earthly hopes, must have prayed with renewed earnestness for its destruction before the morrow. Never had the stock exchange folded its tents with surer confidence of continuing its victorious march. Sugar advanced with record-breaking total sales to 207½ and the final half-hour carried the whole list of stocks up with it. In that time some of the railroads jumped ten points. Sugar closed at the very top amid great excitement, with Barry Conant taking all offered. During the last 30 minutes it had become evident to all that the board-room traders and plungers, together with many of the semi-professional gamblers, who operated through commission houses, were selling out their stock and going short over the opening of the Wall street hoodoo-day, Friday, the 13th of the month. But it was also evident, with the heavy selling at the close and stiffness of the price, which had never wavered as block after block was thrown on the market, that some powerful interest as well had taken cognizance of the fact that the morrow was hoodoo-day. At the close, most of the sellers, had they been granted another five minutes, would have repurchased, even at a loss, what they had sold, for it looked as though they had sold themselves into a trap. Their anxiety was intensified by the publication, a few minutes later, of this item:

"Barry Conant in coming from the Sugar crowd after the close remarked to a fellow broker: 'By three o'clock to-morrow, the 13th, will have a new meaning to Wall street.' This was interpreted as pointing to a terrific jump in Sugar to-morrow."

"The street" knew that the news bureau that sent out this item was friendly to Barry Conant and the "system," and that it would print nothing displeasing to them. Therefore, this must be a foreword of the coming harvest of the bulls and the slaughter of the bears.

Others than Ike Bloomenstein remarked upon the fact that Bob Brownley had hung close to the Sugar-pole all day, but when the close had come and gone without his having anything to do with the Sugar skyrockets, he dropped out of his fellow-brokers' minds. Wall street has no use for any but the "doer." The poet and the mooner would be no more secure from interruption in the center of the Sahara than in Wall street between ten and three o'clock. Some sage has said that the human mind, like the well-bucket, can carry only its fill. The Wall street mind always has its fill of budding dollars. In consequence, there is never room for those other interests that enter the normal mind.

Friday, the 13th of November, drifted over Manhattan island in a drear drizzle of marrow-chilling haze, which just missed being rain—one of those New York days that give a hesitating suicide renewed courage to cut the mortal coil. By ten o'clock it had settled down on the stock exchange and its surrounding infernos with a clamminess that damped the spirits of the most rampant bulls. No class in the world is so susceptible to atmospheric conditions as stock-gamblers. Many a stout-hearted one has been known to postpone the inauguration of a long-planned coup merely because the air filled his blood with the dank chill of superstition. Because of the expected Sugar pyrotechnics, stock exchange members had gathered early; the brokers 'offices were overcrowded before ten; the morning papers, not only in New York but in Boston, Philadelphia and other centers, were filled with stories of the big rise that was to take place in Sugar. The knowing ones saw the ear-marks of the "system's" press-agent in these stories; and they knew that this industrious institution had not sat up the night before because of insomnia. All the signs pointed to a killing, and and a terrific one—pointed so plainly that the bears and Sugar shorts found no hope in the atmosphere or the date.

Bob had not been near the office the afternoon before, and as he had not come in by five minutes to ten, I decided to go over to the exchange and see if he were going to mix up in the baiting of the Sugar bears. I had no specific reasons for thinking he was interested except his recent queer actions, particularly his hanging to the Sugar-pole, yet doing nothing, the day before. But it is one of the best established traditions of stock-gambledom that when an operator has been bitten by a rabid stock he is invariably attracted to it every time afterward that it shows signs of frothing. More than all, I had one of those strong nowhere-born-nowhere-cradled intuitions common to those living in the stock-gambling world, which made me feel the creepy shadow of coming events.

As on that day a few weeks before, the crowd was at the Sugar pole, but its alignment was different. [illegible] the center were Barry Conant [illegible] trusted lieutenants, but no [illegible] rival. None of those [illegible] brokers showed that desperate [illegible] to do or die that is born of [illegible]sity. They were there to by [illegible] but not to put up a life or death [illegible] me-depends-the-result fight. [illegible] who were long of stock could [illegible] be distinguished by their expression of joy from the shorts, who [illegible] the handwriting on the wall and [illegible] filled with uncertainty, fear, [illegible] The demeanor of Barry Conant [illegible] his lieutenants expressed [illegible] they were going to do what [illegible] there to do. They showed by their [illegible] buttoned coats, and squared shoulders that they expected lots of work, [illegible] and haul work, but apparently [illegible] anticipated no last-ditch fighting. The gong pealed and the crowd of brokers sprang at one another, but only for blood, not flesh, bone, heart and soul; just blood. The first price on Sugar was 211 for 3,000 shares. Some one sold it in a block. Barry Conant bought it. It did not require three eyes to see that the seller was one of his lieutenants. This meant what is known as a "wash" sale, a fictitious one arranged in advance between two brokers to establish the basis for the trades that are to follow—one of those minor frauds of stock-gambling by which the public is deceived and the traders and plungers are handicapped with loaded dice. In principle, it is a device older than stock exchanges themselves, and is put to use elsewhere than on the floor. For instance, four genuine buyers want a particular animal worth $200 at a horse auction. Its owner's pal starts the bidding at $400, and the four, not being up in horse values, are thereby induced to reach for it at between $400 and $600. But human nature, whether at horse sales or at stock-gambling, loves to be "hinkey-dinked" as much as the moth to play tag with the candle flame. In five minutes Sugar was selling at 221, and the frantic shorts were grabbing for it as though there never was to be another share put on sale, while Barry Conant and his lieutenants were most industriously pushing it just beyond their reaching finger-tips, either by buying it as fast as it was offered by genuine sellers, or by taking what their own pals threw in the air.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FLY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

Numerous American Birds Make Trips to the British Isles.

The occurrence of American birds in this country raises the interesting question: How do they cross the intervening 2,000 miles of ocean? says the London Globe. Can we suppose a bird is capable of sustained flight for a sufficiently long period to accomplish this? On the supposition that this yellow shank can fly at the rate of 150 miles an hour, it would accomplish the distance in 14 hours. And then it must be remembered that this bird, being a wader, would be able to rest from time to time on the water. As regards the rate of flight attained by birds in their migratory journeys, some interesting computations are to be found in Kätke's "Heligoland as an Ornithological Observatory." His figures are 125 miles an hour for the hooded crow, 208 for the northern blue throat and 245 for the Virginia plover. At the last rate the Atlantic could be crossed in about eight and three-quarters hours. Some six other American birds, including the red-crested snipe and the Eskimo curlew, are recorded from Sicily islands.

Other American birds, including the yellow-billed cuckoo, have been recorded in Ireland. And in connection with this crossing of the Atlantic by American birds it is interesting to note an apparent attempt to cross in the opposite direction. In a British association report from 1887 we read:

"At Rathlin O'Birne (West Donegal) immense flocks of birds—starlings, thrushes and fieldfares—passed west from December 18 to 23. The nearest land to the west of this rock island is America. This is not an isolated occurrence. The westerly flight of land birds at stations off the west coast of Ireland has been noticed on other occasions."

It would be interesting to know if any of these enterprising migrants ever reached the other side.

Cork Legs.

From the name universally given artificial limbs one might suppose that they were made of cork, but that is not the case. They are so called from the fact that when artificial limbs were first produced the majority of factories were located in Cork street, London, and it became the custom to speak of them as cork legs. Since then manufactories have been established in many countries, but the name of cork still clings to their wares.

Remaining Young Long.

One step in this twentieth century we are making in the right direction—we are remaining young much longed. Our grandmothers took to caps at 40 and became old women before they had attained to middle age. Now we are frisky at 60 and are taking our part in social life well on in the seventies, many even in the eighties, and some fortunate people when over 90.

Locks of Washington's Hair.

Lancaster, Pa. — Mrs. Margaret Snader, an aged woman, living in New Holland, has several strands of the hair of George Washington, given to her mother many years ago by a member of the Custis family.