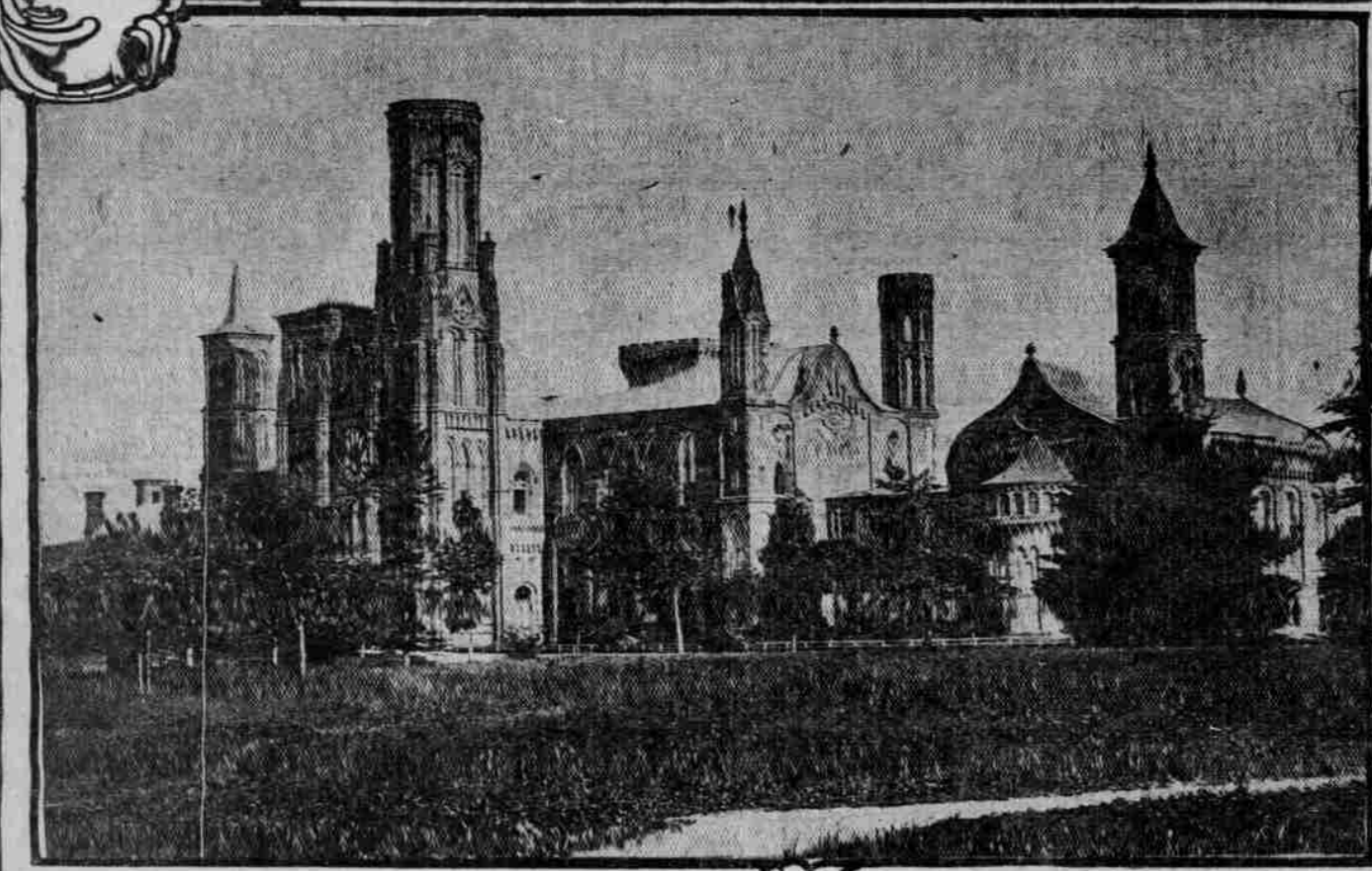


MOST EXALTED of GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

Head of the Smithsonian Institution to Succeed Prof. Langley to Be Chosen This Month.

Pathetic Story of the Eminent Founder of America's Leading Scientific Establishment.



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

At their annual meeting to be held, according to statute, on the fourth Monday of January, the regents of the Smithsonian Institution are expected to elect Secretary S. P. Langley's successor as secretary and director of that great scientific establishment.

The new secretary will be the ranking scientist of the realm. His exalted position will assure him greater prestige and influence than could the presidency of any university or of any scientific institution of the new world. Professor Joseph Henry, while serving as the first secretary of the Smithsonian, declined the presidency of Princeton at double his salary. Professor Langley's successor will be Francis Smith's tutor and chief advisor on scientific matters, his guardian over the sacred treasures and works of science, which it were unsafe to intrust to the hands of men dominated by political motives. He will enjoy the privileges of the floor of the Senate and like a Cabinet officer will be officially addressed as "Mr. Secretary." He will draw a salary of \$7500 a year, if the regents elect to allow him the same compensation as drawn by Professor Langley at the time of his death.

At state functions held at the White House or elsewhere he will, according to the established order of precedence, take rank immediately after the justices of the Federal court of claims and before the brigadier-generals of the Army.

A Veritable Potentate.

No other personage in the official life of the capital will enjoy a position more independent, unless it be the Chief Justice himself. Neither the President nor Congress will have the power to remove him, no clique or clan of politicians can disturb him, and he will not be beholden to Congress for his salary. He need bow his head to no earthly authority other than the regents of the Smithsonian Institution, which elects him, and although this body has the power to remove him his appointment is understood to be for life, as was that of each of his predecessors. He will not only be the secretary, but the principal executive officer of the board of regents, which consists of the Vice-President, Chief Justice, three Senators (appointed by the President of the Senate), three Representatives (appointed by the Speaker) and two citizens of Washington, together with four distinguished citizens of separate states (appointed by joint resolution of Congress).

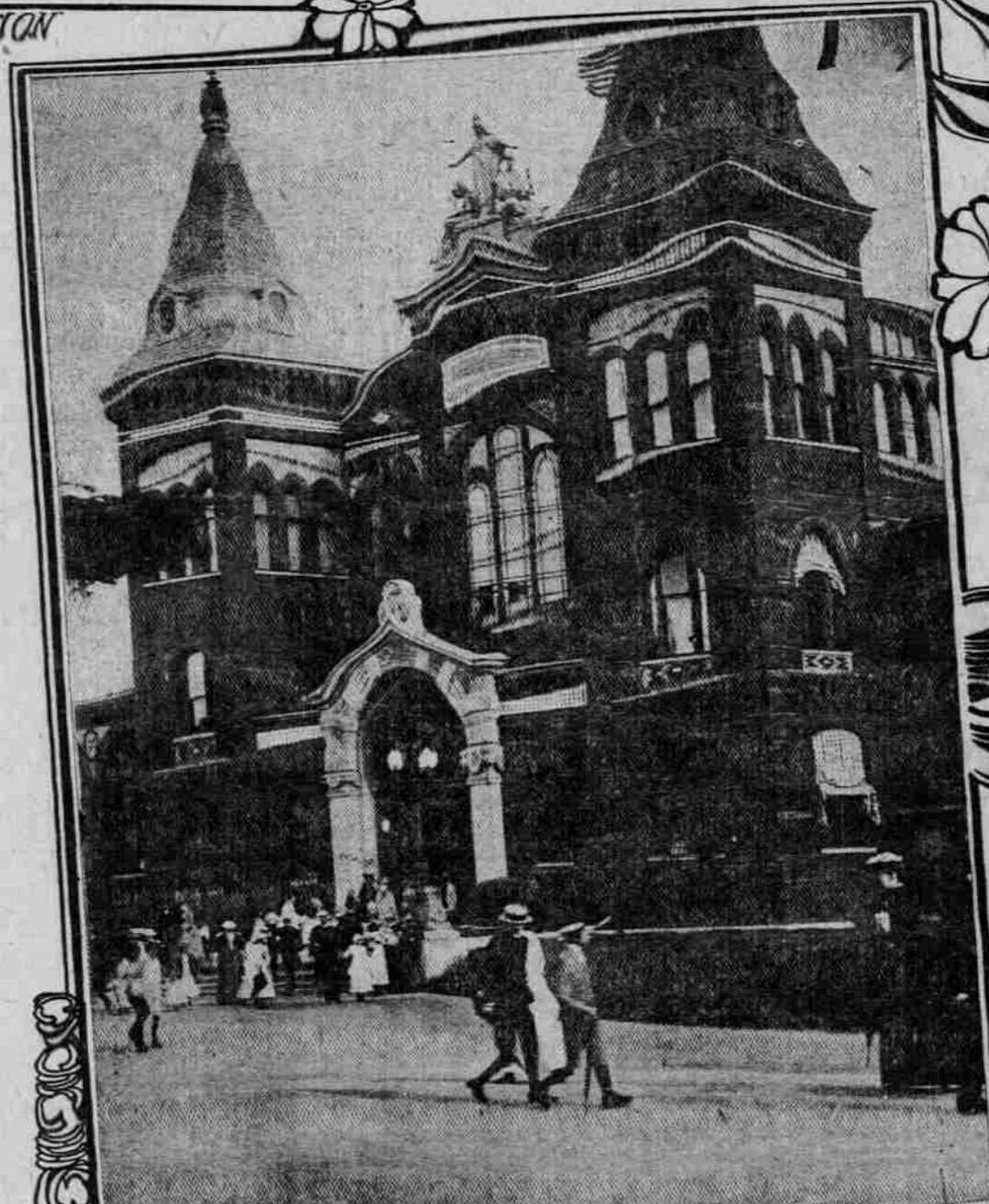
The meetings of the regents are presided over by the Chief Justice, designated as the "chancellor," and there is also an "executive committee" of the board consisting of three regents. The regents are supposed to receive the "service and instruction" of a higher body, "the establishment," consisting of the President of the United States, Vice-President, Chief Justice, Cabinet and several Senators. The "establishment" is supposed to meet at stated intervals, the President of the United States presiding, but has not been called together for 20 years, and as a factor in the affairs of the institution it has become obsolete. In spite of all of this formidable organization the secretary's administration of the institution is practically supreme. He is really the director of the institution, the title of "secretary" having been originally adopted because in Washington it designates the highest grade of executive responsibility below the President of the United States. The new secretary will make all appointments on the staff of the institution, will be responsible for its funds and the custodian of its property and treasures.

Although the guardian of many Government interests and the administrative officer over hundreds of Government employees he will be neither a Government official nor will he receive a Government salary. The Smithsonian Institution is a corporation, endowed by a private fund administered by the Government, whose acceptance of such a trust is the only instance of such an action in our history.

Government Bureaus Under Him.

But by virtue of his office the new secretary will be also the administrative head of five Government institutions, the National Museum, bureau of American ethnology, bureau of international exchanges, astro-physical observatory and National Zoological Park.

The real function of this great mother-house of science, the Smithsonian Institution, is to be the center of the



U.S. NATIONAL MUSEUM

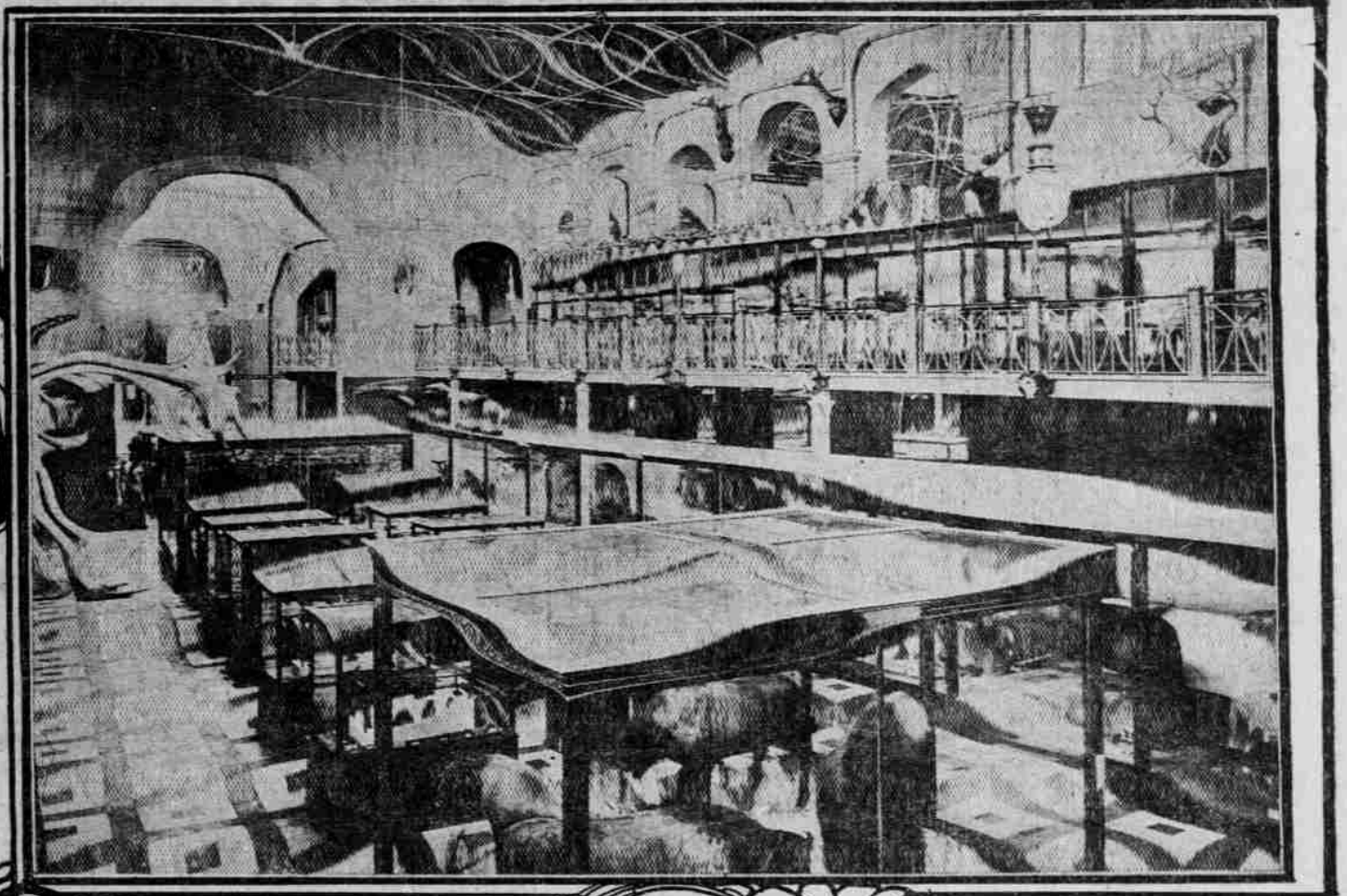
stitution proper, is understood by a surprisingly small proportion of the public. The majority of visitors to Washington depart with the impression that its chief work is the collection of natural history specimens, a misconception due to the fact that the many-towered Norman castle occupied by the offices of the secretary is, owing to the crowded condition of the present National Museum building, also used largely as a repository for the overflow collections of the museum. When asked to define the functions of the Smithsonian Professor Henry once answered: "To assist men of science in making original researches, to publish them in a series of volumes and to give a copy of them to every first-class library on the face of the earth." The Smithsonian has not only made grants of money to many investigators throughout the world, but has supplied books, apparatus and laboratory accommodations to thousands. Its aid is not limited to Americans, but is just as accessible to the citizens of one nation as to those of another. This broad scope of its usefulness seems to be expressed in the will of James Smithson, who bequeathed his fortune to found at Washington, under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men. The last two words have been interpreted to mean "among all mankind."

Pathos in Founder's Life.

In England there flourished during the seventeenth century a powerful lord, Hugh, first Duke of Northumberland. In 1740, when this peer had been Sir Hugh Smithson of Stanwick, he had married Elizabeth Seymour, of the illustrious family of Percy. Twenty-six years later his dukedom was created for him by George III. Thirteen years after his marriage this lord had a liaison with Elizabeth, heiress of the Hungerford family of Studley and also to Charles, the proud Duke of Somerset.

JOSEPH SMITHSON WHEN AT OXFORD

At the time of this liaison this former Miss Huntley was Mrs. Macle. The issue, in 1754, was an illegitimate son, James, who was given his mother's family name, Macle. His father provided a liberal allowance for his support and education, and entered him at Oxford, where he excelled in the study of chemistry, to which he devoted even his vacations. At his graduation, still under the name of James Macle, he received the degree of A. M. and the next year he became a fellow of the Royal Society. This young man brooded over the circumstances of his birth, shunned society, and he was an intimate friend of



MAMMAL HALL NATIONAL MUSEUM

to Hungerford's children. "Legitimate or illegitimate," if any, but in the event of Hungerford's death it was to go to the United States for the founding of the Smithsonian Institution. His nephew survived him but six years and died childless. President Jackson commissioned Richard Rush of Philadelphia to bring the funds to the United States. After a suit in chancery Rush returned to America with the whole amount, \$558,333.46, in English sovereigns.

Congress, haggled for eighteen years over the disposition of the bequest, and a number of our statesmen objected to its acceptance. William C. Preston, in the Senate, said that if the money was accepted "every white-headed vagabond that had been trading our country might think proper to have his name distinguished in the same way." At length an act was passed authorizing the Smithsonian Institution. The money brought from England had first been invested in Arkansas bonds, and was now, in 1846, lent in perpetuity to the United States at a low cost interest, which has since supported the institution. The income and added bequests have brought the permanent fund up to over \$10,000,000. The act establishing the institution "all objects of art and of foreign and curious research and all objects of natural history, plants and geological or mineralogical specimens" belonging to the government were to be then and thereafter installed in the institution.

The architect of the beautiful building was James Renwick, who had modeled Grace Church, New York. He fashioned the Smithsonian after the Lombard or later Norman castles of the twelfth century. The cornerstone was laid in 1847 and the building was completed at a cost of \$231,000. The exhibits of the "national cabinet of curiosities" were transferred to it from the patent office in 1855, and installed in a great hall 200x50 feet, designed as the original National Museum. Another large T-shaped hall, 125 feet long, was provided as the National Gallery of Art, the custody of which has always been a function of the Smithsonian institution, according to the recent ruling of the Attorney General in the recent case of the Harriet Lane Johnston art bequest to the government. In 1855 the first building out the hall north and south towers the upper story of the main building. In this conflagration James Smithson's own collection of 10,000 minerals was destroyed.

The Mother Hen's Chicks.

After the centennial of 1876 the Government found itself the possessor of hundreds of thousands of exhibits donated by the various industries and foreign governments exhibiting at that exposition. So Congress appropriated \$250,000 for the erection of the present National Museum adjacent to the Smithsonian on the east. The National Museum was placed in charge of Professor Spencer Baird, then secretary of the Smithsonian, although Congress has since appropriated for its maintenance and immediate administration. The first use of this far-spreading building was for the installation of the Garfield Inaugural ball. Since its opening as the National Museum soon afterward its exhibits have multiplied thirty-fold, until they today include over 6,000,000 objects. Its space being entirely inadequate, a new building is now in course of erection, and its total cost will be \$12,500,000. It is proposed to convert the present museum building into a National Museum of Mechanical Arts, an outgrowth of the section of mechanical technology in the National Museum. As soon as the new building has been completed it will receive the overflow museum collections. After these spaces have been cleared and reconstructed it is probable that the present nucleus of the National Gallery of Art, consisting of the Johnston collection of masterpieces in oil, the Marsh collection of engravings and other valuable collections, will be installed therein. Included in the general scheme of the National Gallery will be the separate building for which Charles I. Freer, of Detroit, has bequeathed \$500,000 to the Smithsonian for the installation of his 855 Whistler paintings, his peacock room by Whistler, his 50 additional framed Japanese art and nearly 1000 pieces of ancient Oriental pottery. This great collection is now valued at \$500,000 and Mr. Freer's agreement to make additions to the extent of \$200,000, so that at his death the Smithsonian will receive a \$1,000,000 collection, besides the \$500,000 building to shelter it. The success of the hitherto undeveloped National Gallery of Art being now assured, Americans have a repository for such private collections as they wish to bequeath to the Nation as a whole rather than to a city or a state.

JOHN ELFRETH WATKINS.
Washington, D. C., January 5.

The largest wooden ship was probably that built by Ptolemy Philopater. It was 420 feet long, 38 feet broad and 48 feet deep. It carried 3000 crew.



ROTUNDA NATIONAL MUSEUM

After 1291 he adopted his father's name, and hence was thereafter known as James Smithson. A new mineral which he discovered after that time is called Smithsonite in his honor.

"The Sins of the Fathers."

So sensitive was he over his birth that he never married. He died in 1828 at Genoa, and there, far away from home or kin, he was buried in the little cemetery of the English church, on the heights of San Benigno—a solitary spot shadowed by cypress trees and overlooking the Gulf of Genoa. Professor Langley several times made pilgrimages to the town and saw that it was cared for. Three years ago it was decided to remove the remains to Washington, and Professor Alex. Graham Bell, one of the regents of the Smithsonian, volunteered to attend to the removal at his own expense. On opening the tomb he found that the wooden coffin had molded away, but that the skeleton was fairly preserved. The bones and surrounding dust were carefully placed in a metal casket and inclosed in a coffin of strong wood, wrapped in an American flag. After the ceremonies had been conducted by our Consul and Dr. Bell the remains were brought to New York on a steamship and thence transported to Washington on the U. S. S. Dolphin. The flag-draped coffin received naval honors at the navy yard, and a funeral procession, including the regents, British Ambassador, high officials of our Government and a cavalry escort, conveyed it to the Smithsonian, where ceremonies were held. Later a beautiful marble sarcophagus was erected upon the main floor of the Smithsonian building. In a small room decorated with palm-trees the remains were placed, all of the dust removed from the tomb was religiously, moonlike sheen of a window of true glass. Before the remains were deposited in this final resting place all of the dust removed from the tomb was carefully sifted and cast in measurements of the skull were made by an expert anthropometrist of the institution.

Such was the fate of the unhappy student who surprised the American people by bequeathing into their trust a generous fortune to be devoted to "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." This clause of his will seems to have been inspired by the very similar phrase of Washington's farewell address. That he entertained anti-monarchical ideas is indicated by a letter which he wrote from Paris just before the revolution. In this he compared a nation with a king to a man who takes a lion for a watchdog. While he evidently sympathized with the American patriots in their struggle against the land of his father, his half-brother, Lord Percy, the legitimate son of the duke, commanded a brigade of red coats at Bunker Hill, and is said to have circulated in England a report that he had been recruited by the British privateers. That his noble kinsmen—perhaps this brother also—held themselves aloof from him is indicated by Smithson's oft-quoted prediction: "On my father's side the best blood of England flows through my veins; on my mother's I am descended from kings; and although I am deprived, by the bar sinister upon my escutcheon, from assuming family honors, my name shall live in the memory of the nation, the titles of Northumberland and Percy are extinct and forgotten."

Manuscript Rejected: Changes Will.

America owes its acquisition of the Smithsonian bequest to an author's pique over the rejection of his manuscript, according to persistent tradition. It is said that Smithson first bequeathed his fortune to the Royal Society, which for years had published his papers in its "Transactions," but that in 1810 the society rejected one of these papers, whereupon the highly sensitive author made the will by which the fortune came to America, a land which he never had visited. In this document, drawn in 1826, his estate was left to Henry James Hungerford, his maternal nephew, who evidently had befriended him. The estate was to descend